

Part 1 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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# Executive summary

## **VISION**

A recognised world-class museum exploring Australia's past, illuminating the present, imagining the future.

## **MISSION**

To promote an understanding of Australia's history and an awareness of future possibilities by:

- developing, preserving and exhibiting a significant collection
- taking a leadership role in research and scholarship
- engaging and providing access for audiences nationally and internationally
- delivering innovative programs.

## Director's review of operations

Since opening in 2001, the National Museum has striven to be a major cultural tourism destination, engaging visitors with Australian history and heritage. This year our efforts were well rewarded, with the Museum named Best Major Tourist Attraction in the Australian Tourism Awards. This was especially welcome at a time when a considerable amount of our work had been in areas that might not be immediately obvious to the visiting public, but which will bring their own rewards in years to come.

After four years of operation at Acton, the Museum is well placed to build upon its achievements and learn from its experiences. This year we continued to focus on strengthening core activities and planning for the future — developing the collections, reviewing and improving exhibitions, expanding our research base, and refining operational processes.

Much of this work is central to the ongoing implementation of the four-year Collections and Gallery Development Plan, adopted last year to guide the Museum's progress and address some issues raised in the *Review of Exhibitions and Public Programs* (2003).

The Federal Government's announcement in the 2004 budget that the Museum will receive an additional \$1 million per year for acquisitions provided a significant boost to collection development this year and will continue to enrich the Museum's gallery redevelopment over the coming years.

We were also very fortunate this year to be given one of the biggest and best-documented collections on the history of a major rural property. The Springfield collection includes a wealth of material evoking Australia's pastoral history and the everyday lives of pioneering pastoralists.

As well as continuing to work on enhancing the permanent exhibitions, the Museum this year refined its focus for temporary and travelling exhibitions. Council approved a new policy for temporary and travelling exhibitions, supported by a five-year program. The program will also strengthen our outreach activities, with a greater focus on delivering quality smaller exhibitions to venues outside Canberra.

All of the Museum's exhibitions and collection development activities are underpinned by quality research. This was reinforced this year by a new research policy, which will help develop the Museum as a centre of excellence for the understanding of Australian history and society. The Museum's in-house publisher National Museum of Australia Press is an important outlet for the scholarship of our research program. Planning began this year for an online scholarly journal, expected to be published during the next financial year.



Director Craddock Morton

George Serras

The year also saw considerable work go into refining the operational framework that supports core activities. A new strategic plan brought a sharper focus to business planning and priorities, while the review of 16 major policies provided an improved policy framework in which to operate. The Museum and staff also successfully negotiated a new certified agreement, expected to be implemented from July 2005.

While the year was highly productive and successful for the Museum, it was not without its challenges. Staff departures and delays in recruitment of suitable replacements resulted in some program slippage. Combined with a perceived need for caution about over expenditure and some over optimism about the time frames required for project completion, this resulted in an underspend of the Museum's financial allocation for the year.

The Museum recognises a need to better align business planning and financial management across all program areas. Next financial year will see a greater emphasis on building the organisation's business operations skills.

Another challenge is to address the Museum's serious shortage of space, both for collection storage and office accommodation. Considerable work was done this year to identify options and a project has commenced to extend the Acton Annexe to increase office space. Some short-term improvements were made to collection storage in one repository, but this has not decreased the need for a long-term solution.

After four years the Museum appears to have settled into a post-opening pattern of visitation. While we experienced a decline in visitor numbers, research showed that visitor satisfaction remained high.

As we strengthen our collections, research and business operations, we look to the future with great optimism and commitment to our vision.

I wish to acknowledge the Government's support for the Museum and in particular the support of our portfolio ministers Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan and Senator the Hon. Rod Kemp. I am also grateful for the continuing support and assistance of the Chairman of Council, the Hon. Tony Staley, and of other Council members.

I would also like to acknowledge the highly active Friends of the National Museum of Australia for their ongoing support and commitment to the organisation.

Finally, I wish to congratulate and thank the Museum's dedicated staff and volunteers for their continuing commitment to the organisation and its visitors.



**Craddock Morton**

Director  
August 2005

# The year at a glance

## OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

The National Museum of Australia is funded by the Commonwealth Government to achieve an agreed outcome through a series of outputs. The Museum's performance is measured by Government against the outcome and outputs and associated performance indicators, as specified in the annual Portfolio Budget Statements.

The Museum's outcome is:

*Australians have access to the National Museum's collections and public programs to encourage awareness and understanding of Australian history and culture.*

*(Outcome, Portfolio Budget Statement 2004–2005)*

### Financial summary, measured against PBS

Total price of outputs: \$43.832m	<b>Actual price of outputs: \$41.144m</b>
Departmental appropriations: \$40.132m	<b>Actual appropriations: \$40.132m</b>
Revenue from other sources: \$3.700m	<b>Actual revenue from other sources: \$5.044m</b>

### Performance summary, measured against PBS

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<b>Relevance of acquisitions</b>	
Proportion of acquisitions acquired in accordance with Collection Development Framework  Target — 100%	<b>100% of acquisitions acquired in accordance with Collection Development Framework</b>
<b>Accessibility of National Historical Collection</b>	
Proportion of the collection which is available for exhibition, public programs and research  Target — 50%	<b>50% of the National Historical Collection is available for exhibition, public programs and research</b>
<b>The extent to which awareness and understanding is increased of Australia's history and culture</b>	
Proportion of visitors and users who indicated the Museum's exhibitions and public programs have contributed a new or different awareness or perspective on Australia's history or culture  Target — 75%	<b>77% of visitors surveyed confirmed they had learned something new about Australian history during their visit</b>

### Access to exhibitions and programs

number of visitors or users of Museum's exhibitions and programs (excluding web)

**666,173 visitors or users in 2004–2005**

target — 800,000

## OUTPUT GROUP 1.1 — COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

### Financial summary, measured against PBS

Total price of outputs: \$9.153m	<b>Actual price of outputs: \$6.432m</b>
Departmental appropriations: \$8.909m	<b>Actual appropriations: \$6.274m</b>
Revenue from other sources: \$0.244m	<b>Actual revenue from other sources: \$0.499m</b>

### Performance summary, measured against PBS

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	ACHIEVEMENTS
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#### Quality

100% of National Historical Collection acquisitions are consistent with acquisitions policy	<b>100% of National Historical Collection acquisitions are consistent with acquisitions policy</b>
75% of National Historical Collection stored at or above appropriate museum standards	<b>75% of National Historical Collection stored at or above appropriate museum standards</b>

#### Quantity

1000 conservation treatments	<b>1600 treatments completed</b>
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#### Price

\$9.153m (\$45.76 per collection item)	<b>\$6.432m (\$32.16 per collection item)</b>
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## OUTPUT GROUP 1.2 — NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### Financial summary, measured against PBS

Total price of outputs: \$34.679m	<b>Actual price of outputs: \$34.712m</b>
Departmental appropriations: \$31.223m	<b>Actual appropriations: \$33.858m</b>
Revenue from other sources: \$3.456m	<b>Actual revenue from other sources: \$4.545m</b>

### Performance summary, measured against PBS

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<b>Quality</b>	
70% of all visitors satisfied or better	<b>91% of visitors recorded they were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit</b>
80% of school visits satisfied that schools programs meet core curriculum requirements	<b>89% of schools visiting the Museum were satisfied that the schools programs met core curriculum requirements</b>
<b>Quantity</b>	
800,000 visitors or users of programs	<b>666,173 visitors and users in 2004–2005</b>
400,000 unique visits to the website	<b>383,000 unique visits</b>
<b>Price</b>	
\$34.679m (\$45.35 per visitor/user)	<b>\$34.712m (\$52.11 per visitor/user)</b>

# Strategic plan

## NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA 2004–2007

### KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

#### **Enhance exhibitions, programs and services**

The National Museum of Australia will implement the plan approved by Council to address the recommendation of the *Review of Exhibitions and Public Programs* (2003) including:

- Gallery redevelopment
- National Historical Collection development
- Visitor amenities improvement.

#### **Care for the National Historical Collection**

The National Museum of Australia will develop and care for the National Historical Collection to help fulfil the Museum's national role.

#### **Sustain research and scholarship activity**

The National Museum of Australia will ensure research and scholarship continue to underpin collection development, exhibitions, programs, conservation, publications and other activities.

#### **Engage national audiences**

The National Museum of Australia will reflect its focus on customer service by developing programs, products and services which engage national audiences.

#### **Strengthen business processes**

The National Museum of Australia will develop best practice business processes.

#### **Enhance staffing and workplace development**

The National Museum of Australia will create a working environment where people are valued and organisational potential is continuously developed.

#### **Augment asset development and planning**

The National Museum of Australia will further develop its asset and capital development plans.

#### **Strengthen resource base**

The National Museum of Australia will build, review and strengthen its commercial activities and its approach to collection donors, sponsorship and philanthropy.



## **BUSINESS PRIORITIES**

### **PROGRESS ON KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2004–2005**

(as specified in the *Strategic Plan 2004–2007*, p.10)

#### **1. Enhance exhibitions, programs and services**

##### **Implement gallery redevelopment Year 1 plan**

- Work ongoing to redevelop Circa theatre, Nation and Horizons galleries
- Development and production of gallery guides underway.

##### **Establish an object acquisition fund for the National Historical Collection**

- Fund established 2004–2005.

##### **Establish National Historical Collection object acquisition priorities and targets**

- Targeted acquisition strategy delivered November 2004
- Council approved 108 significant collections for inclusion in the NHC
- The Museum accessioned 73 collections comprising 403 objects.

See page 18 for more information on acquisitions.

##### **Improve visitor amenities through continued audit and improvement of acoustics, wayfinding and labelling**

- New wayfinding plan developed and signage updated
- Work is continuing to improve acoustics.

See pages 16 and 78.

#### **2. Care for the National Historical Collection**

##### **Review and set priorities for documentation of the National Historical Collection**

- New collection information management system released July 2004
- Work began to review data standards and documentation practices
- Ongoing program established for collection documentation.

See page 17.

##### **Identify and undertake preservation work for priority areas**

- More than 1600 objects treated throughout the year
- 11,334 pest and hazard checks and 364 pest treatments undertaken

See page 21.

##### **Identify interim solutions to maximise the use of existing National Historical Collection storage space**

- Interim solutions implemented throughout the year, for example, Bark Painting Relocation project completed, providing improved storage for more than 400 paintings.

See page 20.

### 3. Sustain research and scholarship activity

#### Review existing research policy

- Policy approved by Council November 2004.

See page 33.

#### Develop a broad-based research plan 2004–2007 identifying priority areas, collaborations, partnerships and resource implications

- Research plan endorsed for implementation by Executive in January 2005, following policy approval.
- The Museum is an industry partner for 12 Australian Research Council grants projects
- The Museum hosted a program of 96 different scholarly conferences, lectures and forums.

See page 33 for research activities.

### 4. Engage national audiences

#### Develop and implement a national outreach policy and plan

- Policy approved by Council February 2005 and plan developed and implemented throughout the year.

Outreach activities included:

- Seven travelling exhibitions toured to each mainland state and territory
- Museum involvement in Croc Festivals, a national youth festival that travelled to seven states and territories and attracted 15,000 people from remote and regional locations
- Community-based online projects involving five towns in the Murray–Darling Basin
- Snapshots, an online photographic project, enabled school students to feature their community on the Museum's website
- 11 Talkback Classroom forums involving more than 1000 secondary school students, most of which were broadcast on Radio National
- Six publications released
- 11 educational resources published online.

See pages 40, 41, 46, 47, 53 and 55 for details.

#### Further develop the Museum's web potential

- Release II of web architecture technical development substantially in place
- Substantial new content added to existing website.

See page 55.

#### Revise the temporary and travelling exhibition programs

- Council approved a new *Temporary and travelling exhibitions* policy
- Five-year forward program established for temporary and travelling exhibitions
- During 2004–2005, five temporary exhibitions were staged at the Museum, including the year's major exhibition, *Extremes*
- Seven travelling exhibitions toured mainland Australia.

See page 29–33.

## **5. Strengthen business processes**

### **Review how intellectual property is developed, valued and utilised**

- Delayed due to key staff changes.

### **Improve Information and Communications Technology customer service across the Museum**

- Customer service improvements delivered throughout the year
- New desktop hardware and operating environment scheduled for delivery late July 2005.

*See page 58.*

### **Review the human resource software system**

- New system chosen and implementation commenced.

*See page 84.*

## **6. Enhance staffing and workplace development**

### **Develop a new certified agreement 2005+**

- Ministerial approval was granted mid-June 2005
- Staff ballot and certification by the Industrial Relation Commission is scheduled to occur in July 2005.

*See page 80.*

### **Review the Workplace Diversity Plan**

- Museum Workplace Diversity Plan was reviewed and a new plan produced
- Plan prepared for staff comment June 2005 before finalisation and implementation.

*See page 83–84.*

### **Review the workplace harassment policy**

- *Workplace harassment* policy and guidelines reviewed and finalised.

*See page 84.*

## **7. Augment asset development and planning**

### **Review facilities lifecycle plan**

- Lifecycle plan reviewed, now fully incorporates all of the Museum facilities.

*See page 79.*

### **Review and align accommodation and staffing requirements**

- Procedures put in place to ensure consideration of the physical location of new or re-engaged staff in the approval process
- Approval was gained for an extension to the Acton Annexe building.

### **Scope Museum storage requirements, including collection and exhibition needs**

- Consultancy reports are underway for the long-term future requirements and issues surrounding the Museum's storage needs
- Additional facilities were leased for exhibition furniture and other non-collection storage.

### **8. Strengthen resource base**

#### **Review the commercial revenue framework to maximise alternative revenue opportunities**

- Review delayed by changes in key staff
- Council expected to review *Cost recovery and charging for goods and services* policy July 2005.

#### **Seek external support for Museum programs and in the process create long-term corporate collaborations**

- External support successfully obtained for exhibitions *Behind the Lines* 2004 (Acumen Alliance) and *Extremes* (CSIRO)
- One new Corporate Circle member, with four more anticipated for 2005–2006.

*See page 75.*

#### **Refine the framework for managing substantial philanthropic donations to the National Historical Collection**

- The Museum reviewed its protocols for the management of donors to the collection and worked closely with the Friends of the National Museum of Australia in establishing the Friends Foundation.

*See page 60.*