

Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific

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**Heritage Inquiry
Productivity Commission PO Box 80
Belconnen ACT 2616**

Dear Commissioners

Submission on behalf of the Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific, Deakin University

The Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (CHCAP), based on the Melbourne campus of Deakin University at Burwood, is a major centre in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region employing international best practice in cultural heritage education, research and consultancy. It draws practitioners, scholars and students across the region and beyond into collaborative projects and disseminates professional knowledge by means of educational programs, training workshops, seminars, conferences and publications. It is closely connected with Australia ICOMOS, ICOM and UNESCO, including its World Heritage Centre, Forum UNESCO and Asian Academy of Heritage Management. It has Memoranda of Understanding and active engagement with universities in Indonesia, Korea, Philippines, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

The suite of award courses, culminating in the Master of Cultural Heritage, taught within CHCAP has three specialised foci: heritage places, intangible heritage, and museums. The enrolment is currently around 180 enrolled fee-paying students, including overseas students. In addition CHCAP staff supervise PhD students, some of whom are international students. During 2004 CHCAP conducted on behalf of UNESCO's Division of Cultural Heritage two training workshops for Pacific Island heritage place managers in Fiji and Niue, while in December 2005 it will run a train-the-trainer workshop in Vietnam jointly with the Hanoi Architectural University. It played a major role in the formation of the 'Sharing Our Heritages' consortium of eight universities teaching heritage studies at the postgraduate level, four in Europe and four in Australia; the consortium, which is funded by the Australian Government and the European Commission, will exchange students and teach master classes at UNESCO Paris and Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory. The Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific has conducted major pieces of research for the Australian Heritage Commission/Council and Department of the Environment and Heritage, including thematic studies on 'Creating a Democracy' and 'Australians at War' for use in compiling the National Heritage list.

I would like to discuss with the Commission the following aspects of Australia's Historic Heritage Places:

1. The international importance of conservation management expertise acquired by heritage professionals in Australia and the ways in which this might be better harnessed to strengthen Australia's role in the Asia-Pacific region. This is especially relevant in today's context in which other nations are increasingly using cultural heritage activities as a form of foreign aid designed to raise their perceived status and improve their political leverage in the region.
2. The high international standing of Australian educational programs in cultural heritage management and the ways in which this might be built upon to the benefit of both Australian students and international students through increased Australian Government funding and policy direction. Again this is particularly important at a time in which competing institutions from other countries are beginning to move into the region as educational suppliers.
3. The need to strengthen articulation within the Australian heritage system (World, national, state/territory and municipal), including in terms of heritage listing criteria and thresholds, thematic approaches to building up the lists, and the need for a strong research basis supporting the nomination and monitoring processes. Effective articulation also requires a greater degree of agreed conformity between the states/territories regarding levels and types of performance by government authorities.
4. The potential to expand the cultural tourism industry in Australia catering for both domestic and international visitors and the need to ensure that the management of Australia's historic heritage places is based on principles of sustainability, that the definition of cultural heritage used by the tourism industry and related government departments is a broad and inclusive one, and that operators in the tourism industry, including bus drivers and guides, are better educated in relation to the heritage significance of the places to be visited.

Yours sincerely

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