



## TEMPLATE FOR INPUT INTO THE AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE STRATEGY

### Overview

This template should be used to provide comments on the content of the Australian Heritage Strategy.

### Contact Details

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### Questions

Please add your comments for some or all of the questions provided with the Strategy's three high level themes below. If you have other information you wish to provide, please add this in the "Other comments" field.

#### 1. Improve National Leadership

What are the most important things the Australian Government should be doing to offer leadership in heritage?

How can the Australian Government provide guidance and support for our national heritage—while still empowering other government, industry and community members to take responsibility and get involved?

What priority areas are important to you, your organisation or group?

What practical actions would you suggest to improve national heritage leadership?

Note this joint submission from Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter is additional to the main submission to the Draft Australian Heritage Strategy by Australia ICOMOS.

Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter are pleased to note references to quality and a quality framework in the Strategy for Australia's Heritage - Draft for Consultation. Both organisations continue to support and advocate for this. We commend the proposal as presented and urge that appropriate measures be adopted in the Strategy for Australia's Heritage to provide for its development over time within the constraints of available resources.

A proposal to establish a National Quality Framework was presented in the earlier submission to the National Heritage Strategy by Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter.



To support the aim of the strategy ‘to provide a framework for leadership’ it is proposed that the final Australian Heritage Strategy should include provision for the incremental development of a quality framework with the long term aim of realising a National Heritage Quality Framework supported by and implemented by all participants in the heritage ‘industry’, largely through a voluntary and self-regulatory process.

To support the aim of ‘contributing to international heritage standard setting and guidance’ Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter proposes that the long-term goal of a National Heritage Quality Framework would be world’s best practice in heritage and conservation management.

In future Australia will enjoy higher levels of support for our national heritage; the short-term objective must therefore be to ensure that all present-day actions are sustainable over the long term, and that our heritage resources will be always protected from damage by neglect, exploitation and inappropriate intervention. Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter hold the view that a focus on quality would provide security and long-term sustainability and compensate for the shortcomings in the present heritage management system.

## **2. Pursue Innovative Partnerships**

What partnerships are most needed within the heritage sector?

What heritage roles and responsibilities should be led by governments, peak heritage organisations or community groups in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

How should resources be shared through heritage partnerships to ensure the greatest return on agreed priorities?

Can you provide examples of successful innovative partnerships you or your organisation have established?

Since submitting the National Quality Framework proposal in early 2014 a number of issues have emerged in consideration of the proposal. They include:

- the consultation sessions on the draft Strategy have exposed high level of concern about shortcomings in the current heritage management system amongst the many disparate stakeholders in the heritage field and they have highlighted limitations in the potential to improve the management of heritage across the nation in the current political and economic climate
- the single most enduring element of value in the national heritage scene today is The Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (current edition 2013), which continues to provide philosophical and practical direction for heritage conservation actions at every level
- through the tireless efforts of their members, organisations including Australia ICOMOS continue to lead by example and to some extent fill the vacuum created by public and official resources constraints and growing deficiencies in heritage management, although a continuing decline in the quality of heritage management can be witnessed in almost every



jurisdiction – local, state, national and international.

- notwithstanding the important roles played by Australia ICOMOS, APT, and other member organisations working to support conservation of the cultural and natural environment, a lack of leadership is identified as being largely responsible for diminishing resources and a perceived lack of public support.

To support the aim of ‘providing greater heritage policy and process alignment across all levels of government’ Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter proposes to continue the development of practice notes and quality measures for the range of activities provided for in the policies and guidelines of the Burra Charter and suitable for use in the day-to-day processes of local, state and national heritage management.

To support the proposal ‘to explore the further development of national standards and best practice guidelines for conservation and management of heritage places’ the development of quality measures and the move towards a National Heritage Quality Framework will satisfy that aim.

To support the proposal to ‘further promote Australia’s standing internationally as a world leader in heritage management’, Australia ICOMOS and APT members, who currently work in support of heritage conservation in SE Asia and the Pacific region, and those undertaking teaching and consultancy missions overseas, will continue to promote high standards of quality as exemplified by the China Principles and Hoi An Protocols for best conservation practice in Asia (both directly informed by the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter) and, more recently, the drafting of quality Measures for Heritage Impact Assessment, which are now informing World Heritage Management in George Town and Malacca in Malaysia.

### **3. Enable encourage communities to understand and care for their heritage**

What should the Australian heritage sector be doing to help the Australian community better engage in heritage activities?

How can a shared understanding of our national heritage be developed and best celebrated together?

Do you have any examples of activities that have been successful in promoting local heritage to a broader audience?

What is the role of technology and new media in providing greater community access to heritage?

A quality approach to heritage and conservation management is anticipated and provided for in The Burra Charter (specifically Articles 2, 3, 4, 6, 14-22 and 28-32). However, a quality approach would differ in general from the current system in which The Burra Charter is highly influential, in being more outcomes focused and less process orientated. A quality focus on outcomes is needed today to compensate for the inability of heritage managers and administrators to adequately



monitor outcomes. A well-constructed national quality framework would have the advantage of being to a large extent self-regulating.

To support the aim of ‘building heritage capacity through workforce support, education and training’ the proposed heritage quality measures will reflect an aim of ensuring that work will be undertaken by suitably qualified and suitably trained operatives, thus providing incentive for training and education to satisfy that aim. Australia ICOMOS continues to support the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) heritage training programs now in place in South Australia and Tasmania, and being trialled in Western Australia, which are providing practical training for contractors working on heritage places throughout Australia.

To support the aim of ‘improving support for Australia’s iconic World Heritage sites’ the APT Australasia Chapter proposes to continue to provide capacity-building and information sharing at the annual Longford Academy held at the World Heritage inscribed sites at Brickendon and Woolmers and to use quality measures in the development of short programs at Woolmers to inform works and workers at the inscribed convict sites.

To support the proposed action to explore innovative approaches to fund the long-term protection and management of Australia’s heritage places’ it is proposed that the full investigation of the proposed National Heritage Quality Framework should include the impacts of comparative costs with particular reference to savings that would be realised through a move from a high level of bureaucratic regulation and the attendant legal costs associated with appeals, to a self-regulatory system based on quality.

To support the proposed action ‘to explore complementary partnerships between the Green Army projects and quality Frameworks’ Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter pledge to work collaboratively with all parties through the development and implementation of quality measures for each of the activities and categories of works that would have any potential to impact adversely on the heritage values of places, including implications for the sustainability of outcomes achieved by the Green Army projects over the projected four-year life of the program.

The development of an Australia Heritage Quality Framework also presents an outstanding opportunity for community engagement as the Quality Measures should be developed with broad community input.

#### **Other comments**

In conclusion although there is no proposed action in the draft to develop a national quality framework, it would seem prudent to ensure that all support for heritage management including activities undertaken under the ‘Green Army’ strategy, should be planned, implemented and monitored in accordance with quality principles and with a view to obtaining high quality sustainable outcomes.

The National Heritage Quality Framework has been discussed and considered over recent months



by several peak bodies, including the NSW Heritage Council, Heritage Victoria, the Australian Heritage Council and HCOANZ, where it has obtained guarded support. The evident enthusiasm for the proposal is countered by concern about promotion today of a proposal that appears to involve further 'red tape'. Clearly this is not intended and the proposal requires further development.

Australia ICOMOS and the APT Australasia Chapter therefore propose that a National Heritage Quality Framework would be consistent with several of the provisions of the *Strategy for Australia's Heritage - Draft for Consultation* and consistent with the aim of improving heritage management through an incremental process in harmony with the ambitions and resources of stakeholders in heritage conservation today.