

# **REGIONAL GALLERIES SCOPING STUDY FINAL REPORT**

**Prepared for Museums and Galleries NSW by Australia Street Company with Admin Art**

**21 October 2005**



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regional galleries play an important role in the cultural life of the community and as the sector develops, funding agencies as well as local government managers are increasingly concerned to understand and assess the current sector environment and to assess future needs and opportunities. In 2004 the NSW Ministry for the Arts (now Arts NSW) provided funds for Museums and Galleries NSW to manage a Scoping Study of the sector and in late 2004, the Australia Street Company with Admin Art was commissioned to undertake the research. Although this Scoping Study was commissioned by the Ministry for the Arts, it will also be very relevant to local government as a key partner in the management of regional galleries.

The data and analysis presented in the Scoping Study presents a long-overdue analysis of the regional gallery sector across New South Wales. The Study presents an overview of the sector, detailing diverse models of delivery and uneven levels of access across sixteen geographic regions. Although there still remain significant gaps in the available data, the Study never-the-less provides a snapshot detailing the need for active collaboration between councils as well as support for robust research programs which improve strategic planning, inform standard setting and performance review and promote policies that will ensure long-term sustainability and viability.

The information collected provides a beginning and hopefully, a work in progress. Although much valuable data has been collected, it is only a first step, providing insights into the sector's performance and practices and setting the scene for the development of strategies for the future.

The Study provides an opportunity to reflect on the current scale of operations of the sector and to consider future support models and mechanisms particularly in the nature and scale of local government support.

This Scoping Study indicates that the regional gallery sector in New South Wales is well established and growing. It has been relatively well supported and resourced over many decades by the NSW local government sector which on average spends as a minimum, over \$4M per annum on regional gallery activities. This support and recognition has been crucial in establishing the sector as a viable component of local government business.

The sector receives significant levels of financial and advocacy support from the NSW Ministry for the Arts and this support is well-established and acknowledged. The State government also provides critical arms-length operational and sector wide development support through MGnsw. Limited Federal funding support is sourced from DCITA through the Visions of Australia program as well as through the Australia Council's Visual Arts and Crafts Board.

The models established for support of the sector by the NSW Ministry for the Arts, and in particular the role played by MGnsw, are regarded as best-practice models by other Australian States. From the available data it is clear that the evolution of robust funding policies and responsive support programs for the sector over time by the Ministry in partnership with the NSW local government sector have provided a relatively firm foundation for the future. The Ministry's Visual Arts and Crafts Committee's funding policies and resulting programs of support are equitable, objective and accessible. They are relatively flexible and have the capacity to integrate any new directions that may emerge from this Study. They set the scene for ensuring the sustainability of the sector.

There are 34 galleries across the State representing considerable diversity in terms of facility size, scale of operations and range of programming. The sector attracted over 1,225,365 visitors in 2004 and manages collections valued at over \$14 M. The average annual cost of operating a regional gallery is \$434,089. On average regional galleries employ 3.3 full time staff and 4.3 part time staff. This varies depending on the capacity and level of commitment of each council.

The provision of regional gallery programs and services varies across the State and access is uneven with significant differentiation between the State's 16 planning regions. Catchment populations vary from one gallery serving a regional population of 18,200 in the Southern Tablelands to 6 galleries serving a regional population of 687,200 in the Hunter and 6 galleries serving a regional population of 1.7M in Western Sydney.

A summary snapshot of the sector follows, based on the data collected during this Study.

## SECTOR SNAPSHOT

CATEGORY	DATA
Number of regional galleries in NSW	34
Number contributing to this Study	32 (2 galleries were without Directors during the period of the Study).
Oldest gallery	Broken Hill established 1904
Tamworth established	1919
Youngest gallery	Hawkesbury established June 2005
Average local government net annual operating cost per gallery	\$434,089
Approximate level of local government sector support 1992 to 2005	\$63,577,026
Approximate level of Ministry for the Arts funding to the sector 1992 to 2005	\$21,501,227
Approximate level of Australia Council support to the sector 2000 to 2005	\$350,079
Average opening hours per week	38 (23 out of 32 are closed on Mondays)
Total visitors to 32 galleries in 2004	1,225,365
Total school group visits in 2004	2,427 groups (based on data for 12 galleries only)
Average number of workshop programs per gallery in 2004	98 (up 42% from 2003)
Total insured value of collections 2005	\$142,577,598
Total items in NSW regional gallery collections	42, 405
Average number of one-off, internally curated exhibitions per gallery per annum.	16
Most common governance/ management structure	14 with "Board" and 12 with Advisory Committee plus line management. 5 council line management only, reporting direct to Council.
Average staff numbers	3.3 full time and/or 4.03 part-time (2004 data)
Number of galleries with 2 or fewer staff positions.	6
Galleries with current Strategic Plan/Business Plan	15
Number of galleries with active collections	22
Galleries with no collection	5
Number of galleries providing digitised access to collections	15
Number of galleries with research programs	14
Number with audience research programs	6
Number of galleries with formal partnerships	22
Number of galleries receiving awards/ public recognition since 2002	6

Directors interviewed in this Study indicated a wide range of ambitious forward plans for their galleries. They were enthusiastic about the future and keen to position their institutions as central resources in the cultural life of their regions. Plans include capital works projects, programs for new and emerging audiences, specialist staff appointments, new partnerships and sponsorships and extended hours of operation. Many identified opportunities to take on expanded cultural roles within their councils.

However data collected in this Study also provides a reality check on the sector, presenting a picture where information is scarce, systems underdeveloped, formal collaborations are relatively rare and planning and policy limited. The lack of reliable data and the absence of minimum standards to inform planning and program review is a critical gap in the sector.

This Study is therefore only a first step in the ongoing need to establish and maintain information to inform policy and funding support for the sector. The identification of building blocks and strategies will be critical in ensuring the sector's sustainability in the short term but also into the future.

## **SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS**

This Report begins with a snapshot of the sector providing for the first time new information on funding levels, staffing resources, collection value and size, governance structures, visitation levels and scale of programs and exhibitions. The Study identifies key planning issues for consideration based on policy trends in the sector including experiences in Queensland, Victoria, New Zealand, North America and England.

These issues include:

- Building cycles
- Sector investment
- Planning for capital works
- Travelling exhibitions
- Training and development
- Scholarship and research
- Community cultural development
- Strategic planning
- Program evaluation and performance measurement
- Partnerships
- Collections including specialisations

## **KEY FINDINGS**

1. The regional gallery sector in NSW is diverse, made up of at least three distinct types of galleries. These include:
  - Regional galleries with high visitation levels, at least 6 full time staff, above average annual funding and diverse programming. (5 galleries).
  - Regional galleries with 3 to 5 full time staff, modest visitation, average annual funding and an active exhibition program (24 galleries).
  - Regional galleries with two or less full time staff, below average funding, low visitation and a modest annual exhibition program (5).

This variety in delivery standards and diverse geographic spread presents strategic opportunities for the sector to work closely with local government to strengthen gaps and to build on established models of excellence.

2. Regional galleries no longer require collections as a basis for their existence. New operational models are emerging where education, participation and community engagement are just as important as collection development, management and interpretation. Overall collection management across the sector is well managed and resourced.
  - 22 galleries have active collections whilst 5 galleries have no collection
  - 55% of collections were assessed as being of moderate State significance and 77.8% were assessed as being at a good level of condition and intactness.
  - 24 galleries indicated that they had special collections
  - 10 galleries acquire works via acquisitive competition
  - Most galleries indicated an interest in acquiring works by local/ regional artists
  - Emerging collection areas include the works of multicultural artists and local Indigenous art

- 15 galleries indicated that their collection was digitised
- 87.5% provide information and referral services particularly in relation to their collections.

3. Gaps in data are significant in the area of gallery programming and more research is urgently needed to complete the roadmap. Anecdotal evidence suggests that galleries support a range of programs but limited data is available in this Study on internally curated exhibitions, audience development and workshop programs. (Based on the data available the following is presented as a guide only).

- On average 16 internally curated exhibitions are held per gallery per year
- Average of 9.5 audience development programs
- Average number of workshops per gallery per year is 98.

4. Trends in the sector indicate that there is increasing pressure to measure and improve performance in order to identify and demonstrate effective and efficient ways of achieving objectives. However performance measurement in the sector is relatively underdeveloped and only three galleries were able to demonstrate robust and stand out programs of evaluation.

The measures used across the sector are important to overall performance assessment but overall the level of engagement and critical assessment is not sufficient. It is not clear from the Study how galleries utilise the resulting analysis.

Performance measures currently used by the sector include:

- 35.3% evaluate permanent exhibitions
- 20.6% evaluate workshop/ studio programs
- 41.2% evaluate income targets
- 23.5% evaluate repeat visits
- 32.4% carry out an annual visitor survey
- 14.7% evaluate school visits
- 68.8% count number of school groups
- 50% indicated that they count the impact of their programs
- 21.9% count number of local visitors
- 10% count international visitors

5. Comparative data collected in a systematic way can yield significant results. The development of standards for data collection and the maintenance of that data over time is crucial to the development of benchmarks. It is also crucial to fostering improved understanding of the sector and improving sector performance.

Although this Study has provided new insights into the regional gallery sector, gaps in data remain. In order to better understand the sector in its context and to plan for a sustainable future, the following areas require further and ongoing analysis:

- financial data including level of earned income, grants, bequests
- staffing levels including equivalent full time and part time staff
- program development including specific audience development and education programs
- impact assessment and social benefits

6. A number of practical steps/strategies have been identified during the Study which would provide much needed operational support for the sector. The steps have the potential to have a positive impact on both individual gallery as well as sector-wide performance. These suggestions for consideration (see below) may be best coordinated on behalf of the sector by MGNSW in consultation with local government. The following strategies are proposed for consideration:

- Support for the design and coordination of a rigorous research based audience development program
- Continued support for touring exhibition programs
- Support the development and upgrade of short term Artist in residence programs that focus on engagement with the local community as well on production.
- Support and strengthen internship and mentorship programs between regional galleries and major State galleries.

- Review opportunities to integrate regional collection planning and management via galleries, museums, libraries and archives.
- Cultivate regional gallery roles in lifelong learning that cross institutional boundaries e.g. between museums, galleries and public libraries.
- Develop an advocacy program to local government that raises awareness of the crucial contribution made by strategic facility pre-planning including feasibility studies in ensuring ongoing facility sustainability and viability.
- Develop a best practice guide to governance that would assist councils to establish preferred management models for their galleries.
- Expand seminar/ workshop programs that support the development and management of volunteer programs in anticipation of a growth of demand in the sector.
- Develop workshops that provide best practice information on the benefits of formal partnership programs.
- Support the development of ongoing programs that assist galleries to better document their collections as part of the national cultural heritage in consultation with the Collections Council of Australia. This might take the form of skills development, IT hardware/ software systems support, collection systems, awareness raising and promotion.
- Explore the development of a state-wide program that provides affordable and appropriate digital technology and training as a start to all galleries and therefore improves collection access for the community as well as for gallery management.

7. The raw data collected in this Study has formed the basis for the design of a Regional Galleries database. The database provides a crucial building block for the sector and builds on the files maintained at MGnsw. The development of minimum standards for evaluation and performance measurement is crucial for decision makers and for funding bodies. Resources and leadership are needed to design, develop and maintain a database of accurate and relevant statistical information to inform decision making and to influence strategic directions.

- Establish a Working Party in consultation with local government to design standard data collection systems across the sector as a basis for future planning and advocacy.
- Develop an annual state-wide survey of gallery visitors, as a first step, based on a standard template for use in each gallery, results evaluated centrally and communicated in a usable form to gallery management.
- Facility data collected by MGnsw needs to be updated and maintained as a crucial planning resource for local councils.

# INTRODUCTION

The NSW Ministry for the Arts through its Visual Arts and Crafts Committee commissioned this Study in late 2004 as a means to better understand the current and future needs of the regional galleries sector across NSW. The Study is being managed by Museums and Galleries NSW and is being undertaken by the Australia Street Company working with Admin Arts. A Steering Committee was established to support and direct the Project with membership drawn from the Ministry for the Arts and Museums and Galleries NSW. Membership of the Steering Committee is provided at Appendix 1.

The Study provides a snapshot of the sector in order that the Visual Arts and Crafts program of the Ministry can review its policy objectives in relation to funding and support. The data gathered will contribute to ensuring that the building blocks are in place for the development of a sustainable regional gallery network in the short, medium and long term. Ultimately the information collected in the Study will be taken into consideration when the Ministry's policy and planning frameworks are reviewed.

## METHODOLOGY

The Study has been undertaken in 3 stages with Stage 1 requiring decisions in relation to criteria for inclusion. Stage 1 also took into account data collection and software considerations, the development of pilot data collection sites and collection of core data for every gallery via desktop research and web analysis. This included scanning key files and documents held at the NSW Ministry for the Arts and the review of databases maintained at Museums and Galleries NSW.

During Stage 1 and following the pilot testing of the data collection worksheet with three regional galleries, face to face and phone interviews were conducted with most Gallery Directors in order to capture more complex, higher order information relevant to this Study. This was a time consuming but effective means of establishing more detailed information in relation to each Gallery.

A sample data collection worksheet is provided at Appendix 2.

The overall approach taken, consisting of desktop research combined with phone interview, proved to be an effective means of data collection. Interruptions to already stretched management resources at all of the galleries was minimised and at the same time the lead consultant had an opportunity to make direct contact with gallery directors and to develop a better understanding of each gallery's operating environment. This was invaluable in identifying policy options for the future.

As part of Stage 1 in late April 2005 a briefing session was provided to the Ministry's Visual Arts and Crafts Committee. The briefing provided an opportunity for verbal feedback to the Committee on progress to date including a preliminary identification of emerging issues. Stage 1 concluded with the presentation of a Progress Report to the Steering Committee.

Stage 2 of the Project included data entry in relation to each Gallery and the verification of data with each Gallery Director. It also included analysis and evaluation of data relating to each Gallery in order to identify key issues and trends for consideration in reviewing Ministry policies. Stage 2 also incorporated a scan of interstate and relevant international gallery support models in order to identify best practice policy and funding frameworks for the future. A draft Study Report was prepared as a component of Stage 2. It included discussion of key issues, presentation of the findings of the best practice and policy trends scan as well as proposed recommendations for future policy and program consideration.

Following discussion and feedback from the Study Steering Committee, the Study Report was reviewed and revised, data was verified, comparative data collected on policies from arts funding bodies in Queensland and Victoria and recommendations were finalised for consideration. A briefing on Study outcomes was provided to the Ministry for the Arts, Visual Arts and Crafts Committee at this Stage. The Final Report was presented in September 2005.

# DEFINING THE STUDY

This Study has been undertaken in the context of global debate about just what is a gallery/ museum. Until the development of the Internet and the emerging impact of information technology and telecommunications on actual and virtual museum and gallery environments, the function-based definition adopted by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) has provided a basis for defining the sector. The ICOM definition reflects collection-based functions as well as interpretation and education. This Study has not sought to redefine the sector but rather recognises that in NSW, regional galleries may or may not include responsibilities for collection management. Regional galleries in NSW are however linked by a universal commitment to exhibiting art and to the development of programs which encourage a greater understanding of art in the community.

At the same time this Study recognises that institutions that are referred to as regional galleries may include city art galleries, art centres, art museums, arts centres and cultural centres. This Study includes all of these types of regional galleries. It also includes regional galleries that are co-located and in some instances integrated with museums. Where possible the Study has sought to separate regional art gallery operations data from museum functions.

Taking into account the above factors, a criteria was developed as a basis for the identifying those institutions eligible for inclusion in the Study. Based on discussion with members of the Steering Committee and with key staff of Museums and Galleries NSW (MGnsw), it was agreed that the Study would focus on the 34 regional art galleries supported and maintained by local government and managed by professional and qualified staff. This includes art galleries that may not be directly managed by local government but which may be provided with a building and/or are subsidised by their local council. Under this definition artist run initiatives and volunteer run galleries have not been included.

# GALLERY RESPONSE

Fourteen Galleries verified the data gathered in the Worksheets distributed to each Gallery for checking in early June 2005. 4 galleries failed to return data sheets by the cut-off date and 2 galleries were without Directors for most of the period of the Study. Higher order data for those galleries was not provided and their core data was not verified.

# REGIONAL GALLERY POLICY TRENDS SUMMARY

In order to inform the discussion of key issues and the development of recommendations for the future a scan of local, State, national and relevant international policy trends in the sector was carried out as part of this Study. The analysis included relevant initiatives at the Federal and State level in Australia and a brief analysis of recent initiatives in the regional gallery/museum sector in England, Canada and New Zealand. Data has been identified via desktop research and, in the case of Queensland and Victoria, through interview with staff at State funding bodies as well as with sector organisations – Museum and Gallery Services, Queensland (M+GSQ) and Public Gallery Association of Victoria (PGAV).

A summary of these trends is provided below. More detailed data is provided at Appendix 5.

## SUMMARY

The following key recent research outcomes and policy trends in the sector have been identified:

- support for touring exhibition programs is crucial to the sector since it provides significant local benefit
- artist in residence programs that focus on engagement with the local community as well as on production provide economic as well as cultural benefits
- programs that foster and encourage the development of a skilled workforce in the sector are critical
- support for internships and mentorships between regional galleries and major State galleries fosters opportunities for skills development and encourages collaborative programming
- funding programs should be competitive, equitable and quality focused, open to all institutions in order to encourage new ideas and to foster best practice across the sector
- arms-length peak sector bodies when well resourced and managed, can provide improved capacity to deliver strategic programs and services in comparison to membership-based organisations
- funding programs should embrace all gallery models and not just those that are collection-based
- opportunities to integrate regional collection planning and management between local-government supported galleries, museums, libraries and archives will improve access and foster conservation and preservation
- more research is needed into models that encourage regional leadership and collaboration and their potential for improving efficiency and effectiveness outcomes
- opportunities to establish networks that focus on managing and improving access to subject based collections should be fostered
- support for rigorous research into audience development is an emerging focus
- programs that cultivate gallery roles in lifelong learning and that cross institutional boundaries at the local level can provide building blocks for the future

# REGIONAL GALLERY SECTOR SNAPSHOT

The following data provides a snapshot of the NSW regional gallery sector. It has been drawn from data collected in this Study and provides a summary of the capacity and current status of the sector overall.

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Number of galleries with 2 or fewer staff positions.	6
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Number of galleries with active collections	22
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Number with audience research programs	6
Number of galleries with formal partnerships	22
Number of galleries receiving awards/ public recognition since 2002	6

# KEY ISSUES

The following issues have been identified for consideration based on policy research, discussions with key stakeholders, analysis of the data collected and other sector documentation and research studies.

## BUILDING CYCLES

Data indicates that there have been real cycles of building and development in the sector. Although the first gallery included in this Study was established in 1904 (Broken Hill) and the most recent addition to the sector officially opened in July 2005 (Hawkesbury) there have been certain periods when the development of galleries has undergone a boom. In the 1980s and particularly around the time of the Bicentennial celebrations 15 regional galleries were established. Twenty years on another building frenzy seems to be underway with 7 galleries established across the State since 2000. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that at least another 5 are in the pipeline in the following local government areas - Blue Mountains, Ku-ring-gai, Cessnock (Kurri Kurri), Singleton and Hornsby.

This significant expansion of the sector through capital development projects presents policy and development issues for the Ministry as well as for MGNSW and local councils. New building designs as well as management models are being developed as part of this expansion which are already presenting policy and funding issues for consideration. These include galleries which have no spatial allowance for collection storage.

Recent anecdotal evidence from Gallery directors suggests that galleries inevitably develop responsibilities for collections over time due to donations, new programs, bequests etc. Recently local government has embraced opportunities to co-locate galleries via linked/ shared foyers with other cultural facilities such as libraries and museums. This co-location presents both opportunities and threats in terms of service-delivery, funding, programming, staffing structures and facility management.

## PLANNING FOR CAPITAL WORKS

As well as the development of new galleries, research indicates that at least 13 of the 34 galleries considered in this Study are anticipating extensions or new buildings in the next 5 years. In the case of extensions the focus seems to be on the addition of workshop and/or storage space and has usually been costed at under \$100,000. There are exceptions of course and a small number of galleries have benefited from considerable injection of capital grant funding for extensions and/or refurbishment.

It is of some concern that many gallery directors reported that they had only limited information in relation to the impact of proposed capital improvements on staffing, budgets or programs. Few councils seem to have access to expert, objective and well documented feasibility studies. Planning information seemed sketchy. A "she'll be right" approach still seems to prevail despite Ministry and MGNSW support and advice to councils in this area over many years.

## INVESTMENT IN REGIONAL GALLERIES

Spending by the Federal, State and local government sector on regional galleries supports both programming and cultural projects as well as the development and building of infrastructure assets. Historically it has been local government that has provided the leadership and ongoing budget support for both capital works and recurrent operational resources for the sector. And this continuing commitment and support over decades has been crucial in establishing regional galleries alongside the public library as one of the significant cultural facilities in local communities.

Most councils also recognise the regional gallery's role in tourism as well as in economic development and the recognition of these diverse roles and impacts has ensured ongoing support over time. Data gathered during this Study indicates that at a minimum, total NSW local government support for the sector from 1992 to 2005 was \$63,577,026 or \$4,890,540 per annum.

Although galleries are generally regarded as providing services to a designated 'region' made up a number of local government areas, in reality most regional galleries are supported financially by just one council. Annual commitments to operational subsidy by more than one council in a region are rare. Where they do or have occurred, the contributions are seldom equitable; they are rarely based on population size or visitation/impact data.

The NSW State Government through its funding and advocacy programs has established a subsidy framework that supports and enhances local government support for the sector. In particular the provision of planning advice, capital works funding, staffing support and program and project funding has had a significant influence in ensuring long-term local government recognition and support.

NSW Ministry for the Arts direct support to local councils for regional galleries between 1992 to 2005 was, at a minimum, \$21,501,227. Note: data collected in this Study in relation to grants is incomplete and therefore should be taken as indicative only.

The available data includes capital as well as operational/program support. Over time the development of a strong partnership between the local government sector and the State government has been a crucial building block in developing sector sustainability.

Federal government support for regional galleries is small when compared to the level of investment by the local and State government sectors. Limited funding is available through DCITA's Visions of Australia support for touring exhibitions. Some councils in NSW have also been successful in attracting capital works funds from the Department of Transport and Regional Services.

As the Federal Government's arts policy and funding agency, the Australia Council also provides opportunities for regional gallery funding mainly through the Visual Arts and Crafts Board. Data provided by the Australia Council for this Study indicates that its support to individual NSW regional galleries between 2000 and 2005 totalled \$350,079. 15 grants were awarded over that period.

The galleries received grants to support the following activities:

- exhibition development
- public art planning and production
- audience development
- symposiums
- artists workshops

Sector funding is also provided by the Ministry for the Arts and the Australia Council through support for the operations and programs of Museums and Galleries NSW. This includes support for NETS from the Australia Council (\$61,000 pa) as well as funding for sector conferences and research programs.

## **TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS**

Many of the galleries include travelling exhibitions as core components of their annual program. Access to these exhibitions is appreciated and valued despite the inherent management problems that travelling exhibitions present. At least 2 gallery directors noted that whilst they appreciated travelling programs such as the Archibald Prize and Art Express, they would appreciate an increased focus on regional touring from the Art Gallery of NSW (AGNSW). They commented that the Gallery has a very restricted approach to support for the regions and that it should increase its programming in this area. Regional communities are responsive to Art Gallery of NSW exhibitions and appreciate having access to its collection via travelling exhibitions. An advocacy program on behalf of NSW regional galleries may be needed in order to change the AGNSW's perceived attitude towards regional touring.

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Whilst most galleries have access to training and development funds it seems that this is an area where resources have been reducing over many years. Regional travel costs have also risen dramatically in that time. This has resulted in many galleries

(particularly the smaller galleries) increasingly finding it difficult to participate in professional conferences, to attend seminars and to undertake continuing education. Many galleries rely on the pooled Council training fund to support them in these activities and shifts in council spending priorities in recent years has resulted in reduced funding and/or stiff competition for training and staff development. A number of galleries are missing out as a result.

Research indicates that most of the larger galleries participate in mentorship and intern programs. These programs are highly regarded and galleries generally appreciate the opportunities to contribute despite the additional responsibilities and costs that these programs bring. It is crucial that any program that supports the development of exchanges and internships also provides funds to replace those staff at their home institution in order to dilute local impact and to ensure program continuity.

## **SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH**

Very few regional galleries reported that they have the capacity to undertake higher order research. Those that do (and they are mainly the larger galleries with at least 3 to 4 full time staff) often rely on project partners to contribute to the research such as a local university or another art gallery/ cultural institution. The majority of research projects identified in the Study either focused on research linked to the development of a major exhibition or on specific aspects of audience development. In most cases funding for the research has come from the Ministry for the Arts.

Feedback associated with this question indicates that the middle-sized galleries and larger institutions (with at least 3 full time staff or more) would welcome the opportunities to undertake primary research into areas of interest or into issues that might affect program development and audience development. However they consistently reported that their councils would only rarely support these initiatives and that Ministry for the Arts funds were limited in this area.

## **COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Most of the smaller galleries indicated that they were “distinctive and unique” due to their programming focus on local artists and to their active involvement with the local community through innovative programming. In a few cases these links take the form of active outreach programs as well as close and formal links to schools and community groups.

However in a significant number of cases the links and relationships are based on Friends and volunteer support and the administration of a temporary exhibition schedule that maintains the status quo of traditional audiences. Lip service seems to be paid to developing imaginative programs that foster the involvement of local artists working across diverse media and attract new audiences. Artists in residency schemes/ artist run workshops/ master classes/ links to community development programs etc could really impact in small communities but such imaginative connections do not seem to be widespread.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Most galleries indicated that they had a strategic plan or a business plan. In many cases directors however indicated that the plans were a result of council corporate reporting requirements, that their plan was out of date and that goals and performance evaluation were just processes that had to be gone through. Not many of the smaller galleries seem to appreciate that a strategic plan is a tool that supports policy and advocacy and when well crafted, maintained and promoted can provide a crucial device for gaining support.

Further, few if any directors indicated that they were taking into account demographic trends in planning their operations for the future. Data collected through this Study indicates that some coastal councils will experience high growth over the next 20 years and that current audience patterns will shift dramatically as Australian society ages. Other regional and rural areas will experience population decline. In general these shifts will start to impact dramatically around 2012 to 2018. They will impact on programming, on income generation capacity and on staffing. From the data collected in this Study there is little evidence that demographic trend analysis is on the sector's planning agenda.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

Other than the large regional galleries the evaluation and measurement of effectiveness seems to be underdeveloped across the sector. All galleries collect basic output/ throughput data such as audience levels including total annual visitor levels, attendance at workshops and events but in most cases data collection does not extend further. Some galleries keep exhibition focused comments books, few undertake annual surveys, and few have allocated resources to target-setting and tracking progress as a planning priority.

A number of the smaller galleries when advised in interview during this Study that media promotion can be measured through estimating the dollar value of column inches over a year, thought they'd give that a try. Generally performance evaluation seems to be an area for development in line with standard setting projects in the museum and library sectors generally.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

Directors were asked specifically to identify if they had 'formal' partnerships with other organisations such as schools, universities, local businesses, other galleries, libraries, the media, community organisations etc. In this context 'formal' implied "a jointly signed written agreement documenting a commitment to work together on agreed projects with agreed objectives".<sup>1</sup>

Many directors indicated that they had project-based sponsorship partnerships and that these were one-offs negotiated on an as-needs basis. Formal partnerships based on a written agreement such as a Memorandum of Understanding seem to be much less common and many of the smaller galleries suggested that this 'was just not their style'. Those smaller galleries that had pursued this mechanism for extending support were more than happy with the results and spoke highly of the benefits to both sides. This appears to be an area of activity that could be more widely promoted and developed.

## **COLLECTIONS**

There is a diversity of collection management experience across NSW regional galleries. As noted above in relation to building cycles, some galleries do not have a permanent collection although their councils do. In other cases galleries have custodianship of extensive collections of national significance (3 have more than 4,000 items). One very small gallery has an equally small collection (31 items). Twenty two galleries indicated that they are actively collecting.

Size of collection does not necessarily imply significance and the assignment of significance is an area for further development. The opportunity provided by this Study for directors to rate their collections according to cultural and geographic significance presented some challenges for quite a number of directors. Assessing significance may be an area requiring advocacy as well as skills development for the sector.

## **COLLECTION SPECIALISATION**

The assignment of specialisation across the sector seems to be an established tradition. Specialisations seem to generally reflect themes, subjects, individual artist or chronological period. Themes can be linked to local distinctiveness and sense of place. In some cases collection specialisation has been reported anecdotally as influenced by the personal preference of a previous director or the donation in the past of a private collection. See Table Appendix 3.

This generally ad hoc development seems to have resulted in some galleries having a broad shopping list for potential acquisitions. Directors in many instances also said they were actively collecting but that they had only limited funds. Annual purchased acquisitions across the sector seem low (average seems to be 3-4 works per gallery). Levels of donations seem to be growing and may be being influenced by increased public awareness and increased advocacy by directors of the benefits of the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme.

One director reported that the Gallery has been negotiating with a potential seller/donor for an "Australian couture" collection. The potential impact of this collection on the gallery's operations (storage, staffing, conservation, display etc) seemed spectacularly underdeveloped. Further research into the quality of collection management/ development policies overall is needed across the sector.

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<sup>1</sup> As communicated during interviews with each director in relation to Question 26 on the worksheet.

# SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF STUDY DATA

Due to the complexities of data collection across the sector there are still remain significant gaps in the data available for analysis. The information below is therefore a beginning and hopefully, a work in progress. Although much valuable data has been collected, it is only a first step, providing insights into the sector's performance and practices and setting the scene for the development of strategies for the future.

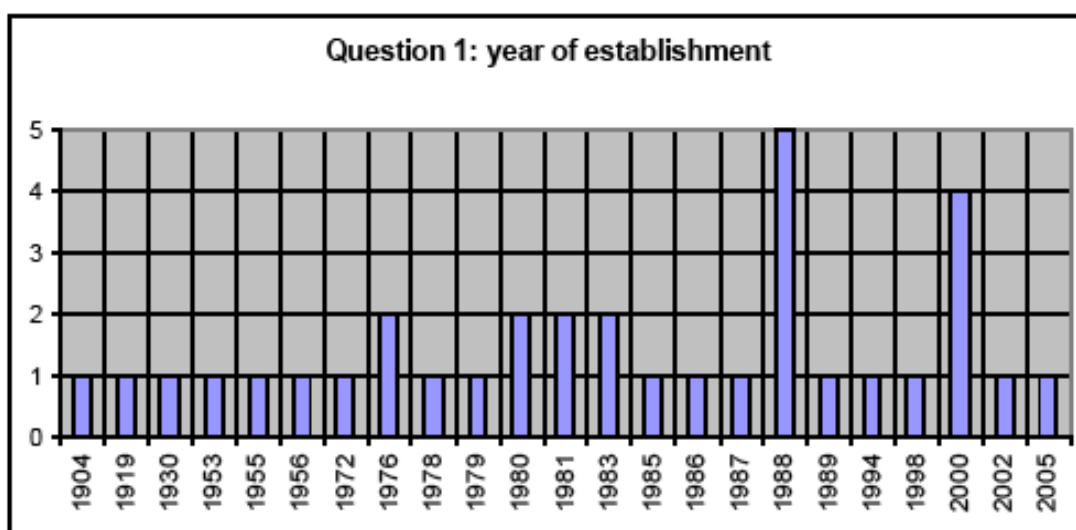
In addition to key contact data (name of facility, address, phone, fax, email, name of Gallery Director) data was collected across 21 topic categories. Information collected in each category was aggregated across the sector and is documented below. It is based on data collected via in-depth research of Ministry for the Arts files and MGNSW databases, as well as interviews with the Directors of all but 3 galleries. Once the data had been collated onto the database each gallery's information was returned to the Director for checking, verification and update where needed. More complex data was not collected for 2 galleries due to key staff vacancy over the period of the Study. 4 Galleries failed to return their verified data by the close off date.

The raw data collected has formed the basis for the design of a Regional Gallery database. The database is compatible with files maintained at MGNSW. It is expected that MGNSW will maintain and update the data on a regular basis.

## QUESTION 1 YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT

### COMMENT

Building and development cycles have been noted earlier in the Issues Section, especially growth that results from the availability of significant State and Federal Government Capital funding grants. These have been associated with national celebrations/ events such as the Bicentennial and more recently the Centenary of Federation. From 1978 to 1988 sixteen galleries were established, with six of those galleries opening in the Bicentennial year 1988 and four new galleries around the Centenary of Federation in 2000.



2005 has seen another burst of activity including refurbishments and extensions, new facilities and in late July the opening of a new regional in the Hawkesbury LGA.

### COMMENT

Anecdotally it seems that most councils, once persuaded that their area/region needs a gallery, seem to focus more on raising capital funds than on the analysis of the potential recurrent impact on operational budgets. This pattern is supported later in this Section when considering statements on future plans. Eleven galleries indicated that they were planning major extensions or new buildings in the next 5 years. However, only 4 indicated that feasibility studies, economic impact or business plans had been developed to inform operational planning.

## **QUESTION 2      LOCAL AND REGIONAL POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

Catchment populations for regional galleries range from a local population of 13,147 in Cowra to a regional Sydney metro population of 2.0M for Manly Art Gallery and Museum. Gathering accurate regional demographic data for this Study has been challenging due to recent council amalgamations, boundary adjustments and diverse definitions of regions applied by individual councils. Data is largely based on ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing and updated where possible via Local Government and Shires Association files.

All the 31 Gallery Directors interviewed, indicated that their gallery was distinctive due to its focus on supporting local and regional artists. Many (38.7%) also indicated a key role in building local and regional audiences. This presents complex challenges for many galleries as they juggle their local and regional roles, their potential as a tourist destination for inter-state and international visitors and in the case of many of the regional galleries, their relations with nearby galleries e.g. Western Sydney supports 6 regional galleries with each claiming a regional population of 1.7M. The Northern Rivers has 4 galleries with a regional population of 336,954. The Orana region of western NSW has one gallery with a regional population of 131,264.

The data indicates significant differentiation in provision across the State and provides further information in relation to the potential for the development of new operational and/or developmental models such as regional gallery clusters, centres of excellence, twinning and partnerships. The data has provided an opportunity to update the State-wide regional gallery map produced by MGNSW in 2003. See Appendix 6.

The map demonstrates uneven patterns of development across the State with significant variety across populations served, staffing and volunteer structures. It provides a firm basis for the development of sector standards to inform policy and planning for the future.

### **POPULATION TRENDS**

ABS data analysed during this Study projects significant population shifts across NSW. This includes some rural regions where the population is expected to decline whilst other regions (generally coastal) will experience significant increase. Projections in relation to key age groups such as young people or older adults will also impact on gallery programming. The data indicates for example high levels of young people in key population centres such as Port Macquarie, Gosford and Western Sydney within an overall trend towards an aging population.

However only two Directors out of the 31 interviewed, indicated that they were monitoring population trends and anticipating demographic change that would impact on their planning and programming over the next 20 years.

### **COMMENT**

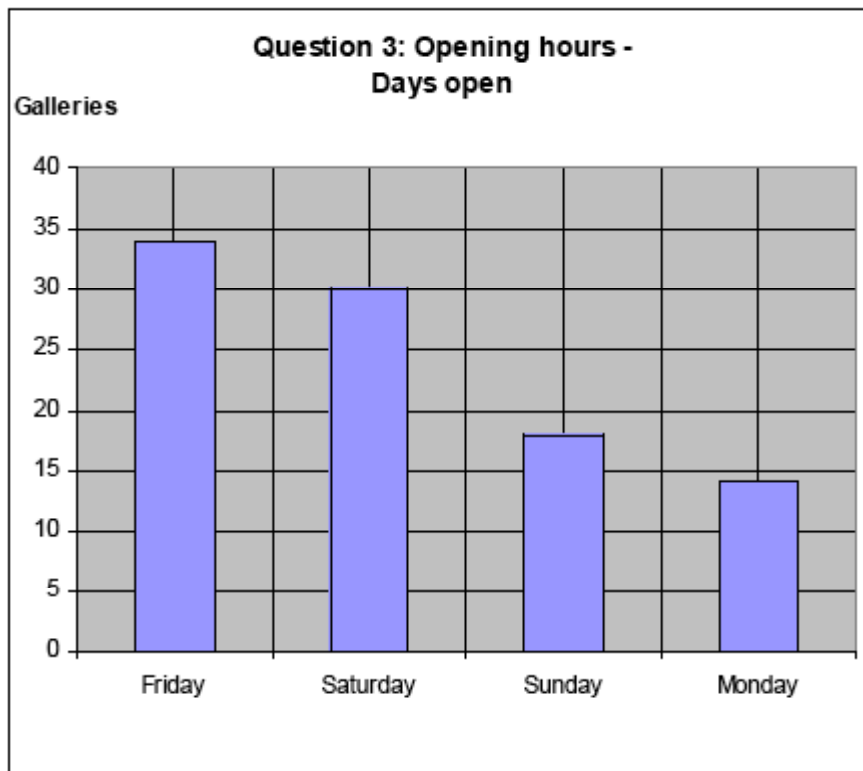
The role of demographic analysis and long term strategic planning seems undervalued across the sector. Opportunities to raise awareness in the sector of the value and usefulness of demographic data should be encouraged along with opportunities to develop skills in simple trend analysis.

The Map provided at Appendix 6 presents an overview of the sector, detailing diverse models of delivery and uneven levels of access across sixteen geographic regions. Although there still remain significant gaps in the available data, the Study never-the-less provides a snapshot detailing the need for active collaboration between councils as well as support for robust research programs which improve strategic planning, inform standard setting and performance review and promote policies that will ensure long-term sustainability and viability.

## **QUESTION 3      OPENING HOURS**

The median level hours of opening across 34 galleries is 35.9 hours per week. Only 9 galleries are open 7 days per week. Most galleries (68.8%) are closed one week day (either Monday or Tuesday). 34.4% galleries close at 4pm on weekdays.

Opening hours are dictated in most places, by financial resources. The payment of overtime for weekend work and the need for staff to have time to carry out essential backroom duties presents significant impact on the planning for opening hours. Smaller galleries with only one or two staff utilize volunteers for weekend opening whilst others, flying in the face of Occupational Health and Safety standards, are forced to open the gallery with only one staff member on duty. Standard practice should require a minimum of two staff on frontline duty at all times.



## COMMENT

Many galleries indicated that a review of opening hours is underway or planned and that weekend hours were being reviewed. Traditionally key flagship galleries/museums in most Australian major cities have been open 7 days but due to staffing costs most NSW regional galleries are closed at least one day per week. Despite visitor expectations, it is unlikely that all NSW regional galleries would have the resources to open across a 7 day span of operation. Therefore objective qualitative and quantitative research that identifies accurate visitation patterns (including on weekends) would inform decision making across the sector.

## QUESTION 4 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

From responses it seems that 43.8% of galleries have a 'Board' of management. However the so-called Board's status is unclear from the data available i.e. whether it has an arm's length relationship from Council with independent Directors or operates as a formal Advisory Board /Committee of Council with community and/or specialist honorary Board members appointed by Council.

Data collected indicates that as an alternative and more traditional structure, 37.5% of galleries have access to an Advisory Committee established under Section 355 of the Local Government Act. In most cases the body lasts for the life of the Council (4 years) and is reviewed at the time of the election of each new council.

15.6% of regional galleries are managed under line management, reporting to a senior Council manager or member of the executive management team. Some galleries enjoy both governance models – access to an Advisory Committee and reporting responsibilities through Council line management.

## COMMENT

The status of a number of galleries in relation to reporting mechanisms is unclear from the data and more information is needed to clarify the information received and to identify best practice in applying effective governance models.

## QUESTION 5 STAFFING

Accurate and comprehensive data relating to staffing and volunteer levels in NSW regional galleries has not been forthcoming in this Study. Ministry and MGNSW files consulted do not seem to provide consistent information and data sheets in the staffing area were not updated or validated by every Gallery in the Stage 2 verification process. Most detailed data is available for calendar years 2002 to 2004. Useful data on Equivalent full-time (EFT) staff numbers is not available. It is also not clear from the files whether part-time staff also includes casual staff.

Data is available for 29 galleries and of these galleries 27.6% record declining staff numbers and 24.7% record increasing staff numbers for the calendar years 2003 and 2004. 31% of galleries reported that part time staff numbers had declined whilst 13.8% reported increases in part time staff. 27.6% galleries reported that full time staff numbers had increased and 10% galleries reported that full time staff numbers had decreased.

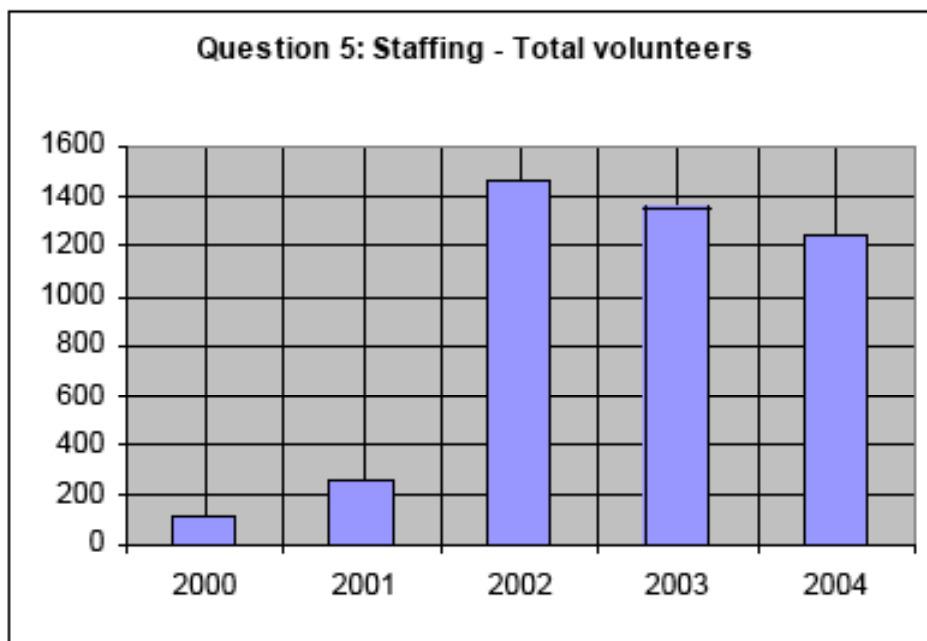
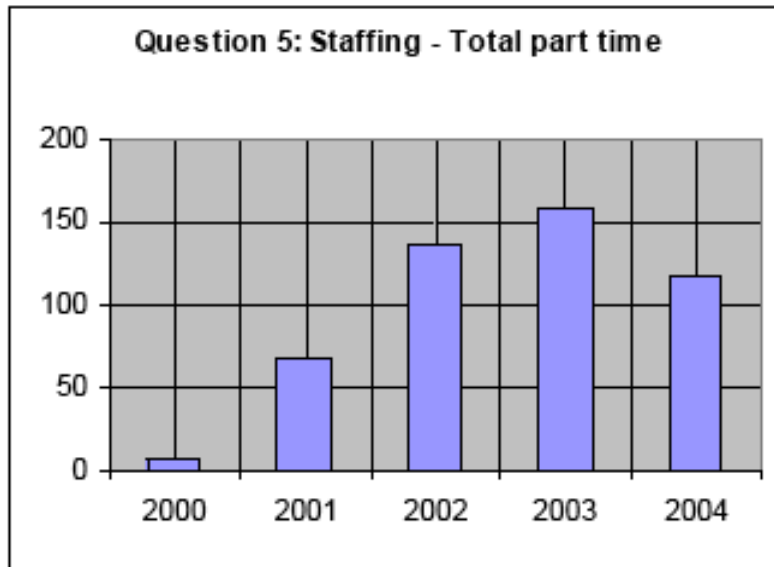
The following tables indicate that overall full time staff numbers have risen steadily since 2000 and that part-time staff numbers have also been increasing except for a drop in numbers of 25% for the calendar year 2004. Note: part time staff numbers include tutors engaged. In 2002 and 2003 the number of part-time staff remained steady at 76 but that number dropped to 40 in 2004.

Five regional galleries employ 2 or less staff. These galleries, also manage volunteer programs and report that they face daily challenges in the delivery of programs and services and in maintaining operations.

Ten regional galleries employ 4 or less EFT staff. All of these galleries deliver diverse programs, manage collections, enjoy high profile status within their regions and also across New South Wales. This is remarkable given the level of their resources.

For the same period 55.2% of galleries reported that volunteer numbers had increased and 24.7% reported that volunteer numbers had decreased. 4 galleries reported that volunteer numbers had increased by over 50% and 4 galleries reported that volunteer numbers had decreased by 25%. In 2002 volunteer numbers overall were 1458 but volunteer numbers seem to be generally declining and had dropped to 1243 by 2004.





**COMMENT**

Staffing numbers seem to reflect general growth in the sector with full-time staff steadily increasing between 2000 and 2004. Contrary to the general trends in employment, part-time numbers across the gallery sector, after steady increases, dropped significantly in 2004 but this may be due to activities at just one gallery or the impact on temporary program changes such as renovations or extensions.

The declining levels of volunteer numbers presents challenges for the sector but may indicate a shift to more focused and better managed volunteer programs which target skilled and committed volunteers willing to take on higher order responsibilities. More analysis would be useful to inform planning and policy in this area.

## **QUESTION 6      PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Directors were asked in interview to comment on staff development programs including mentorship programs, staff exchanges, conference attendance, further study support and scholarships. 27 galleries completed this section and analysis of data indicates that:

- 22.2% participate in mentorship programs.
- 22.2% encourage and support staff exchanges
- 81.5% have sufficient resources to encourage attendance at conferences, seminars etc.
- 66.7% provide or would provide support for work related study programs
- 25.9% provide scholarship programs for staff.

Discussions with gallery directors revealed that they would appreciate increased opportunities for mentoring programs for their staff but at this time are constrained by resources. Most galleries have included staff attendance at major conferences in their operating budgets but some regional and remote galleries were finding it difficult to meet the high travel expenses associated with attendance. It was also noted that conference attendance has a significant operational impact on galleries with low staffing numbers. Staff absences generally impact on the capacity of the gallery to maintain core services. Frontline as well as behind the scenes tasks are affected.

### **COMMENT**

The support of mentorships and internships is an emerging area of interest across the sector and not just by the larger galleries. However any programs in this area should provide support to replace absent staff so as to ensure continuity of programs, maintenance of quality visitor experiences and avoidance of work backlogs.

## **QUESTION 7      FORMAL PARTNERSHIPS**

This question relates to the formal written and documented agreements/partnerships that galleries may have established with, for example, local schools, other galleries or cultural institutions, universities, local businesses etc.

35.3% of galleries indicated that they had no formal partnerships. Some implied that they could see no reason for establishing or fostering such relationships.

Of the 21 galleries that indicated that they had established and maintained formal agreements, 42.9% indicated that they were with local businesses. A number of galleries noted that they had negotiated agreements with local travel and transport companies as well as with local utility providers. Country Energy and Qantaslink were mentioned.

33.3% indicated that their agreements were with local universities and /or TAFE colleges and 28.6% indicated that they had agreements with community organisations. Many of those agreements were with community colleges, WEA etc and were linked to lifelong learning programs. Only 2 galleries indicated a formal agreement with local schools.

The role of galleries in supporting and fostering lifelong learning, increased understanding and appreciation of art, skills development and economic development would be enhanced by stronger connections to the education sector. This seems to be an undeveloped market particularly in light of the NSW State government's commitment to education and the arts.

28.6% of galleries indicated that they had agreements with other regional galleries including one gallery with an agreement with a regional gallery in another State. 1 gallery has developed an agreement with a State flagship cultural institution (Historic Houses Trust) and 2 have formal agreements with national cultural institutions (National Gallery of Australia and the Australian War Memorial).

5 galleries have established formal agreements with their local media. 3 galleries have agreements with local service organisations and 2 have agreements with local tourism related organisations. 1 gallery has an agreement with a local theatre.

## COMMENT

Many Directors indicated that they were planning to establish formal partnerships in the future and this seems to be an emerging area of activity. Research into the benefits and impacts of formal partnerships/ agreements is needed as a basis for informing the sector.

## QUESTION 8 COLLECTIONS

84.4% of galleries out of the 32 that contributed to this Study indicated that they were collection-based. 68.8% of those galleries indicated that they were actively collecting via purchase or donation.

The total number of items in NSW regional gallery collections is 42,405 with collection size ranging from 16,000 items to 31 items. Four galleries advise that they have collections numbering over 2000 items whilst the majority of galleries manage collections under 1000 items where 15.6% maintain under 200 items, 12.5% maintain under 500 items and 18.8% have holdings under 1000 items.

Overall collection insured value supplied by 23 out of the 27 collecting galleries is in excess of \$140 million. Level of collecting varies annually, with 10 galleries acquiring through an acquisitive competition whilst others receive donations to the collection. Galleries indicated that they received 1235 items in 2003/04, and on average this represents around 50 items per annum for each gallery. However this may be skewed if one gallery received a major donation in that year, one gallery advised that it received 300 donated items in 2003/04. A review of the data indicates that on average, donations total 3 to 4 items per annum.

96.3% of galleries indicated that they have collecting specialisations. These are listed in Appendix 2. A number of collecting areas are pursued by more than one gallery (e.g. Asian art, Indigenous art, ceramics, photography), and this may lend itself to increased cooperation and collaboration. Many galleries indicate an interest in collecting the work of local /regional artists, and in this way the institutions are contributing to the local cultural economy as well as to fostering local creativity.

Some galleries, particularly those in Western Sydney, indicated an interest in collecting and exhibiting works of art that represent the diversity of cultures that make up Australia in the 21st century. This emerging field of interest is not yet represented in the collections listed in this Study but is an area for further research, funding and development across the State. Similarly, a number of galleries indicated that they had an emerging interest in collecting the work of local Indigenous artists and that this interest was being promoted and encouraged by their councils, boards and advisory committees. These new directions present opportunities for funding policy, for staff development, for collaborative exhibition development and for public programming.

## COMMENT

Collection planning and management and the integration of collection management across regions are emerging as focus areas at national as well as State and regional levels. Programs that raise awareness of issues and promote collaborative projects should be considered for development.

## OVERALL COLLECTION SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of collections varies across the State, but overall 55.6% general collections were assessed by their Directors as being at or as more than 3 in terms of State significance where, 1 indicates low State significance and 5 indicates high significance. 77.8% of collections were assessed as being at level 3 or more in terms of condition and intactness with 14.8% of collections being assessed as unsatisfactory and needing attention at level 2 or below.

It seems likely that there are many thousands of items in regional galleries across NSW that are in storage and not accessible to the public. This is inevitable given the space available for exhibitions and the nature of programming. However gallery collections form part of a distributed network of cultural assets which, if widely promoted and interpreted, have the potential to influence social and economic development and promote a better understanding of Australia's cultural identity. Improved access to collections – both physical and remote is crucial.

## **COMMENT**

Access is a key issue for all collecting institutions and the development of strategies that get objects out of storerooms, assessed for significance, conserved, digitised and/ or actively circulating and into public view should be a high priority.

## **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

24 galleries indicated that they had special collections and in most cases these collections reflected each gallery's nominated collection strengths. Some galleries have established special collections based on a donation or bequest and it is these collections that in many cases add significant value to the programs and activities of that gallery. For example the Grafton Regional Gallery has received two bequests that have positioned the gallery as an important research resource for scholars in addition to its role as a place to appreciate diverse works of art. One bequest relates to botanical drawings by an artist of international reknown and the other collection represents the work of an early colonial photographer. Both collections have been assessed as having high level national significance, as well as aesthetic and historical significance. The Renaldo Cameron collection at Lake Macquarie, the Les Darcy collection at Maitland, the Datillo Rubbo collection at Manly and the Max Watters collection at Muswellbrook have all been valued as highly significant across a range of criteria by their directors. Each collection contributes to the capacity of its gallery to provide a unique experience for visitors and scholars. The collections also form part of the State's movable cultural heritage.

## **COMMENT**

The development of strategies such as digitization, virtual exhibitions, and publications etc. that promote these special collections as significant cultural assets and make them accessible to a wider audience should be developed and promoted.

## **QUESTION 9      ASSESSING COLLECTION SIGNIFICANCE**

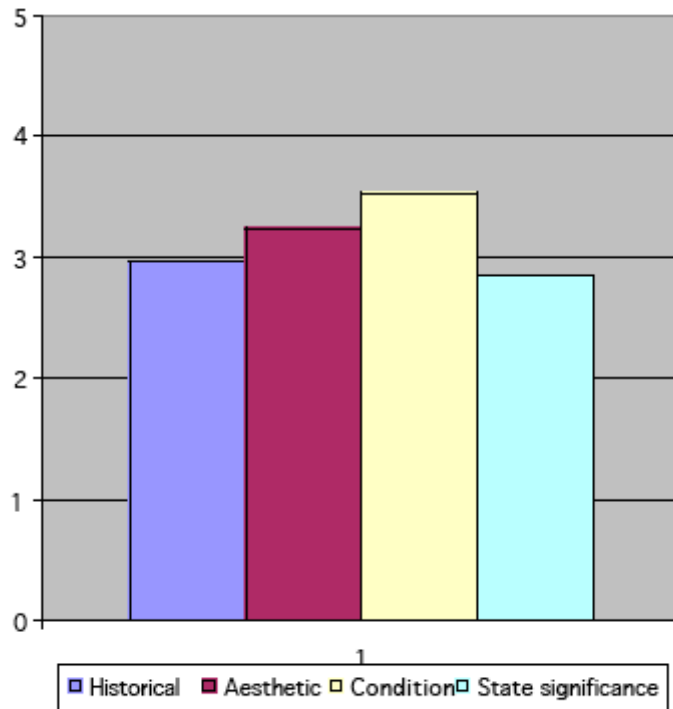
This question presented some challenges for most directors when asked to provide an off-the-cuff assessment of significance in relation to their collections. The data collection sheet provided opportunities to assess each collection according to elements broadly based on categories developed by the Heritage Collections Council in 2000. (See Appendix 2 Worksheet for details of categories). In addition geographic significance was also assessed using local, regional, State and national as standard elements. Each category was assigned a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is unsatisfactory and 5 is excellent.

Based on assessments provided at interview, data has been collected for most collections and a picture emerges not surprisingly of great diversity in quality as well as in potential for interpretation and research. In the main most collections in this State's regional art galleries seem to be well housed, professionally managed, well documented and generally valued by their local council acting as overall custodian.

## **COMMENT**

Support needs to be provided to regional galleries to better document their collections as part of national cultural heritage. This might take the form of skills development, collection management systems, significance assessment, digitization support, awareness raising and promotion.

### Question 9: assessing collection significance (1-5)



### QUESTION 10 STUDY AND RESEARCH SERVICES

Most galleries surveyed keenly recognise their role in providing study and research services particularly in relation to their own holdings. 87.5% offer information and referral services, 78.1% offer access and study visits by appointment to the collection and 59.4% of galleries maintain an art research library.

Only 21.9% of galleries provide online access to digital images. The small number of galleries utilizing digital technology to document and conserve their collections and also to improve access presents a key planning issue. The benefits of providing online access to art collections have been well researched over recent years. Online access impacts across diverse user markets – for example it supplements teaching material in schools, colleges and universities; provides travel planning information for tourists; supports research program planning by scholars; promotes the work of specific artists to a wide community and provides a virtual gallery experience for those unable to access the physical gallery. This is an area of activity that requires more research and financial support.

#### COMMENT

A state-wide program that provides digital technology and online access to all galleries and therefore improves access for the community including remote visitors as well as for gallery management should be explored. Digitization also provides opportunities to collaborate with other collection management institutions such as public libraries and museums.

### QUESTION 11 COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Information related to collection management procedures were collected for only 18 galleries, and the data collected seems inconsistent and therefore unreliable. This is in spite of data verification by each gallery. More information is required in relation to the types of collection registration systems in place across the State.

15 galleries indicated that their collection was digitised and 6 indicated that their collection was available on CDROM. 11 galleries indicated that they had a digital camera and flat-bed scanner. It seems that access to a digital camera and scanner facilitates basic in-house digitization of the collection. Consideration could be given therefore to commissioning further research into this area, including the negotiation with a supplier for the affordable supply of one digital camera and scanner at an appropriate technical standard for each regional gallery in NSW, along with a training program for key staff.

## **COMMENT**

A coordinated digital technology project supported by MGNSW and applied across the regional gallery sector would provide a framework for improving the management of collections including improved community access.

## **QUESTION 12 RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

Art galleries at the local level face many challenges the least of which is the identification of core roles and objectives. Traditionally art galleries have focused on the preservation, presentation and interpretation of their collections but more recently as new gallery models are established and financial pressures increase, gallery managements have sought to expand audiences, to increase community involvement and to concentrate more on public program and marketing. The traditional narrow programmatic focus on collections, scholarship and professional activities has shifted to a focus on learning and to ensuring a quality visitor experience. In this context traditional roles in research and scholarship seem to have been jettisoned or generally downplayed.

In this Study only 12 out of 32 galleries indicated that they maintained a research program focusing on higher order scholarship and analysis. 9 of the 12 reported that their research was collection based and would culminate in an exhibition. 3 only reported research activities that provided data for audience development, marketing and program planning. Most of the programs were supported by Ministry for the Arts funding (7 out of 9). Two galleries reported that their research was supported by either a local business or another State government agency.

In addition to the 12 galleries with current research programs, a further 9 reported that they were planning to undertake specific research in the future. Examples of proposed research includes in-depth collection analysis and interpretation particularly in the case of collections of significance; young people and audience research; valuing the gallery in the community. The galleries with research programs range from small galleries with limited staff in both metropolitan and rural centres to some of the largest gallery facilities in metropolitan Sydney.

Most directors indicated that they had neither the money nor the staff to contemplate a research program. They also commented that the local government environment did not generally support research-based programs and that it would be unlikely to provide funding for research if approached through the annual budget cycle. Research into issues across local government and not just cultural issues, was traditionally funded by other levels of government or the private sector.

## **COMMENT**

Feedback from directors indicates that generally there is no pattern to the support for research activities in NSW regional galleries although it does not seem that gallery size has much impact. Rather a commitment to and interest in research based programs may depend more on leadership and taking advantage of research opportunities as they arise. Research programs reported by directors were generally designed to be undertaken over several years and seemed to recognise staff time constraints. They seemed generally designed to accommodate a stop-start research process.

Research and analysis provides a sound base for gallery decision making, influencing program development as well as operational management. Scholarship can contribute to the visitor experience whilst also making a gallery competitive. The value of research and funding sources for research programs including collaborative projects should be widely promoted to NSW gallery directors.

## **QUESTION 13 PROGRAM AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

23 galleries provided details of their documented program aims and objectives. Most of these respondents have developed vision/mission statements as a foundation for their strategic objectives. Generally Mission and Vision statements focus on either:

- the role of the gallery as a community cultural resource or
- the role of the gallery in providing a 'professionally managed' venue for the visual arts

The development of program objectives were consistent across the data received indicating an emphasis on the following activities:

- exhibition program development
- building audiences
- managing collections and
- ensuring best practice in facility management

Twelve galleries indicated strategic objectives that were aimed at supporting local/regional artists and this was supported at interview when most directors reported that their programs were 'distinctive' due to programming emphasis on local artists.

We know from this Study that few galleries undertake rigorous analysis or evaluation of their program goals and objectives. And there is only limited evidence that the sector generally links performance evaluation to strategic directions and planning frameworks.

### **COMMENT**

To navigate successfully in the local government environment all galleries need a strategic framework that identifies their core roles, establishes priorities and sets goals for achieving those priorities. Most galleries seem to have a basic planning framework in place but the supporting research and capability data that matches the current and projected challenges in the local, regional and broad sector environment with potential opportunities seems underdeveloped.

## **QUESTION 14 PERFORMANCE DATA**

Data collected in this Study indicates that the majority of NSW regional galleries measure and evaluate performance using relatively simple methodologies. 30 galleries surveyed indicated that they evaluated their programs against their objectives but when asked, few could identify more than 4 specific programs that were subject to evaluation. 61.8% indicated that they assessed temporary exhibitions, with 61.8% also indicating that they assessed public programs. 52.9% of galleries indicated that they assessed school visits, followed by 35.3% of galleries that indicated that they evaluated permanent exhibitions. 20.6% of galleries indicated that they evaluated workshop/studio programs.

Responses indicate that generally galleries carry out their evaluation programs in relatively unsophisticated ways. Programs using quantitative measures include:

- 41.2% of galleries reporting that they measured and evaluated income targets
- 38.2% of galleries indicated that they measured media responses and column inches. (One gallery reported a remarkable \$1.3M worth of media coverage in 2003.)
- 23.5% of galleries reported that they measured repeat visits.
- Only one gallery reported that it evaluated its Friends program.

Less than 35% of galleries reported specific qualitative measures of evaluation. For example:

- Only 32.4% of galleries reported that they carried out an annual visitor survey
- 20.6% of galleries indicated that they benefited from questions integrated into their council's annual community survey
- 20.6% also reported that they managed a program of community focus group workshops
- 14.7% of galleries only indicated that they utilised an evaluation form for visiting school/group visits.

It should be noted here that whilst overall performance measurement is underdeveloped across the State, a small number of galleries stand out as leaders in this field. These galleries with comprehensive evaluation programs in place include Hazelhurst, Penrith and Wollongong. They present best practice models for the sector.

## **VISITATION**

Only 9.4% of galleries provided continuous visitation data that could be compared over the period 2002 and 2004. 65.6% indicated that visitation between 2003 and 2004 had increased whilst 30% indicated that visitation had decreased. 68.8% galleries count number of school groups visiting the gallery pa. Only 21.9% of galleries currently count the number of local visitors and only 13.3% of galleries count number of visitors from elsewhere in NSW. 6.7% of galleries only count visitors per annum from interstate and 10% count international visitors.

## **COMMENT**

Basic input data provides useful information in planning and managing local cultural facilities. Why for example have visitor numbers decreased in 9 galleries between 2003 and 2004? Measuring levels of interstate visitors provides opportunities to evaluate the potential of niche target markets but few galleries collect this data. As well as overall visitation levels, gallery management needs more specific visitor information to more effectively plan programs, provide support amenities and to develop effective marketing strategies. Standard data collection systems across the sector would establish a framework for further improvement.

## **MEASURING IMPACT**

Only 50% of galleries indicated that they measured the impact of their programs. When asked to specify how impact was measured, the following responses were provided:

- Comment book for every exhibition; informal discussion with visitors
- Annual visitor survey and visitors book; daily visitors comments collected; visitor response to exhibition and to the gallery
- Regular feedback from volunteers; feedback from Friends
- Preparation of exhibition reports that assess impact and document lessons learnt
- Exit comments; entry comments
- One-on-one interviews,
- One week survey conducted for every exhibition

The measurement of impact is clearly underdeveloped across the sector. "Impact" in this question was interpreted as being social impact rather than economic impact, and where impact is being measured; in most cases the approach is generally simple and ad hoc. Measuring impact of gallery programs on particular target groups does not seem to be a component of research e.g. impact on school groups, impact on local Indigenous communities, impact on the unemployed, impact on young people or impact on visitors/ tourists to the area.

## **COMMENT**

The measurement of impact is an area requiring more research and development. The development of standards for evaluation and performance measurement is crucial for decision makers and for funding bodies. Support needs to be given to developing a system of gathering statistical data in a systematic way to support management, to inform decision making and to influence strategic directions.

## QUESTION 15 POLICY AND PLANNING

A scan of files and databases indicated that galleries have access to the following range of policy and planning documents:

DOCUMENT TITLE	NUMBER OUT OF 34
Collection Management Policy	21 out of 27 galleries that indicated they were collection base have developed policies in relation to collection management.
Disaster Plan	13/ 34 with 2 additional plans in preparation.
Business Plan	22/34 have business plans. These are annual plans generally required by Council.
Strategic Plan	23/34 have longer term Strategic Plans although 6 of those plans are out of date.
OH & S Policy	20 have OH & S plans that have been prepared under the umbrella of Council.
Technology Plan	No galleries have a Technology Plan although 1 Gallery indicated that it had an IT Plan in process. It is likely that general IT needs are provided for in the Council's IT Strategy where available.
Marketing Plan	5 galleries have Marketing Plans. 2 indicated that their plans were under review.
Compliance with Australian Standards	3
Access & Equity Policy	2
Other - the following range of policies were specified in the files.  Numbers in brackets relate to number of times each document type was mentioned.	Acquisition policy (8); De-accessioning policy (4); Exhibitions policy (5); Function Plan; Cultural Policy / Plan (8); Social Plan/Community Plan (3); Framework Plan; Operating Plan; Public Art Policy (2); Corporate Plan (2); Operations and management Plan (2); Artistic Policy; Flood Disaster Plan; Public Programs Policy; 3 Year Strategy.

An acknowledgement of the strategic and operational importance of maintaining a range of relevant policies and plans seems to be underdeveloped across the sector. There seems to be recognition of the need for strategic plans and collection management plans although not such a commitment to ensuring that they are up-to date.

Although the majority of collection-based facilities are supported by a collection management policy, curiously many also specified that they had access to acquisitions, de-accessioning and artistic policies. It is not clear what the relationships between these policies are.

The majority of galleries also have access to either or both strategic plans and annual business plans, although 6 out of the 23 plans were out of date. Many directors indicated at interview that their strategic plans were under review indicating that they were very aware of the need to regularly revise and update these particular important planning tools. Only 5 galleries have prepared a marketing plan, supporting earlier evidence that audience development and measurement and analysis of performance (core component of a marketing plan) is underdeveloped.

Provision of information relating to the range of Council documents that support policy and planning indicates that many galleries recognise their role in broad Council business and regard the cultural plan/ social plan for example as tools that are also relevant to gallery planning.

## COMMENT

The update of key policies and plans such as strategic plans and collection development policies seems to present resource challenges for many galleries. Strategies to support gallery managements to review and update their key documents should be developed including seminars, consulting mentorships, workshops etc.

## QUESTION 16 PROGRAMS

Data on programs was collected from the files. Data was sought for the period 2002 to 2004 in the following categories:

- Exhibitions – one off internally curated; external touring; incoming touring and tour management partnership
- Education programs/ activities
- Audience development programs
- Events/ functions
- Friends programs
- Workshops
- Artists in residence programs
- Community driven events and functions
- Fellowships and scholarships

However, overall the files failed to provide comprehensive data across these program areas. The following categories provide a general picture of activity but more rigorous data collection is needed.

## INTERNALLY CURATED ON-OFF EXHIBITIONS

Data was collected for 20 galleries. The highest number of annual one-off exhibitions in a single gallery was 63 whilst the lowest was 2. The annual average for this program category across the State is 16 exhibitions.

2002	Total	521
2003	Total	540
2004	Total	466

## COMMENT

Galleries do not only program one-off exhibitions across their annual schedule but generally also support a range of temporary exhibitions throughout the year. The operational impact of planning, developing and managing a regular schedule of exhibitions presents many challenges and clearly many smaller to medium galleries are torn between the need to promote repeat visits through a diversity of programming and the realities of managing such a busy exhibitions schedule.

## AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Data was only available on the files for 4 galleries. These galleries noted 38 programs in total in this category during 2004.

## COMMENT

Links can be made here to the collection of performance data particularly in the area of program evaluation and qualitative feedback. Programs that develop new audiences and encourage existing audiences to make repeat visits seem non-existent from the data and more research is needed urgently in this area.

## WORKSHOP PROGRAMS

Data was only available in the files for 15 galleries spanning the period 2003 to 2004.

2003 Total 1031  
2004 Total 1464

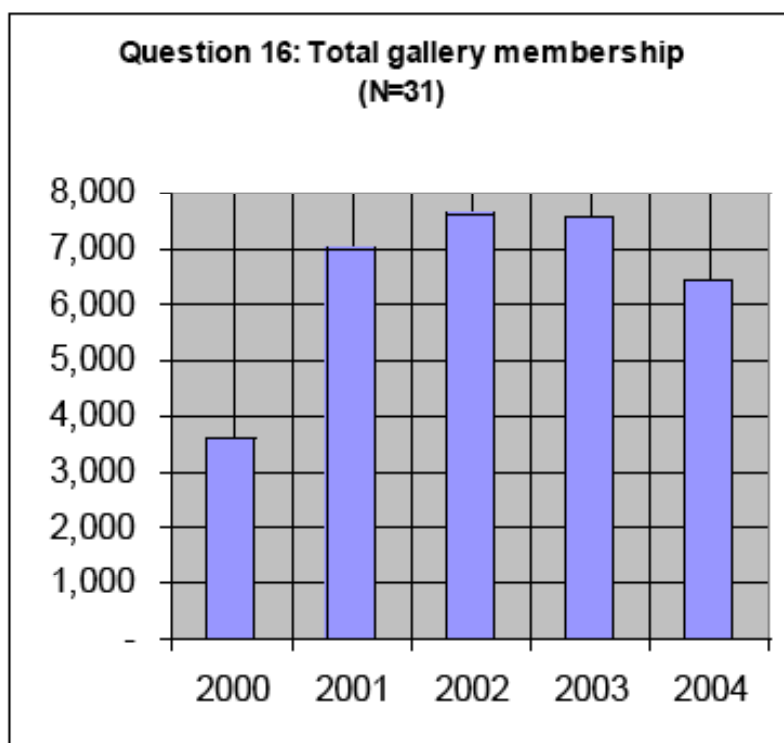
This presents a 42% increase in workshop activity in one year.

Average number of annual workshops per gallery 98

Highest number of annual workshops per gallery was 473 and lowest number was 1.

## COMMENT

Workshop programs and the development of workshop facilities seem to be the flavour for regional galleries at the moment. A number of directors noted plans for new workshops in the near future and the data, although scant, reflects a growing trend in this area. The potential for workshop programs to generate new audiences, to respond to lifelong learning needs as well as to increase annual income is recognised although more rigorous data is needed in relation to the costs and benefits of workshop programs.



## QUESTION 17 MEMBERSHIP

91.2% of galleries indicated that they maintained membership programs. Membership data however is not complete for many galleries surveyed and it is also not clear from the files what type of membership programs are supported although it is likely that they take the form of Friends type programs. Membership numbers have been collected for the period 2000 to 2004 with 83.9% providing a useful sequence of membership totals across that period. In 42.3% of galleries, membership numbers have dropped between 2000 and 2004.

Membership numbers vary from a total of 20 members to 998 members. Average membership across the State in 2004 is 267.

## **COMMENT**

Membership programs are clearly an important gallery activity, but the data collected does not provide sufficient information to develop a picture in relation to operational models or benefits. More information is needed in this area. Only one gallery surveyed indicated that 'Friends' were utilized to provide feedback on gallery performance.

## **QUESTION 18 AWARDS RECEIVED**

6 galleries indicated that they had received awards in the three years to 2005. The galleries are:

- Casula ( 3 awards)
- Fairfield (3 awards)
- Grafton (1 award)
- Lake Macquarie (2 awards)
- Manly (1 award)
- Wagga Wagga (2 awards)

Overall during that time the number of awards totalled 12, with 4 of those awards being Local Government Cultural Awards. 3 of the awards reflected each gallery's achievements in their local area or region, with the balance of the awards being State based. Awards reflect the role of the gallery in the community, particularly in the contribution they make to local tourism and heritage, in education and learning and also in planning and partnerships.

## **COMMENT**

Recognition for a job well done is important – it acknowledges staff effort and professionalism, confirms the value of Council investment, encourages community support and provides good marketing copy. Case studies documenting and analysing the value and benefits of awards could be developed to provide useful data for all gallery managers.

## QUESTION 19 BUILDING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Many galleries are housed in old buildings that have been refurbished to accommodate gallery functions. This adaptive reuse is generally well-received, with the latest success story being the new gallery in Broken Hill which is housed in a building over 100 years old.

87.5% of galleries whose Ministry files documented this subject indicated that they were air-conditioned. Only 2 galleries of those 24 indicated that they did not have climate control and 9 files did not provide data on this matter. The Study sought to collect information on building related data listed in the following table. Data in Ministry files is inconsistent and more information is needed.

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>ANALYSIS</b>	<b>ANALYSIS</b>
Age of building and additions.	13 out of 34 galleries indicated that they had undergone additions in or after 2000. 6 galleries indicated that they were into their second cycle of additions to their original building or had a new building.	
Size of building Running metres/ size of galleries	9 galleries only provided sq. m data in relation to this question.	This is crucial planning information and is useful for comparative purposes. More information is needed.
Number of exhibition spaces	6 galleries only provided data in relation to the number of spaces within the building envelope that they program.	This is crucial planning information and is useful for comparative purposes. More information is needed.
Co-location	The files do not provide information in relation to co-location.	Since this is an emerging trend more information on the level and impact of co-location would be useful.
Air-conditioning	22/24 galleries are now air-conditioned.	In the past this has been a critical issue. More comprehensive data in relation to climate control across the sector would be useful.
Technology- hardware/ software	2 galleries only provided information in this area.	1 gallery identified that it has 24PCs, uses Office 2000 and has a photocopier, printer and fax. 1 gallery indicated that it was networked to the Council's IT system. More information would be useful since IT support impacts on operational efficiency. IT access for programming is also an emerging trend.

CATEGORY	ANALYSIS	ANALYSIS
Special aspects:  Gardens  Courtyards  Workshops  Loading dock  Shop  Library  Sculpture court  Theatrette  Studios  Café  Conference facility	18/34 indicated access to gardens.  3 indicated access to courtyards.  11/ 34 indicated access to workshops.  13/34 galleries indicated that they had access to a loading dock. 11 of those galleries were purpose built.  21/34 galleries indicated that they maintained a shop.  12/ 34 indicated maintenance/access to a library although in relation to a specific question on information services 19/34 indicated that they maintained a library.  9/34 indicated that they maintained a sculpture court.  5/34 indicated access to a theatrette.  14/34 indicated studios.  13/34 indicated that the gallery operated a Café.  1/34 indicated that they had conference facilities.	Impact of garden maintenance on operational budgets may be an issue. Benefits re. courtyards and gardens to programming could also be explored in relation to design.  Income impact and impact on visitor numbers is largely unknown or not documented.  Data suggests that buildings that are adapted or refurbished may not provide opportunities for inclusion of a loading dock due to design and/or budget constraints.  Data re impact of the shop on budgets and operations needs to be better understood.  More accurate data is needed on this matter.  Provision of studios seems to be an emerging trend.  More information is needed re. scale of café operation. Anecdotal evidence indicates that cafes can range from provision of instant coffee on at tables located in the foyer to restaurants seating 80 or more patrons. Cafe management models would also be useful for planning. E.g. lease or staff operation.
Other	The following notes were also provided in this area: - amphitheatre (2) -200 seat performance space -artist-in-residence space (7) -digital studio -concert capacity -conservation room -meeting room	The benefits/impact of spaces that support artist-in-residence programs (7/34) is an area for further research.

## COMMENT

The planning and design of gallery buildings is an area of ongoing importance to local government. More accurate and detailed comparative information would be useful in relation to, for example, overall building size, specific gallery size (m<sup>2</sup>), core facilities-public amenities, kitchens and supplementary facilities – workshops, meeting rooms, seminar rooms, studios etc.

Data on impact and benefit of income generating facilities e.g. shops, workshops, gardens for event hire etc. would also be useful.

Data on co-location benefits/costs, impacts on management structures, economies of scale in relation to capital works etc. would also be useful.

## QUESTION 20 FINANCIAL DATA

Funding to the sector across the three levels of government has been discussed under the Key Issues section of this Report. The Australia Council advises that between 2000 and 2005 support for NSW regional galleries totalled \$350,079. 15 grants were awarded over that period to 12 galleries.

More detailed data is provided below in relation to State and local government. NSW Ministry for the Arts files were analysed for data relating to funding as well as for operational budgets. Overall there was limited consistency in reporting and sources of funding over time are incomplete. Funding patterns were researched from 1992 to 2005 whilst operational budgets were collected for the period 2002 to 2004. Most operational data was available for the calendar year 2003 with information relating to operational budgets for 24 galleries.

## NSW MINISTRY FOR THE ARTS

The data documenting Ministry for the Arts support over a thirteen year period indicates an annual investment of \$2,066,263 per annum to the sector. This is likely to be indicative only and should be taken as a minimum figure. The Table however does indicate that funding varies across the sector and presents opportunities to consider new funding models and policies that address factors such as location, population served, scope of programs, best practice and overall capacity.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

Local government provides critical and significant support to the sector and this well-established support is crucial to the sector's sustainability and viability. Levels of support however vary in line with the capacity and commitment of each local government area. Indicative data indicates that between 1992 and 2005 local government support for regional galleries totalled \$63,577,026.

Note: data is not available for 3 Councils, it includes capital as well as operational funding and is not complete for every council for every year in the timeframe specified.

## OPERATIONAL BUDGETS

Ministry files provide a snapshot of operational budgets. The analysis of operational budgets focused on calendar years 2002 and 2003 since they provided the most consistency. The following Table provides an analysis of total budgets across key operational areas for 29 galleries. Data was not available for 5 locations. Note: further verification of data is required since information included in the table seems inaccurate in some categories for some galleries.

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STAFF</b>	<b>PROGRAMS</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>MARKETING</b>
<b>Total Amount</b>	\$3,000,822	\$3,287,889	\$6,249,319	\$506,624
<b>Average</b>	\$103,476	\$113,374	\$215,493	\$1,746

Indicative average annual operating budget: **\$434,089**

## **COMMENT**

Overall the range and scope of financial data available in this Study relating to the gallery sector is disappointing. However the data does confirm the crucial and considerable levels of support provided to the sector by local government. Despite gaps in the data, the commitment of local government to regional galleries over decades has contributed to the sector's relative stability. The operational data although not available for some key galleries, seems however overall to be consistent. More information relating to income and levels of subsidy from specific councils would be useful for benchmarking and planning as would average per capita finding across the sector. This would provide a useful tool for advocacy to individual councils and would complement nation-wide data available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The long-term advocacy and funding support for the sector by the State government in partnership with local government has resulted in a sector well-positioned to identify and effectively address emerging trends and challenges.

The data confirms the low level of Australia Council funding going towards support for regional galleries and presents opportunities to develop advocacy strategies that communicate the need to increase support to the sector. More information is required on success levels in attracting grants from for example Visions of Australia and the Myer or Darling Foundations.

## **QUESTION 21 NEW DIRECTIONS/FUTURE PLANS**

Most gallery directors identified a range of new program directions and plans for the future. Plans included facility improvements, refurbishments and new facility developments. A number of galleries identified that they were taking on new responsibilities such as for public art or cultural services; hours of opening were being reviewed and new partnerships developed. Appendix 4 provides more detail in relation to plans.

Details in relation to budget impact of proposed new directions were significantly underdeveloped across the sector. Few directors indicated that they had access to financial or other resources that provided for the anticipated facility, service or program upgrades. Directors indicated that there would be impacts but were uncertain in relation to level of impact on say staffing or visitor numbers and were unclear in relation to sources of funding support.

## **COMMENT**

In reality it is these hopes and dreams for the expansion and upgrade of facilities and programs across the gallery sector that sustains gallery management and staff in a climate of uncertainty and resource constraint. The new directions articulated across the sector indicate that directors are actively analysing the environment for opportunities to enhance their operations to reflect their current local and regional environments, many have the capacity to "think big" despite a general climate of caution and fiscal restraint across the local government sector.

However the general paucity of strategic documentation supporting these plans is a matter of some concern.

# CONCLUSION

Although this Study was commissioned by the State government's Ministry for the Arts, it will also be very relevant to local government as a key partner in the management of regional galleries. The data and analysis presented in the Scoping Study is only a beginning but it presents never-the-less a long-overdue analysis of the regional gallery sector across New South Wales.

The Study provides an opportunity to reflect on the current scale of operations of the sector and to consider future support models and mechanisms particularly in the nature and scale of local government support.

This Scoping Study indicates that the regional gallery sector in New South Wales is well established and growing. It has been relatively well supported and resourced over many decades by the NSW local government sector which on average spends as a minimum, over \$4m per annum on regional gallery activities. This support and recognition has been crucial in establishing the sector as a viable component of local government business.

The sector receives significant levels of financial and advocacy support from the NSW Ministry for the Arts and this support is well-established and acknowledged. The State government also provides critical arms-length operational and sector wide development support through MGnsw. Limited Federal funding support is sourced from DCITA through the Visions of Australia program as well as through the Australia Council's Visual Arts and Crafts Board.

The models established for support of the sector by the NSW Ministry for the Arts, and in particular the role played by MGnsw, are regarded as best-practice models by other Australian States. From the available data it is clear that the evolution of robust funding policies and responsive support programs for the sector over time by the Ministry in partnership with the NSW local government sector have provided a relatively firm foundation for the future. The Ministry's Visual Arts and Crafts Committee's funding policies and resulting programs of support are equitable, objective and accessible. They are relatively flexible and have the capacity to integrate any new directions that may emerge from this Study. They set the scene for ensuring the sustainability of the sector.

There are 34 galleries across the State representing considerable diversity in terms of facility size, scale of operations and range of programming. The sector attracted over 1,225,365 visitors in 2004 and manages collections valued at over \$14 M. The average annual cost of operating a regional gallery is \$434,089. On average regional galleries employ 3.3 full time staff and 4.3 part time staff. This varies depending on the capacity and level of commitment of each council.

The provision of regional gallery programs and services varies across the State and access is uneven with significant differentiation between the State's 16 planning regions. Catchment populations vary from one gallery serving a regional population of 18,200 in the Southern Tablelands to 6 galleries serving a regional population of 687,200 in the Hunter and 6 galleries serving a regional population of 1.7M in Western Sydney.

Directors interviewed in this Study indicated a wide range of ambitious forward plans for their galleries. They were enthusiastic about the future and keen to position their institutions as central resources in the cultural life of their regions. Plans include capital works projects, programs for new and emerging audiences, specialist staff appointments, new partnerships and sponsorships and extended hours of operation. Many identified opportunities to take on expanded cultural roles within their councils.

However data collected in this Study also provides a reality check on the sector, presenting a picture where information is scarce, systems underdeveloped, formal collaborations are relatively rare and planning and policy limited. The absence of minimum standards to inform planning and program review is a critical gap in the sector.

This Study is therefore only a first step in the ongoing need to establish and maintain information to inform policy and funding support for the sector. The identification of building blocks and strategies will be critical in ensuring the sector's sustainability in the short term but also into the future.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Study has been ambitious in scope, presenting a number of challenges particularly in the data collection and information gathering area. The consultants however would like to acknowledge the goodwill and support extended to them by all key stakeholders and to commend the sector's commitment to collaboration and cooperation.

In particular we would like to thank the staff of the Visual Arts and Craft Program of the Ministry for the Arts as well as the Ministry's Records Manager. Access to information collected and maintained at the Ministry and also at Museums and Galleries NSW provided invaluable assistance in ensuring that the Study could be managed with a minimum of impact on the sector. The consultants also appreciated the opportunity to brief the Visual Arts and Crafts Committee, Ministry for the Arts at key milestones during the Study.

The willing support and interest provided by management and staff of Museums and Galleries NSW (MGnsw) is also gratefully acknowledged.

We would also like to thank the Directors and staff of each regional gallery who patiently provided critical advice and feedback. In particular the input of the three Directors at Lake Macquarie, Wagga Wagga and Campbelltown during the pilot data gathering stage should be highlighted.

# APPENDIX 1 STEERING COMMITTEE

- Deborah Ely, Program Manager, Visual Arts and Crafts, Ministry for the Arts
- Maisy Stapleton, CEO, Museums and Galleries, NSW
- Dolla Merrillees, Director, Visual Arts, Museums and Galleries, NSW
- Sue Boaden, Director, Australia Street Company
- Patricia Parker, Director, Admin Art

## Research support

- Sarah-Jane Rennie, Team Leader, Research and Training, Museums and Galleries, NSW

# APPENDIX 2 DATA COLLECTION WORKSHEET

(Note: Most questions were completed via desktop research of Ministry and MGNSW files. Those completed via interview with Gallery directors have been identified. )

INSTITUTION NAME: MGNSW ID No.

STREET ADDRESS PO ADDRESS

SUBURB P/CODE

PHONE FAX MOBILE

EMAIL WEB

14. CONTACT: 15. REGION 16. LGA

17. YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT

18. LGA Population 19. Regional population

20. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS TO 2020

21. OPENING HOURS

22. TOTAL OPEN HOURS PER WEEK

23. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE Board  Company  Council Line Management  Advisory Committee   
Charitable Status

24.

STAFF	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
F/T					
P/T					
Volunteers					
Total volunteer hours					
Salary budget \$					

25. ( By interview) 2004 Professional Development

Mentorship  Further Study  Staff Exchanges  Scholarships  Attendance at Conferences  Other

26. (By interview) Formal PARTNERSHIPS based on written agreements. Specify type of partnership

Schools  Museums  Libraries  Local businesses  Media  Service/volunteer groups  Community organizations  Unis/TAFE  Tourist Boards, Committees, Organisations  NSW Flagships specify: ArtGNSW, Aust. Museum, HHT, SLNSW, Powerhouse, Regional Galleries, National Flagships specify National Gallery, War Memorial, Museum of Australia, and National Portrait Gallery. Other (Specify)

**27. (By interview) COLLECTIONS**

Size of overall Collection:

Number of 2003/2004 acquisitions:

Number of works purchased per annum from Acquisitive competition

Number of 2003/2004 donations:

Are you actively collecting? Yes  No Does your Collection have particular strengths? Yes  No 

List your Collecting focus (theme, artists, artforms

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

**28/29. (By interview) Rate your overall collection on a scale of 1-5**

(1 unsatisfactory, 5 excellent)

<b>Overall Insured collection value 03/04</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Primary Significance of Overall Collection</b>	<b>1 – 5</b>
Historical	
Aesthetic (craftsmanship, style, technical excellence, beauty, demonstration of skill and quality of design and execution. Might be innovative or traditional objects from Indigenous or folk cultures or high art. May be unique or mass produced.)	
Social significance	
Technical	
<b>Comparative significance</b>	
Provenance	
Representativeness	
Rarity	
Condition, intactness and integrity	
Interpretive potential	
Geographic significance (tick as appropriate)	Local regional State National

**30. (By interview) Do you have a special collection? Yes  No** **31. Identify each collection**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

32/33. (By interview) Primary Value & Significance of each Collection –

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Overall Insured collection value 03/04</b>	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Primary Significance of Each Collection</b>					
Historical					
Aesthetic (craftsmanship, style, technical excellence, beauty, demonstration of skill and quality of design and execution. Might be innovative or traditional objects from Indigenous or folk cultures or high art. May be unique or mass produced.)					
Social significance					
Technical					
<b>Comparative significance</b>					
Provenance					
Representativeness					
Rarity					
Condition, intactness and integrity					
Interpretive potential					
Geographic significance (tick as appropriate)	Local regional State National				

34. (By interview) Do you provide Collection related study, research & services? Yes  No

If Yes, do you provide the following?

Access/study visits  research library  information & referral services

On line access to digital images  published documentation  gallery based public access database

Other (specify)

35. COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Registration Book Card Catalogue Mosaic System Web access Database Other

**Catalogued** Collection digitalised **Storage System** – CD Rom, Collection Database, Separate database, Other .....

Conservation Program

36. (By interview) RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

(Collections, Audience & Exhibitions)

Name of program	Nature of Program: Qualitative Quantitative Collaborative	Output eg report/ database/ book	Budget \$	One off or ongoing

37. (By interview) Research & Scholarship Future Plans

**38. Program Aims & Objectives (By interview)**

**39. (By interview) PERFORMANCE DATA**

**What is distinctive / unique about your program?**

**40. (By interview) Do you evaluate whether your programs achieve their objectives? Yes  No**

**41. If Yes, what programs?**

Public program  school visits  Special events  Permanent exhibitions  Temp exhibitions  Community exhibitions  group visits  partnerships  café  publications  Shop  Other –

**If Yes, what measures do you use to evaluate performance against objectives?**

**Quantitative e.g**

- Repeat visits
- Active involvement of partners
- Gallery visits by visiting dignitaries to Council
- Media response – articles, column inches? \$
- Income targets – shop sales
- Other -

**Qualitative e.g.**

- Focus group workshops
- Annual visitor survey
- Evaluation form for school/ group visits
- Question in Council's community survey
- Professional recognition
- Other

**42. (By interview) OUTPUT MEASURES**

YEAR	VISITORS	SCHOOL GROUPS	LOCAL VISITORS	NSW VISITORS	INTER-STATE VISITORS	INTER NATIONAL
2002						
2003						
2004						

**43. (By interview) Do you measure Program impact? Yes  No**

Specify

#### 44. POLICY AND PLANNING

Document title	Date	Comments
Collection Management Policy		
Disaster Plan		
Business Plan		
Strategic Plan		
OH & S Policy		
Technology Plan		
Marketing Plan		
Compliance with Australian Standards, Quality and Building (Please specify)		
Access & Equity Policy		
Other		

#### 45. PROGRAMS

Type pa	Internally Curated (one off)	External Touring	Incoming Touring	Tour Management Partnerships
Exhibitions 2002 2003 2004				
Education Programs 2002 2003 2004				
Audience Development 2002 2003 2004				
Events/Functions 2002 2003 2004				
Friends Programs 2002 2003 2004				
Workshops 2002 2003 2004				
Artists in Residence 2002 2003 2004				

Community Driven Events/Functions 2002 2003 2004				
Fellowships /Scholarships 2002 2003 2004				

**46. MEMBERSHIP programs**

2000  
2001  
2002  
2003  
2004

**47. AWARDS RECEIVED**

--

**48. BUILDING/INFRASTRUCTURE DATA**

Age of Building                      Addition/s date:  
M<sup>2</sup> size of building                M<sup>2</sup>size of galleries: specify  
Co location data:                    Air conditioning  
Technology Hardware/Software  
Special Aspects: gardens sculpture court theatrette workshops studios loading dock café shop Other: e.g.  
Conference facility, artist-in-residence space.

**49. FINANCIAL DATA**

YEAR	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	ANNUAL BUDGET
2002			
2003			
2004			

**50. GRANTS – LGA, State, Federal, Endowments, Bequests**

Year	Source	Purpose	Amount \$

**51. (By interview) NEW DIRECTION/FUTURE PLANS**

Identify proposed changes to scale of operations and anticipated timeframes. e.g.

New / refurbished buildings

New management responsibilities

New programs

Changed opening hours

Other

**52. (By interview) POTENTIAL IMPACT OF NEW DIRECTIONS** eg increased staff and budgets

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# APPENDIX 3 COLLECTING SPECIALISATIONS

<b>SPECIALISATION</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>
Animals in art	Dubbo
Asian art -China Tibet	New England, Wollongong Albury
Australian aboriginal art -Hastings local indigenous art - Illawarra Indigenous art	Broken Hill, Campbelltown, Moree Plains -Hastings -Wollongong
Australian art -1880 to 1948 - post pop - 20th century	New England New England Newcastle, Orange, Wollongong
Australian ceramics - post 1950 - contemporary	Bathurst, Newcastle, Orange , Penrith Muswellbrook -Manly
Australian drawing - from 1950 -Contemporary	Manning Grafton
Australian jewellery -contemporary	Griffith
Australian painting -from 1950	Penrith Manning, Mosman, Muswellbrook
Australian prints -Contemporary	Grafton
Australian sculpture – themed	Bathurst, Penrith Lake Macquarie
Broken Hill artists	Broken Hill
Childrens book illustrations	Dubbo
Cowra artists	Cowra
Fibre textiles	Tamworth
George Lambert	Dubbo
Glass art	Wagga Wagga
Goulburn region artists	Goulburn
Grafton region artists	Grafton
Hastings local artists	Hastings
Hill End artists	Bathurst
Illawarra artists	Wollongong
Lloyd Rees	Bathurst
Modernism – Australian modernism	Bathurst Penrith
New England artists	New England
Photography	Albury, Muswellbrook
Portraits	Tweed River
Postwar abstraction	Manly

<b>SPECIALISATION</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>
Riverina artists	Wagga Wagga
Russell Drysdale	Albury
Wearable art	Orange
Wood	Tweed
Works on Paper	Manly , Mosman, Muswellbrook, Penrith Newcastle, Tweed , Wagga Wagga

# APPENDIX 4 NEW DIRECTIONS AND PLANS

<b>NAME OF GALLERY</b>	<b>PLANS</b>
Albury Regional Gallery	2005-2006 Indigenous art program; youth program 2008 New building within cultural precinct 2005 – Telstra partnership
Bathurst Regional Art Gallery	2005-06 Sister city cultural exchange – Japan Public art 2010 – new building – purpose built – Crago Mill 2010 – satellite gallery at Hill End 2006-7 – Sunday opening hours extended.
Bega Valley Regional Gallery	2005 entire program under review. Workshops, lunchtime lectures commenced 2005 – New Advisory Committee appointed. Options for a collection focus in development. May take on responsibility for public art 2005-06 – opening hours under review to link with co-located library opening hours
Blacktown Arts Centre	2005-06 Planning outreach across the LGA in alternative venues 2005-06 New staff Volunteer Coordinator/ Office coordinator 2005-06 Revised hours – extended weekday opening and revised Saturday hours
Campbelltown City Bicentennial Art Gallery	2004-05 New position – Audience Development Officer 2005 – Major building extension
Casula Powerhouse Art Centre	2005-6 Theatre and performing arts program 2005-06 Major extension to provide museum standard exhibition space, theatre/ performance space; artists studios and residency space, artists business centre, 10 exhibition spaces, retail outlet, café and commercial gallery space
Coffs Harbour City Gallery	2006-07 Development of an acquisitive competition 2007-08 New building/ extensions to provide 2000 m <sup>2</sup> gallery 2007-08 Opening hours extended to 6 days
Cowra Art Gallery	2005-06 .5 Administration support requested 2008 Gallery extension – shop
Dubbo Regional Gallery	2005-6 Development of Dubbo Cultural Centre in former Dubbo High School ( co-located with museum, community arts centre and gallery) Manger, Art Gallery and Museum will take on cultural development role 2005/06 7 day span of operations anticipated. Staff will increase from 2 to 5

<b>NAME OF GALLERY</b>	<b>PLANS</b>
Fairfield City Museum and Art Gallery	2005-6 Music events/ performances in Museum/ Gallery precinct Further development of public areas. Increase in number of quality exhibitions. Development of soundscapes Extending exhibition space 2005-6 Extension to accommodate workshop programs 2006-7 New position – art curator
Gosford Regional Gallery	2006-7 Responsibility for public art projects 2005-6 Review of hours
Goulburn Regional Art Gallery	2008 anticipate Sunday opening 2005 Sponsorship from Country Energy for school workshop program
Grafton Regional Gallery	2008 – development of off site annex for storage 2006-7 Expect to take on cultural coordination, exhibition coordinator and Administration officer
Griffith Regional Gallery	2006-7 New collecting area- Australian couture 2008-9 New gallery – workshops/ space and storage
Hawkesbury Regional Gallery	2005-06 Focus on establishing a balanced program 50% in house curated and 50% touring. Visitor focus critical.
Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Art Centre	2005-06 May take on cultural planning, ccd and public art Future plans include – Connex schools program, Master class/ studio programs, art after hours. Film screenings in theatrette. Forums
Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery	2005 Assessment and forward plan for Sculpture Park prepared by Sally Couacaud 2006 Centre for Excellence proposal to MFA/ OZCO. 2005 New buildings – theatrette/ collection storage 2005 Seminar room 2006-7 Possible responsibilities public art and performing arts 2005-6 Monday opening under consideration
Maitland Regional Art Gallery	2006-7 Higher order audience development program – research based 2006-7 Building extension
Manly Art Gallery	2006-7 Integration of gallery and museum programs 2007-8 Improved facilities – refurbished café 2006-7 Appointment of social history curator
Manning Regional Art Gallery	2005-6 Extending programs to showcase local talent and to support skills development 2005-6 Extension to double gallery space 195 m <sup>2</sup> + 2007-8 Extend opening hours from 5 days pw to 6 or 7 days
Moree Plains Gallery	2007-8 New building to include workshops. Development of Keeping Place in the gardens

<b>NAME OF GALLERY</b>	<b>PLANS</b>
Mosman Art Gallery and Community Centre	2005-06 Staff exchanges to AGNSW Major art exhibition – artists camps of Mosman Sister City exchanges 2007-08 Major sponsorship in development linked to 10th Anniversary 2008. Catalogue of collection focus
Muswellbrook Regional Gallery	2005-6 Off site storage 2005-6 Staff exchanges 2007-8 Establish Trust of Foundation
New England Regional Art Museum	No comment provided
Newcastle Regional Gallery	2005-06 Newcastle Building Society partnership 2005-06 Late Friday night openings 5-8pm. Focus on 20 to 45 year olds 2007-8 Masterplan and development of major cultural precinct including a commercial income generating component 2005-6 Children's art focus – 3-15 years Collaboration with Hunter galleries – Gosford, Taree, Muswellbrook, Port Macquarie. Collection focus to ensure accessibility/ exhibitions and long term loans
Orange Regional Gallery	2008 New museum facility integrated with art gallery and to include workshops, bistro and storage
Penrith Regional Gallery	2005-06 Expansion of programs 2005-06 Expanded facilities – exhibition space 2005-06 Appointment of Indigenous curator
Port Macquarie/ Hastings Regional Gallery	2006-7 New building – space doubled
Tamworth City Gallery	2005-06 Master classes and specialist workshops 2005-06 Opening hours under review 2005-6 development with partnerships with other regional galleries – seminars, workshops etc.
Tweed River Art Gallery	2005-06 Stage 2 gallery extension to 500 m <sup>2</sup> increase (2004-5 extension = 5 additional staff) Development of temporary exhibition space 2005-06 opening hours extended Tuesday to Saturday
Wagga Wagga Art Gallery	2006 Travelling glass exhibition 3 Wagga Wagga initiated shows pa. 3-5 collection shows including one touring biannually 2005 – new downstairs entrance 2005 Museum and public art responsibilities 2005-6 Monday to Sunday opening (Monday currently closed)
Wollongong City Gallery	2005 Focus on SE Asia links. Indonesia at local, regional and international level 2005 Building partnerships with university, government, business with link to Asia (Indonesia)

# APPENDIX 5 POLICY TRENDS

## THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

As a general rule it is the local government sector that provides the bulk of funding for regional galleries in Australia. In 1998/99 local government spent \$24,300,000 on the support of art galleries.<sup>2</sup> Local government provides capital as well as ongoing operational resources and although funding is available from the other two tiers of government support is generally limited to contributions towards capital works and/or projects or programs.

In Australia the sector is dynamic ..... and growing. In the 1950s there were eight regional galleries and by 2000 this had grown to 104 across Australia. There is no indication that development is slowing and in NSW in June 2005 one new gallery opened (Hawkesbury Regional Gallery) whilst two galleries launched major extensions (Campbelltown and Tamworth with a major redevelopment underway at Casula). At least three other Local Government Areas are planning new galleries (Blue Mountains, Cessnock and Ku-ring-gai) and many respondents to this Study indicated plans for refurbishments and extensions.

## COMMONWEALTH SUPPORT

Support for regional galleries at the Commonwealth level mainly comes via the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) and the Australia Council. In regional and outer metropolitan Australia funds for art gallery feasibility planning and capital development have also been supported by the Department of Transport and Regional Services under the Regional Partnerships program.

## VISIONS OF AUSTRALIA

DCITA actively provides program funding for regional galleries via the Visions Australia program. The Visions of Australia program is focused on providing greater access to original cultural material via funding assistance for cultural and community organisations to develop and manage touring exhibitions. Exhibitions must tour to at least one other State and Territory. The program is broadly based and is not limited to a specific program category or subject.

Since its establishment in 1993 Visions has provided critical support for visual arts and craft activity (37.5%) and many of the projects have assisted NSW regional galleries to initiate touring exhibitions and/or to be the beneficiaries of tours from other galleries and museums.<sup>3</sup> The program has an impact on skills development including in the areas of research, curatorial and conservation services, exhibition design and installation, audience development and marketing.

## AUSTRALIA COUNCIL

The Australia Council is the Federal Government's arts policy and funding agency. Regional galleries are generally supported by the Council's Visual Arts and Crafts Board (VACB). Grant categories include:

- Presentation and promotion
- Skills and arts development (artists in association with a gallery)
- New work (artists in association with a gallery).
- Key organisations (including NETS agencies triennial grants).

The Australia Council from time to time also has supported regional initiatives through short-term development programs. Regional galleries have been eligible to be considered under these programs.

From data collected in this Study it seems that only a small number of galleries are successful in applying to the Australia Council for support. Information on levels of support to the sector have been requested from the Australia Council but have not yet been received.

2 Report of the Myer Inquiry into the Contemporary Visual Arts and Crafts Sector, 2002. Canberra: DCITA.

3 Report of the Myer Inquiry into the Contemporary Visual Arts and Crafts sector, 2002. Canberra: DCITA.

## **VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFT STRATEGY**

As a result of the Report of the Myer Inquiry into the Contemporary Visual Arts and Crafts Sector with its 20 vital recommendations regarding the future of the sector, the Cultural Ministers' Council developed a funding strategy for the sector. The Strategy provides for the Federal government and all Australian States and Territories to contribute to boosting financial support for the contemporary visual arts and crafts. In particular the Strategy recognises the needs of individual artists as well as contemporary art organisations.

## **TOURING EXHIBITIONS**

Touring exhibition activity is supported by the NETS Australia program. NETS (national exhibition touring support) is a national network of exhibition touring support agencies dedicated to the support of contemporary craft and visual arts and ensuring that interesting exhibitions are developed by and are accessible to regional Australian and in particular to the regional gallery sector.

In NSW, MGNSW is the lead agency generally working in partnership with regional galleries but also libraries, State galleries, arts organisations and centres, artists run galleries etc to create, develop and tour exhibitions. The NETS program complements Visions of Australia since NETS focuses on intrastate as well as interstate touring. Funding has remained static and no increase is envisaged.

The program is managed in NSW by MGNSW with support from the Australia Council. In NSW the priority under this program is to provide rural and remote organisations with access to high quality visual arts and crafts exhibitions which they might not otherwise be able to bring to their community due to cost or distance.

## **STATE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**

The focus of policy analysis for this Study has focused on NSW, Queensland and Victoria since these States have developed visual arts and crafts infrastructure policy and support that fosters the development and operations of regional galleries. The sector in NSW and Victoria is robust with relatively large numbers of galleries operating at the local government level. This scale of operation is not so developed in other States and Territories due to a number of factors including limited collection development at the local level, limited population base, little or no tradition in the development of regional galleries and limited support at the State level. Queensland however has recently upgraded their support to the sector with the establishment of Museum and Gallery Services Queensland, a company affiliated with the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland and modelled largely on MGNSW. MGS, Queensland is funded by Arts Queensland.

Many local councils in other States do however maintain small gallery spaces where some intrastate and national touring and exhibition of local work is programmed. Often the space is maintained by volunteers or as an adjunct to the local museum or public library.

## **VICTORIA**

Under Arts Victoria's current funding, programs that support regional galleries are mainly provided within the Engaging Creative Communities-Public Art Galleries Program. The Program supports the operation, management and programming of Victoria's network of regional and outer metropolitan public galleries. Eligibility is restricted to collection-based public galleries and is based on an established funding relationship with Arts Victoria that has been in place for many years. It is estimated that there are around 30 regional galleries in Victoria.

However only 17 collection-based galleries make up the network and the most recent addition was Monash Regional Gallery in 2003. The subsidies are not competitive and each participating gallery receives an annual operating subsidy that varies between galleries depending on their level of local government support. Levels of support are static and do not change from year to year.

Feedback from the Public Galleries Association of Victoria indicates that not all regional galleries in Victoria are happy with this historical situation.<sup>4</sup> PGAV members are pushing for a criteria of eligibility to be developed and for a reconsideration of the collection-based eligibility policy. The PGAV currently has 36 members including peak flagship galleries in Melbourne. Members perceive that the recurrent funding by Arts Vic to a select network of galleries supports complacency in relation to operations and programming. It also fosters an “us and them” hierarchy within the sector.

In June 2005 the Victorian Arts Minister announced a new Regional Gallery Collection Fund (\$425,000) funded by the Bank of Melbourne and negotiated by Arts Victoria. The Fund allocates \$25,000 to each of the network galleries and is focused on fostering the purchase of new works, the conservation of existing works or the documentation of regional gallery collections.<sup>5</sup>

Engaging Creative Communities program supports an Indemnification Scheme for collection-based public art galleries in regional and outer metropolitan Victoria. This category also supports Artists in Community programs as well as a funding program for Community Liaison Officers and Professionals in residence scheme. This program facilitates the employment of professionals to work in galleries, museums or performing arts centres as well as with community groups and is focused on enhancing engagement with local communities and on increasing community participation in cultural activities. It also seeks to foster economic development and tourism sector.

Under the Building Creative Industries program, activities are supported that focus on international export and touring as well as cultural exchanges. Regional galleries are eligible to apply as part of a longer-term State government initiative to develop and promote Victoria as a major cultural centre in the Asia-Pacific region.

Arts Victoria also provides a program of support under “Developing Artists, Ideas and Knowledge” which encourages the creation and presentation of new work and the fostering of arts innovation. In June 2005 the agency announced a new internship program (\$10,000) that will support the staff from Victoria’s regional gallery sector to undertake professional internships at the National Gallery of Victoria. The internships are designed to develop participant’s skills in areas including curatorial, collection management, public programs, marketing, communications and fundraising.

Arts Victoria reports that a review of regional gallery policy is not anticipated in the short term.<sup>6</sup> Although it should be noted that officer in the area is newly appointed and plans a program of familiarisation site-visits over the next few months.

## QUEENSLAND

It is estimated that there are approximately 35 galleries operated by local government in Queensland and that many of them are struggling due to low levels of funding from councils. In the last 5 years Queensland has experienced a building boom due to capital funds sourced from Centenary of Federation, Heritage Trails and Millennium Program Funding. Insufficient planning for recurrent operational has resulted in many galleries in dire circumstances.

Arts Queensland does not have a specific program supporting regional galleries. No galleries are funded within Arts Queensland’s recurrent triennial funding program although some galleries may receive specific, annual project based funding. Arts Queensland is supporting Museum and Gallery Services Queensland via triennial funding which started in 2004. MAGS, Qld is the peak body for the sector modelled on MGnsw, replacing Regional Galleries Association of Queensland in 2004.

Galleries in Queensland are eligible for Regional Arts Development Funding supported by Arts Queensland. RADF is devolved to local government and requires councils to provide matching funds to support local initiatives. Decisions are made locally and galleries have to compete with other local community organisations. Funding available is low and would not for example support the development of a major exhibition.

Representatives of MAGS, Qld report that they have been advocating on behalf of the gallery sector for some time and in 2004 MAGS, Qld commissioned a comparative study to analyse regional gallery funding policies and levels across NSW, Victoria and Queensland.<sup>7</sup> Significant data gaps were found which impacted on the value of the analysis but overall, the Study found that State funding for galleries in Queensland should be increased.

4 Discussion with PGAV staff August 16 2005.

5 [www.arts.vic.gov.au](http://www.arts.vic.gov.au) (eNews –Arts Victoria- June 2005).

6 Discussion with Arts Vic Regional Galleries Officer, 17 August 05.

7 Discussion with representative of MAGS, Qld 18 August 05.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

The New South Wales strategic priorities are outlined in the Strategic Plan 2004-2007. The plan provides a foundation for developing the arts in New South Wales and the strategic priorities are:

- 1 Strengthening the arts and cultural environment
- 2 Innovation
- 3 Education and learning
- 4 Leadership

The Ministry's Vision is to 'Foster a spirited arts and cultural environment which values our artists and our heritage, which builds community, excites our imagination and inspires our future'.

The following commitments underpin the Vision:

- Participation
- Creativity
- Excellence
- Respect
- Diversity
- Collaboration
- Sustainability
- Quality

The New South Wales Ministry for the Arts offers a broad range of assistance to professional arts and cultural organisations including regional galleries through the Cultural Grants Program. Incorporated organisations and local government authorities including public galleries operated by local government are eligible to apply for Cultural Grants. The Ministry also offers a broad range of awards, fellowships, scholarships and residencies aimed at supporting and encouraging arts practitioners living in New South Wales. Many of these opportunities are open to practising visual arts and crafts practitioners.<sup>8</sup>

Programs of assistance for regional galleries are provided via the Ministry's Visual Arts and Crafts Program and Program objectives link to the Ministry's four overall strategic priorities listed above. There are four types of funding under the Visual Arts and Crafts Program and these are as follows:

- Annual operations – this funding is available to selected professional companies to support an annual program of activity. There are two categories within this type of funding: program costs and staff establishment grants. Program costs for galleries that have a demonstrated record of achievement and which make a substantial contribution to their own operating costs over several years along with a track record in the delivery of innovative programming are eligible to apply. Staff establishment grants on the other hand provide assistance to organisations including regional galleries that are developing visual arts infrastructure in their region or extending existing programs. This type of support is for the establishment of new professional positions and is in the form of matching grants up to 50% of salary and on-costs and is available for up to three years.
- Projects – grants to support exhibitions, exhibition development, residencies, publications, outreach and educational programs, conferences or other activities that form part of a professional visual arts and craft program of events. Project grants include:
  - Artists projects – aimed at providing enhanced levels of support for individual visual arts and crafts people. This type of support is aimed at artist-directed temporal projects, with a public outcome and which take place in alternative spaces and sites in New South Wales. This program has been developed as an outcome of the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy resulting from the Myer Inquiry and the level of take-up by artists working with regional galleries is not available at this stage.

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<sup>8</sup> Guidelines 2006 Cultural Grants 2006 and Fellowships, Scholarships & Awards 2005-2006. Sydney: NSW Ministry for the Arts, 2005.

- Public art – for assistance towards the commissioning of art in public places including collaborative projects, temporary and permanent works and in sites with significant public access. Project applications can include support for concept works and maquettes and for public art commissioning.
- Strategic initiatives – funding for initiatives that have long-term outcomes for the development of the arts industry in New South Wales. Priority areas include:
  - audience development
  - collection development
  - business development
  - employment opportunities
  - new technology applications
  - national and international partnerships.
- Triennial funding – available to selected organisations with a substantial track record of achievement. It is understood that regional galleries are not considered for support under this category.

## **OTHER RELEVANT MINISTRY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

Regional galleries in NSW may also access other programs of support offered by the Ministry. Of most interest are the following:

- Western Sydney Arts Strategy – including the Capital Infrastructure Program, Western Sydney Local Government Arts Incentive Fund, Western Sydney Artists Fellowships (Biennial) and Community-based Arts Officer positions.
- Indigenous Arts – including projects that recognise, support and promote Indigenous cultural expression and which show evidence of support from Indigenous community members/organisations as documented in the Ministry's Indigenous Arts Protocol.

## **OTHER RELEVANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

In New South Wales a number of peak visual arts organisations provide support for regional galleries with the support of the Ministry for the Arts. These include:

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE VISUAL ARTS (NAVA)**

The Ministry has devolved funds to NAVA to support small grants to professional visual arts/crafts practitioners for marketing and public presentation including catalogue and documentation expenses. This support could provide assistance for artists to develop a program in partnership with a regional gallery/ies.

### **MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES, NSW**

Museums and Galleries, NSW (MGnsw) was established in 1999 to provide services and development for galleries and museums across the State. The organisation in that time has established a new and effective model for the delivery of services and the development of capacity in the museum and gallery sector.

MGnsw has focused its visual arts program on professional development, advocacy and promotion, audience development initiatives, support for strong research programs, national conferences, seminars and symposium series, networking between collection-based agencies, support of mentorships/ internships and scholarships and the support of touring whilst all the time keeping an eye on strategic trends and new directions in the sector both locally and overseas.

Since 2004, MGnsw has devolved grant funds to remote and emerging regional galleries to fund the presentation of touring exhibitions. This includes support for exhibition fees, transportation, education and public programs. The priority is to support access to high quality contemporary visual arts and crafts exhibitions to rural and remote communities.

## INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

A brief scan of policy trends impacting on the regional gallery sector in England, United States, Canada and New Zealand was undertaken as a component of this Study. The results are provided below:

### NEW ZEALAND

The development of a network of regional galleries is emerging as an area of growth in New Zealand where the trend has been towards co-locating galleries with local museums and public libraries. In 2005 it was estimated that overall New Zealand supported 40 art galleries and many of these would be regional galleries.<sup>9</sup> Local government has traditionally provided primary capital and operational support for these facilities. The New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage provides limited support (NZ\$10.3M per annum) for Capital Construction projects under its Regional Museums Policy.<sup>10</sup> Create New Zealand does not have a specific program that supports regional galleries.

The Lottery Grants Board provides capital and operational funding to galleries under its Environment and Heritage program but has a decreasing pool of funds due to decreasing Lotto profits. Quality gallery educational projects are also supported by the Department of Education under its LEOTC funding. There is stiff competition for these funds. Support for the sector is also provided firstly by Museums Aotearoa, the peak organisation for museums and galleries and secondly by National Services Te Paerangi based at Te Papa Tongarewa National Museum in Wellington.

The recently launched Strategy for the Museums Sector provides a framework for developing museums and galleries in New Zealand as more than collections but rather as facilities that “provide a central focus for community life”.<sup>11</sup> The Strategy proposes the development of a collaborative approach to managing collection and exhibition programming.

This in turn provides opportunities for increased support of staff training and development as well the establishment of a national collections body to progress the maintenance of and access to collections (library, archives, museums and galleries) across the country. Linked to this is the identification of opportunities within the sector to link to national Government digital strategies and other advances in the online environment. The need for more research into the sector’s role in life-long learning has also been identified as well as better understanding the sector’s impacts on regional economic and social well-being.

### CANADA

In Canada national support is provided for art galleries via the Canada Council’s program of Assistance to Art Museums and Public Galleries.<sup>12</sup> The Canada Council for the Arts recognizes art museums and public galleries as institutions that collect, preserve, present and interpret works of art from the past and present. In doing so these institutions give shape to the meaning and value of works in the visual arts, locating these works within a critical and historical context. The Council regards public galleries and art museums as the key mechanism linking artworks and Canadian audiences.

The Assistance to Art Museums and Public Galleries program provides support for the following activities in contemporary visual art:

- Collections management
- Curatorial research
- Presentation and circulation of exhibitions
- Publication
- Public programming activities
- Audience development
- Administration and
- Promotion.

9 A Strategy for the Museum Sector in New Zealand, April 2005. Wellington: Museums Aotearora/ Museums of New Zealand.

10 www.mch.govt.nz and email advice Jane Kiminik, Deputy Chief Executive and Policy Group Manager, Ministry for Culture and Heritage 6 July 2005.

11 A Strategy for the Museum Sector, page 35.

12 www.canadacouncil.ca

Grants are awarded based on the following assessment criteria:

- 1 Artistic quality of applicant's curatorial activities in contemporary visual art (50%)
- 2 Quality and effectiveness of applicant's public programming and audience development activities (20%)
- 3 Quality and effectiveness of applicant's institutional objectives and strategies (20%)
- 4 Administrative merit (10%)

## ENGLAND

Through the national Department of Culture, Media and Sport national policy in England in relation to galleries focuses on the government's four strategic priorities – children and young people, communities, the economy and delivery. Programs should also reflect other government priorities on education, social inclusion, regeneration and community cohesion.

In January 2005, the Ministry published a consultation paper "Understanding the future: museums and 21st century life". The Paper invited comments on plans to encourage museums, including galleries, to:

- Make better use of their collections
- Share collections with other institutions
- Modernise their workforces and
- Develop strategies to join up the sector more effectively

Since 2000 there has been significant investment by the central government in England directed towards the gallery and museums sector. The new approach aims to raise regional standards and to deliver improved results in the key strategic areas that support education, learning, community development and economic regeneration. Regional activity is at the heart of this investment and it reflects a coming together at the regional level of infrastructure that develops and supports the museums/gallery, library and archives sector.

Nine regional hubs have been set up in each English region to act as flagship museums, to foster excellence and to lead in developing high standards of regional museum practice. Programs have been identified which describe the full range of activities and these include:

- Access
- Audience development
- Collections
- E-Society
- Leadership and advocacy
- Learning
- Research and development
- Standards
- Workforce development<sup>13</sup>

Overseeing and supporting these activities is the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). As well as being a strategic policy agency, MLA is also a grant giving and program support body providing crucial aid to the regions across the museums, libraries and archives sector. Support has focused on further developing and strengthening the 1988 minimum standards scheme for museums and galleries, workforce development including skills development, leadership, diversification, volunteers, partnerships and core research. MLA also supports strengthening collection's support including strategies that foster best practice in collections management systems, acquisition and disposal, cataloguing, security, care and conservation, records management and cultural property issues. In May 2005

13 [www.mla.gov.uk](http://www.mla.gov.uk)

for example the MLA announced grants to regional museums that support pooled resources, collection database establishment and the sharing and display of artefacts via new "Subject Specialist Networks" which have been set up.<sup>14</sup> Information about objects and collections will be shared through Cornucopia, the MLA's national online database of museum, library and archive collections. ([www.cornucopia.org.uk](http://www.cornucopia.org.uk)).

The Arts Council of England provides another level of grant support for arts organisations including art galleries and for individuals including artists and also curators. Grants for organisations include for:

- Projects and events
- Activities for people to take part in
- Education activities
- Research and development
- Commissions and production
- Marketing activities
- 'Audience development' (activity carried out specifically to meet the needs of audiences and to help arts organisations develop ongoing relationships with audiences)
- Capital items – equipment and improvements to facilities and buildings
- Professional development and training
- Organisational development to improve the long-term stability of arts organisations and
- Touring

## **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is an independent agency that serves as the primary source of federal grants for the nation's libraries and museums. Grants to museums and libraries build institutional capacity, support core library and museum services, encourage excellence, foster collaboration between and among museums and libraries and promote innovation. The Institute complements programs fostering the arts and artists administered by the National Endowment for the Arts and also humanities programs administered by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Institute also complements programs that support the development and operations of art museums at the State and local level.

The Institute provides leadership to the sector. It has supported digital projects that enhance access to heritage resources and also fosters collaboration between libraries and museums. In June 2005 the Institute announced a new report documenting the critical role played by libraries and museums in supporting a learning society and in creating and sustaining a nation of lifelong learners.<sup>15</sup> [www.ims.gov](http://www.ims.gov) The Report highlights projects and partnerships and identifies strategies to cultivate lifelong learning through projects that cut across institutional boundaries to include museums, galleries, libraries as well as schools and other community organisations.

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14 MLA News 18 May 2005. "Museums join forces to bring new life to old collections".

15 Charting the landscape/ mapping new paths: museums, libraries and K-12 education. 2005. Washington: Institute of Museum and Library Services.

# APPENDIX 6 MAPPING THE SECTOR

<b>REGION</b>	<b>GALLERIES</b>
Central Coast	Gosford Regional Gallery and Arts Centre
Central west	Bathurst Regional Gallery Cowra Art Gallery Orange Regional Gallery
Hunter	Hastings Regional Gallery Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery Maitland Regional Art Gallery Manning Regional Art Gallery Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre Newcastle Region Art Gallery
Illawarra	Wollongong City Gallery
Murray	Albury Regional Art Gallery
New England	New England regional Art Museum
Northern	Moree Plains Art Gallery Tamworth City Gallery
Northern Rivers	Coffs Harbour City Gallery Grafton Regional Gallery Lismore Regional Gallery Tweed River Art Gallery
Orana	Dubbo Regional Gallery
Riverina	Griffith Regional Art Gallery
Riverina Eastern	Wagga Wagga Art Gallery
South East	Bega Regional Gallery
Southern Tablelands	Goulburn Regional Gallery
Sydney Metro East	Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre Manly Art Gallery and Museum Mosman Art Gallery and Community Centre
West	Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery
Western Sydney	Blacktown Arts Centre Campbelltown Arts Centre Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre Fairfield City Museum and Art Gallery Hawkesbury City Gallery Penrith Regional Gallery and Lewers Bequest

# Based on Scoping Study of Regional Galleries in NSW 2005

