

A Strategy for the Museum Sector in New Zealand

April, 2005



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1 Introduction: Why a museum sector strategy?

The following report sets out a new national strategy for the museum sector in New Zealand. The aim in developing such a strategy has been to establish a unified vision and clear goals for the sector, and to identify the means of achieving them.

Museums and art galleries in New Zealand are well positioned to play a dynamic role in our national cultural life as centres of excellence where people can learn, experience and enjoy, and be stimulated to think about their place in the world. The museum sector (a term which will be described in more detail in the paragraphs below) has considerable resources of collections and buildings, people and expertise, but it needs to develop these and make better use of its existing strengths to meet contemporary standards and expectations.

There are a number of changing patterns in society, among them a new way of perceiving museums. Museums and art galleries now perform a flagship role in the provision of arts, culture and heritage activities; they help to generate economic activity in urban and rural communities; they contribute to the development of social capital and encourage discourse about the key aspects of our community and our national identity.

However, the museum sector in New Zealand comprises a large number of small, often volunteer-based, organizations and a few mid-size and larger institutions. Many small museums are at present unable to meet adequate standards of collection care and exhibition. It is imperative therefore that there is a high degree of cooperation and mutual support between the various groups in the sector, and efforts made to avoid duplication of resources.

The sector has made a collective effort in recent years to focus on common issues e.g. museum standards, the development of training, and the establishment of a code of ethics. There has also been greater sharing of collections and resources. But there is more to be done in these areas. A particular gap identified by some is a need for a common interest group on heritage and collection management that will raise issues for debate and contribute to the development of Government policy that affects the sector. There is also a need for organizations in the sector to work more closely together on matters that are vital to their collective interest.

In recent years there has been a renewal and rebuilding of many of the museums and galleries in our cities and towns, with new and innovative approaches being undertaken. There are a number of exciting developments recently completed and more are under way. There appears however to be only a limited amount of research into the effectiveness of the sector in recent years. Some useful data is available as a result of recent surveys of the cultural sector conducted by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Statistics New Zealand, and an analysis of census and other data collected by Statistics New Zealand.

The formation of a new national strategy for the museum sector is also timely because the nature of our society, and particularly its demographic structure, is changing. The New Zealand population is undergoing a long term transition from an age structure in which the vast majority of our people are young, to one in which young and old groups are more evenly balanced. This impact on society can be most readily seen in terms of change in the median age of the population, which is currently 35, but which will be 46 by the year 2051 on current projections. Half of our population is already over 35.

The 'baby boom' of the 1960s is moving through the population age range so that the proportion of older people in the population will grow further in the next decade. But this growth will not be uniform. The Maori population is expected to grow at a faster rate than the total New Zealand population and is expected to increase from 15 percent in 2001 to 17 per cent by 2021 with half of Maori being over 27 in 2021 compared with the median age of 22 years in 2001. The Pacific peoples' share of the total population will increase to 9 percent in 2021 from 7 per cent in 2001, with half of them over 24 years of age, and the Asian population is expected to almost double in that period, to 13 percent in 2021, from 7 percent in 2001. This will again be an older population with the median age in 2021 being 36 years, compared to 29 years in 2001.

These population changes are likely to result in a considerable impact on the cultural and social context in which we live, and need to be taken into account by the museum community in a new strategy for the sector. The current debate about the nature of our bicultural society, with the other multicultural influences on it, is likely to continue, and museums will have a role in helping our peoples to explore and understand those influences and the nature of the society in which they live and work.

International trends and influences will also have a continuing impact on museums through changing attitudes over time as well as the social and economic development that they engender. Such influences are likely to include technological, as well as media-related and cultural issues.

The strategy statement that follows therefore seeks:

- To set out a unified vision that will strengthen the role in New Zealand society of museums, galleries and other holders of objects and collections.
- To explore opportunities for alignment and collaboration, both within the sector and with other related sectors, and the Government.
- To suggest how existing resources can be utilized more wisely and to discuss areas where increased resources will be needed in future.
- To provide a context for engagement with central and local government on the development of coherent policy for the museum sector.
- To consider the appropriate arrangements to support implementation of a museum sector strategy.

2 The role of museums in contemporary New Zealand society

There has been an emerging debate in recent years about what exactly is a museum. The definition of a museum used by the International Council of Museums is a functions-based one that was written in the days before the internet had given us the possibility of virtual museums, and before the importance of intangible heritage had been recognized. To many people, museums are institutions that hold collections, a definition that includes art galleries with collections of works of art, science centres, historic places, heritage sites, and of course the long-established museums such as the Auckland, Canterbury or Otago Museums, which hold substantial collections of artifacts, objects and taonga. Their fundamental strength is their ability to present real objects to their visitors. But the rapidly moving information and communications technology based on the Internet is making it possible for users to access the information and collections held in museums in an instant, virtual environment. Museums also face an additional challenge to their traditional role: the increasing recognition of communities' throughout New Zealand, including iwi/Maori, right to contribute to the care, management and understanding of collections. We propose that museums must respond to both challenges by redefining their function in contemporary New Zealand society.

The current definition used by Museums Aotearoa is that "a museum is an institution which is primarily engaged in collecting, caring for, developing or interpreting the natural or cultural heritage of Aotearoa/ New Zealand. For the avoidance of doubt the term includes marae and exhibition galleries or centres, which are maintained on an ongoing basis by other institutions".

For the purposes of this strategy however, we propose to define a museum as having the following characteristics¹:

"A museum helps people understand the world by using objects, ideas and art to interpret the past and present, and to explore the possible future. A museum preserves and researches collections of art, taonga, objects and information, which it holds in trust for society and makes accessible in actual and virtual environments. Museums are established in the public interest as permanent, not-for-profit organizations that contribute long term value to communities.

Organizations that are referred to as museums include whare wananga, art galleries, whare taonga, tribal museums, cultural centres, marae, historic places, heritage sites, science centres, interpretive centres, open air museums or exhibition centres, zoological and botanical gardens, aquaria and other entities that facilitate the recognition, preservation, and management of heritage resources and the values that are attached to them".

This definition is certainly not the last word on the subject, and we anticipate that Museums Aotearoa could facilitate further discussion, leading to changes to this definition in the future.

During the preparation of this strategy statement, Museums Aotearoa held a series of regional consultations at which museum trust board members, staff, and volunteers were given the opportunity to contribute issues and ideas. During these consultations, a clear view emerged about the role that museums can and currently do play in contemporary New Zealand society, including the following:

¹ This definition is new and has been adapted from the definitions used by counterpart organizations in the UK and Australia, and in New Zealand by Te Papa Tongarewa.



(i) Museums are places where New Zealanders and visitors learn about and celebrate our identity.

One of the key goals of the New Zealand Government is "*To Strengthen National Identity and Uphold the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi*". The Government's objective is that 'New Zealanders should celebrate our identity in the world as people who support and defend freedom and fairness, who enjoy arts, music, movement and sport, and who value our cultural heritage; and resolve at all times to endeavour to uphold the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi'.

A primary role of museums in our communities is that they are places where New Zealanders can learn about their identity as individuals by enabling them to seek out and relate to family connections, and to establish their place as part of local and regional communities. They enable our people to develop an understanding of who they are, where they have come from and where they are going.

Museums are also leading agents in the nation's move towards recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the economic and social inclusion of Maori at all levels of society. They provide the means for New Zealanders to explore our bicultural heritage, and also the contributions that other cultures and ethnic groups have played in the formation of our nation. Museums also provide the means for us to explore our increasing relationship with Pacific and Asian peoples and the rich tapestry that the diverse cultures will infuse into New Zealand society in future years.

(ii) Museums are the guardians or 'kaitiaki' of collections on behalf of communities.

Increasingly in New Zealand, museums are developing relationships and partnerships with communities, including iwi/Maori, in terms of their contributing to the care, management and understanding of collections and taonga. This developing practice is based on the concept of museums as 'guardians' or 'kaitiaki' of the collections and knowledge they hold on behalf of communities. Although some public museums in New Zealand are specifically empowered to be owners of the collections they hold, a new concept of museums as guardians is emerging which suggests, at its highest level, that museums hold, preserve and manage their collections in trust on behalf of communities and of the nation as a whole. This concept has particular implications for museums' relationship with Maori, which is discussed further below.

(iii) Museums are centres of learning.

The educational role of museums lies at the core of our service to the public. People of all ages come to learn from the collections, exhibitions and displays created by museums through their research and scholarship. Learning in museums can be both discovery-based, through interaction with exhibitions and displays in a leisure setting, and also structured, through targeted education activities. Museum experiences help to build a desire for life-long learning. For example, the activities offered by museums under the 'Learning Experiences Outside The Classroom' (LEOTC) programme of the Ministry of Education provide many young New Zealanders with an important introduction to what museums offer and in turn they bring their parents back to experience it for themselves. Museums also link schools and other educational institutions to their region through their active education programmes.

(iv) Museums contribute to regional economic development and tourism.

Recent research conducted on the impact of museums shows that they are major attractions for both domestic and international tourism. The number of New Zealanders who currently visit museums and art galleries each year is significant, as has been demonstrated by recent research. Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry for Culture and Heritage undertook a Cultural Experiences

Survey in the first three months of 2002, based on the respondents' experience during the year 2001. The results, which were published in 2003², provide a snapshot of the level of engagement by New Zealanders with various cultural activities, including the museums sector. It is supplemented by expenditure information from the Household Economic Survey and thus provides an expansive view of New Zealanders' cultural activities.

A summary of the 'heritage' category of activity shows that³:

- an estimated 2.1 million New Zealanders, or 77 percent of the population aged 15 or over, experienced at least one of the heritage activities asked about in the survey in the previous 12 months.
- visiting museums or art galleries was the most popular heritage activity. An estimated 1.34 million New Zealanders, or 48 percent of the population aged 15 or over, visited an art gallery or museum in the 12 months before the survey.

We know moreover that museums provide a focus for cultural tourism and have the potential to create a destination as a draw card for visitors. To enhance understanding of the role of cultural tourism in the tourism sector, and domestic and international visitors' demand for cultural tourism experience, Colmar Brunton undertook a survey⁴ for Tourism New Zealand in 2002. This confirmed that the 'interactive traveller' should be the primary target for Tourism New Zealand's international marketing activity. Interactive travellers are interested in a range of activities including cultural products and experiences, have strong perceptions about what New Zealand has to offer in terms of individual cultural products, and are high users of the Internet as a source of travel information.

Forty-nine percent of all travellers interviewed in the survey who had actually visited New Zealand said that they were interested in visiting museums when travelling internationally, and 60 percent would visit sites of importance to a country's history or heritage. For the interactive international traveller these percentages increased to 52 per cent and 67 per cent respectively. Given that the number of international visitor arrivals in New Zealand is forecast by the NZTS to grow to 3.2 million per year by 2010 on even a base case scenario, the potential for increased admissions to the museums sector is high.

Other separate research findings indicate that around 22 percent of total admissions to museums and art galleries in recent years have been from international visitors.

Visitors to museums, whether they are New Zealanders or international travelers, contribute substantially in terms of direct expenditure to the economic growth of their regions. For example, it has been estimated by the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research⁵, that by June 2007, the likely future impact of Te Papa's visitors' expenditure will lead to a direct expenditure impact from visitors for the Wellington Region of \$22.8 million per annum, of which \$20.0 million will occur in the Wellington City. When the flow-on effects of this expenditure are also considered, the total economic impact of visitors' expenditure is estimated to be \$63.9 million per annum in the Wellington Region, with \$38.2 million occurring in Wellington City.

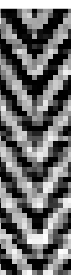
Museums also contribute to the economic growth potential of their regions in ways that cannot be easily quantified. These benefits are also very important for the economic health of their city or town and surrounding region. They include the following:

2 A Measure of Culture: Cultural experiences and cultural spending in New Zealand, Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2003

3 Ibid, page 35-42

4 Demand for Cultural Tourism—Summary of Research Findings, Colmar Brunton Social Research Agency. See www.tourisminfo.govt.nz.

5 Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa- Economic Impact Study, NZ Institute of Economic Research (Inc). November 2002



- attracting skilled people to the region
- creating a positive economic multiplier effect for a range of businesses
- increasing the stock of human and knowledge capital and the related 'spillovers' that result from that increased knowledge.
- adding to the stock of physical capital in the region through enhanced museum buildings and facilities.

(v) Museums provide civic and community spaces.

From art galleries to heritage parks, museums are gathering places for people to meet and to spend time with families and friends or other people. The role of the museum as a public and civic institution has changed significantly over the last decade. As late as the latter part of last century, museums in New Zealand were often viewed as rather elitist places, focused on the care of collections and curatorial interests. Museums today in New Zealand increasingly are a meeting ground for families and communities, whether in the urban or the rural areas. The latest developments in museum buildings provide spaces that are more open, transparent and accessible to visitors and to the communities of which they are part. Museums are places where communities come together to explore their cultural and artistic heritage, to discuss topics of current interest, or simply to pursue leisure or entertainment activity. They are shared community spaces.

(vi) Museums act as catalysts for creativity.

Museums stimulate individual creativity and inspiration. They are places where people can learn about and explore aspects of popular culture. At a higher level, museums help us to recognize, celebrate and think about significant artistic or cultural creativity, and encourage further creative developments. For example, both students and established professionals in the fashion and industrial design industries often find a source of stimulation and encouragement when visiting museums and art galleries.

Museums show creativity in their display techniques, too. New museum architecture provokes interest and debate, and showcases the architects' creativity. Indeed, when people speak of a museum they are often visualizing its exterior as well as the collections it holds.

Museums are places where new artistic endeavours can be recognized and exhibited for people to appreciate and learn from, as well as our art heritage to be displayed. They stimulate debate in the community not only about what they show in their exhibitions and collections but also about what they do as an institution. They are vibrant, changing organizations where individuals and communities can be challenged to think more about and appreciate our cultural and artistic expression.

Museums are also bringing thousands of objects, images and narratives to a generation of new users in on-line applications through websites currently being developed. They provide vocational and practical experience to volunteers, and promote job creation. Museums are in brief, a critical component of a modern creative economy.

(vii) Museums are centres of research and innovation.

Museums have the capability to be key resources for industry and can make crucial contributions to the worlds of technology and science. They contribute to medical and environmental research. They perform a unique function as an objective and independent source for people to understand the background and context of issues currently subject to national debate such as genetic



engineering, and to increase their awareness of new developments in science and technology. Museums also demonstrate a capacity for innovation, not only in the way that they bring information from disparate disciplines together in informative exhibitions but also since they foster new thinking and the development of bold ideas. Museums also create discussion around questions of art and innovation, through topical Art Awards and prizes.

(viii) Museums help to deepen social well-being.

Museums contribute to the development of social capital by encouraging greater social participation. They help to reduce loneliness, isolation and alienation by acting as places where people feel safe because what is exhibited provides a sense of security to them. They are a social anchor, and offer a sense of continuity and preserve things that matter to people. They are a source of stability in a fast changing world. They provide space for contemplation and reflection.

Museums also provide a means for difficult or controversial ideas or subjects to be aired in a neutral, 'safe' environment. They can be places of discomfort, and help to shake us out of our complacency. Art museums, for example, are places where irrational or often inexplicable objects or artforms are displayed for people to think about.

Museums create links between older volunteers and other age groupings; stimulate curiosity about the social, built, cultural, and natural environment; build self esteem and civic pride; and improve the quality of life for their communities. They also contribute to the regeneration of communities by providing heritage records as well as a repository of conservation expertise that enables them to rebuild after devastating climatic or environmental events: for example the recent flooding in several parts of New Zealand.

(ix) Museums strengthen cultural well-being.

Cultural well-being encompasses shared or contrasted beliefs, values, customs, behaviours and identities reflected through language, stories, experiences, visual and performing arts, ceremonies and heritage. Museums help to strengthen cultural well being since they:

- Develop intellectual capacities and inspire curiosity
- Explore spiritual symbols, meanings and stories
- Store information about other societies, cultures and values, thus acting as a window on the world for their communities
- Build understanding across diverse cultures
- Research, record and present cultural histories of the citizens of their region
- Promote creativity and exploration of shape, design, structure and harmony
- Develop partnerships with iwi to explore and display the life and beliefs of iwi and significant taonga
- Are places where the status of iwi in the region, and Maori in Aotearoa, are recognized
- Can become meeting places where cultural barriers can be relaxed and discussed.

(x) Museums enhance our understanding of the environment

Museums are places where the natural history and geomorphology of a region can be displayed by exhibits and interpretive material. They also undertake the following activities that increase our understanding of our environment:



- Display the work of tangata whenua, the Department of Conservation and other organizations who are working on the preservation of native flora and fauna
- Display the power of natural forces such as earthquake, volcanoes, floods and glaciers
- Highlight endangered species of plants and animals
- Demonstrate sustainable environmental practices
- Show environmentally friendly industrial processes
- Create common goals for environmental groups and local businesses

(xi) Museums respond to New Zealand's international obligations

Museums are places that enable New Zealand to meet its obligations as a responsible member of the global community under international protocols such as the *International Council on Monuments and Sites Charter*. There are also benefits which come from museums actively maintaining professional networks overseas. Through participation in the International Council of Museums, ICOM, New Zealand museums maintain a wider vision of museum practice, participate in significant professional dialogue and engage in bi-lateral programmes which enhance museums' contributions to society. ICOM plays a lead role in international museum affairs. In particular, its affiliation with key agencies such as UNESCO and its contribution to the development and promulgation of protocols, treaties and conventions affect not only museum practices but impact on New Zealand's obligations internationally.

Summary

Museums in New Zealand have a common purpose. They are bound together through the collections and services they offer, by the roles they perform as *outlined above*, as well as contributing to civic pride through their buildings and their locations. The examples set out above present a wealth of evidence of the substantial and wide ranging contribution that our museums and galleries make to New Zealand society. In the next sections of this report we discuss what needs to happen now so that the sector is well placed in the future, working to a united vision and ready to provide museum services that are relevant, inspiring and accessible.



3 Current issues facing the sector

During the consultation and submission process, a number of concerns were identified that the museum sector needs to address as part of a new national strategy. They have been summarized into ten issues for consideration:

a) Recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi

- (i) Museums need to take account of the bicultural foundation of New Zealand society. A call was made by Kaitiaki Maori at their hui in Rotorua in July 2004 for the sector to honour the Treaty of Waitangi
- (ii) Museums and Maori should consider developing an appropriate approach to museum practice for themselves (including support for iwi-led developments). There is also a need to embrace the increasingly multicultural nature of New Zealand society
- (iii) Advancing the understanding of non-Western knowledge and classification systems such as *mātauranga* Maori should become a recognized part of museum practice in New Zealand.

b) Museums' relationship with communities

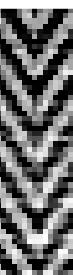
Earlier in this statement we considered the notion of museums as 'guardians' or 'kaitiaki' of the collections and knowledge they hold on behalf of communities and the nation. This has significance for museums' relationship with all of our communities but particularly for their relationship with iwi/ Maori. The challenge facing the museum sector is to recognize and provide for the interest, and role of, communities and iwi who contribute to the care and management of taonga and the knowledge, including *mātauranga* Maori, and stories associated with tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage.

An emerging issue for many museums to manage is the need to work with iwi to resolve cases where taonga now held in museum collections were placed there as a result of confiscation by public or private actions over past years.

c) Funding and Support of the Sector

Over the past decade there has been ongoing growth and expansion in the museum sector in New Zealand. As a result, the sector faces significant challenges to find ongoing support for its operational as well as its capital funding. The Government provides seventy per cent of the annual operating funding of The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa ("Te Papa") through Vote: Arts, Culture and Heritage. The balance is generated by the Museum from sponsorship, commercial and other revenues, including charged-for services. Te Papa also receives an annual capital grant of \$9 million, which includes \$6 million for capital refreshment and replacement, and \$3 million for collection development.

The major sources of capital funding for regional museums are: local authorities, the Lottery Grants Board, and the Ministry of Culture and Heritage. The Ministry administers a Regional Museums Capital Development Fund of some \$10.3m per annum for distribution to Regional Art Gallery and Museum capital development projects. Other capital funding support is provided from philanthropic grants, donations and bequests. Operational funding support is provided by local authorities, and from museums' own revenue sources. The Ministry of Education provides some operational funding support through its LEOTC programme.



The remainder of the sector relies upon Lottery grants, local authorities and on community grant sources (private or philanthropic) for capital and operational funding. Only a limited number of museums in New Zealand charge an entry fee, especially at a level that would cover operational costs.

Issues that the sector faces are that:

- (i) The Lottery Grants Board (and its Environment and Heritage Committee) has a decreasing pool of funds (from decreasing Lotto profits) with an increasing number of applications for funding.
- (ii) The Government's Regional Museums Capital Development Fund is a fixed fund. At present there are several museum and art gallery redevelopment projects underway, which are likely to put pressure on the available funding levels for the next few years.
- (iii) There is strong competition for available LEOTC funding from the Ministry of Education, with the quality of museum educational experiences on offer increasing steadily. While this is an encouraging sign of creativity and innovation in the sector, it places pressure on museums to ensure that the quality of their work continues to adapt and enhance in order that the funding support continues.
- (iv) Many museum organizations are struggling to maintain current levels of revenue and identify new income sources that will provide for ongoing operational funding. The sector will continue to rely for both capital and operational funding on local authorities, and other community sources (Community Trusts, grants and bequests).

d) Whether/how to recognize nationally significant collections, and the need to enhance collections and their display

A longstanding issue for some in the sector is the recognition of nationally significant collections that are held in diverse museum institutions. It is a concern that is shared by the Government and its advisers. In a speech to the annual conference of Museums Aotearoa in May 2001, the Hon Judith Tizard, Associate Minister for the Arts, Culture and Heritage, invited the sector to provide the Government with advice on what are nationally important collections. She stated: "where there are collections of national significance, the government does recognize a role for itself, on behalf of all New Zealanders, and on behalf of those objects that play such an important part in the way that we develop and maintain our sense of national identity. Any future project fund will therefore be based... on the importance of the collections themselves and on the need to ensure that they are appropriately displayed, cared for and stored. It is not envisaged that any new scheme will fundamentally change the way Government involves itself in the museological sector, and we do not intend to begin providing funding towards the operational costs of institutions".

It therefore seems appropriate, and necessary, that a national strategy for the museum sector should consider whether recognition of nationally important collections is desirable. Not everyone in the sector shares the concern. One submission made during the development of this strategy argued that "there is no direct value in identifying 'nationally significant collections', as significance will depend on the context or community the organization is located within, and will differ from region to region, community to community, amongst individuals, or whanau/hapu/lwi, and will change with time. Rather, the sector should focus on identifying priorities for achieving the long-term outcome of enhancing the local, regional, and national capacity and capability to manage collections and the knowledge, including mātauranga Maori, and stories associated with tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage". The issue is further discussed in the vision for the sector and the various strategies proposed below.

Another concern raised during the course of consultation on the development of this strategy is that at present there is no co-ordinated strategy to ensure the preservation of the nation's cultural material or to facilitate broader physical and intellectual access to it.

A related issue is the need for museums in New Zealand to renew their energy for collections and collecting. Because of resource constraints, and also other priorities, developing and sharing our collections has not been at the top of museums' agenda in recent years although museums can indeed draw on each others' collections and sometimes do so. Work to enhance existing collections through research, acquisition, new collections-based displays or publication often seems like a luxury, rather than a core activity. There is a need to make sure that people have many more opportunities to engage with our museums' collections, and that those collections are as rich, diverse and inspiring as they can possibly be. These issues require a national, co-ordinated response.

It is suggested that a fundamental shift in attitudes is needed that will transform museums users' experience. If they were seen as a single common resource, New Zealand's museum collections would add up to much more than the sum of their parts. Museums would be able to draw on each others' collections more freely and people across New Zealand would have more opportunities to see the best of the collections. The management of museum collections needs new ideas and expertise to bring them to life!

One way of achieving such a transformation in attitude would be for the concept of a "Distributed National Collection" in New Zealand to be developed. Such policy and practice already exist in Australia and in the UK (although they also incorporate the collections of libraries and archives in their practice). Developing a single national collection in New Zealand need not involve changes of locations or ownership. It would provide much better information about what collections are where, with information freely available to museum users and professionals. It would also enable museum users to access basic information about museum collections on-line and for museum professionals to easily get an overview of each others' collections.

e) The need to invest more in shared use of collections and touring exhibitions

Another issue raised during the stakeholder consultation phase of the strategy preparation has been an apparent decline in the number, scope and quality of touring exhibitions in recent years. This is not attributable merely to one-off events such as the demise of the (touring) Museums Company, and Exhibitour. It is a result of rising costs of touring exhibitions, the impact of the events of 9 September 2001 ("9/11") e.g. on insurance costs, and a lack of obvious investment in the development of curators. Creative New Zealand shares this perspective, suggesting that it has led to a cycle of less product development, fewer touring exhibitions and fewer applications to CNZ for support for touring costs etc. Project funding is available from CNZ for exhibition development is currently not being utilized for touring as much as it has been in past years.

There have been a number of ad-hoc opportunities for curators to meet and train, but nothing has been organized on a systematic basis. The development of curators needs to be given greater priority within and between museums and by sectoral organizations. This includes the development of both exhibition and collection curators. There is also a major opportunity for museums to establish protocols and to work together more actively to share and tour exhibitions, in a way that need not require the establishment of a new organization to manage it. Rather, there is an opportunity for a website-based information system to be managed for the sector by an organization such as Museums Aotearoa, with the actual exhibition touring arrangements contracted out to specialist exhibition managers.



Further, there appears to be opportunity for the sector collectively to seek private or public sector investment in major museum projects, including touring exhibitions such as *The Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy: The Exhibition*, that have the potential to provide significant profiling and down-stream economic benefits, both for individual museums and New Zealand as a whole.

f) Support for small museums

One of the strongest issues that emerged from the regional consultations was the need for practical advice and support to be available for smaller museums. There was a sense that something useful had been lost to the sector when the Museums Liaison Service that was discontinued in the mid 1990s had not been replaced by the current level of support available through National Services Te Paerangi. It is important to note however that the advice and support provided by the National Services team is widely appreciated, though not always seen to be affordable.

In some regions, efforts have been made in recent years by the larger museums to act as coordinators for regional meetings and provide assistance to the smaller museums. However this is not the case in all regions of New Zealand and some museums are finding it difficult to know where to find practical advice on day to day issues that arise during the course of their operation. Overall, the impression gained from the discussions was that this is an area that needs attention and reconsideration of the most appropriate way of providing practical support.

g) The need to invest in and develop digital technology for use in museums

The sector needs to consider how it might respond to, and maximize opportunities arising from the *(Draft) New Zealand Digital Strategy*⁶, for which a key component is *unlocking the social, cultural, and economic value of New Zealand content*, including that held in cultural institutions.

There is a significant opportunity for digital technology to assist in unlocking access to collections in ways that have not been possible previously. Virtual access to collection information and also to images of the collections themselves is now within reach, which will help to transform public awareness of and access to the collections held by museums. Recent developments such as the Matapihi project and the National Register of Archives and Manuscripts (NRAM), to which a number of museums contribute content, are the first steps towards virtual access of collections. The draft Digital Strategy proposes as one of its outcomes the creation of a National Content Strategy (2007) and identifies cultural institutions as a key generator of digital content. The National Content Strategy will develop policies and standards for the development, access and preservation of digital content and will impact directly on the museum sector. An opportunity therefore exists where, by promoting and improving the digital content relating to its heritage collections, the museum sector could work towards the goal of increasing its visibility and relevance.

Other separate indicators of the opportunity that currently exists for the museum sector include the Government's work in ICT in the education sector. Over the last five years, its investment in ICT initiatives as part of Digital Horizons, the ICT strategy for schools, has grown from \$5 million to \$60 million annually. It has invested in videoconferencing services, in laptops for teachers and principals, in ICT clusters, in bulk buys of software for schools, in cybersafety tools, and in rolling out high-speed internet access through Project PROBE. It has signaled future collaboration with private business through participation in the forthcoming e-regions broadband development programme.

The Minister of Education announced in October 2004 that he has asked the Ministry of Education to develop a national e-learning framework that will build on the Digital Horizons work.

6 The *(Draft) New Zealand Digital Strategy* was released for consultation by the Government in June 2004, by the Honourable David Cunliffe, Associate Minister of Information Technology. Refer <http://www.med.govt.nz/pbt/infotech/digital-strategy/index.html>.



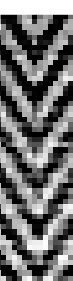
The e-learning framework will be a coordinated effort between schools, the early childhood and tertiary sectors, business and government. It will underpin the government's goals for education – creating an education system that is more fluid, more responsive to the needs of individual students, and less constrained by geography and time.

An e-learning framework will also ensure consistency, and collaboration and reduce the likelihood of duplicating work. It will provide the overarching vision, purpose and principles for work in ICT and education and the development of a networked education system. A new strategy for schools to replace Digital Horizons will be developed by the middle of 2005.

The Ministry of Education has several e-learning initiatives underway, which will in future impact on museums. These include the development of educational metadata, and also of authentication procedures that will enable users to gain access to the proprietary resources and databases of participating institutions. Another initiative being developed is a federated search facility, to enable a single query to search the databases of multiple institutions.

The museum sector needs to respond to, and be part of, these initiatives. But there are several matters that must be addressed in order for this to happen:

- The museums sector is characterized by a very uneven range of access to digital technology, from heavy reliance on home internet connections (particularly for the majority of volunteer-run organizations) to fully networked workplaces with large numbers of networked PCs and multiple-layers of access to ICT. Many museums and historical societies are small organizations that do not have the funding or capacity to download sophisticated ICT content material even if broadband access is available, as the hardware they use is not able to support the latest applications.
- Much of the work of documenting our nation's heritage has been chronically under-resourced. Many institutions within the sector have not had the resources to maintain a consistent approach to documentation – and this must be taken into account in any proposal to make collection information available on a national level through ICT. The work in some major museum institutions to record their collections given the present level of resourcing available is likely still to take several years.
- Consideration should be given to the upkeep of such data – in the current climate, those institutions which are successful in securing resources for collections documentation often do not have any inbuilt, ongoing institutional resources for documentation maintenance and further research – i.e. they may have project-based funding for collections documentation, but no secure resourcing for the ongoing work of keeping such documentation up-to-date.
- There are issues regarding rights of access to information that must be addressed before access can be granted. For example, there may be competing calls for access rights from legal owners, kaitiaki, collection management personnel, other interested parties (e.g. descendants of the subject of a portrait) and the public. There are often issues of copyright which will require research.
- There must be iwi involvement in any initiatives of the type discussed above. There is an emerging development of iwi-based museums and cultural centres that will need to be recognized as part of any discussions on a national digital strategy incorporating heritage collections.
- IT training at all levels is under-resourced: A particular trait that is common to most



museums is a continuing struggle for access to IT skill-sets. Many museums have no in-house IT support, and this is a very real barrier to uptake of appropriate ICT.

There is therefore a need for substantial further investment in information resources and technology in the museum and heritage sector before the sector will be in a position to take full advantage of emerging digital initiatives or to respond adequately to the Government's digital strategy for New Zealand.

h) Best Practice – Standards, Guidelines, and Training

A key part of an ongoing museum sector strategy should be to promote the use of standards and best practice guidelines for museum management in New Zealand and endorse and promote their adoption across the sector. A *New Zealand Museums Standards Scheme Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana a Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa and He Rauemi Resource Guides* have been developed for the sector by Te Papa's National Services Te Paerangi division and are increasingly being adopted by individual museums and galleries.

It is also important that the strategy incorporate the work that National Services Te Paerangi has led on behalf of the sector on getting training standards developed through its National Qualifications Framework project, the need for the sector to support its chosen Industry Training Organization, and also to encourage commitment to raising professional standards through training and skill development.

Specifically, there is a need to develop bicultural competencies within the museum profession to enable a range of cultural perspectives and contexts to be brought to all aspects of museum practice. This kaupapa should inform the future development and provision of standards, guidelines, and training.

i) Strategic Alliances for the Future

Museums need to develop strategic alliances and work with related organizations and sectors (including internationally) to increase the resources and skills/expertise available across the sector, and to achieve common objectives.

The museum sector should reflect on international developments (specifically in Australia and the United Kingdom), and whether further consideration of more closely aligning museums with the archives and library sectors, in order to achieve greater critical mass and efficiencies, is warranted. There are significant opportunities for museums and other arts, culture and heritage organizations to contribute to regional economic development (including through exhibition development and promotion, and research), and the combined group should collectively consider the best way in which to engage with relevant agencies such as regional economic development and tourism organizations towards the realization of common objectives and goals.

In addition, advances in information and communications technologies are breaking down institutional boundaries with respect to access and preservation of collections and natural and cultural heritage materials – providing new challenges and opportunities to work collaboratively with related sectors such as archives and libraries. Local universities are at the forefront of technology development that may be useful to museums e.g. 3D imaging. The sector should consider the best ways in which to engage with new partners in relation to the emerging digital environment.

j) The respective roles of Museums Aotearoa and National Services Te Paerangi

An issue that emerged through the regional consultation phase of the project is that there is confusion at present about the respective roles of Museums Aotearoa and National Services

Te Paerangi, and also concern that the respective place of each organization in the museum sector is not sufficiently well defined.

Museums Aotearoa is the peak professional organization for New Zealand museums and those who work in or have an interest in museums. Members include museums, public art galleries, historical societies, science centres, people who work within these institutions and individuals connected or associated with arts, culture and heritage in New Zealand.

It currently offers its members an annual museums conference, several Awards and scholarship schemes, an annually published Directory of Museums, a biannual Journal 'Te Ara', a monthly publication of news about museums in New Zealand and direct advocacy with the Government on a range of culture and heritage needs.

National Services Te Paerangi was established by the Board of Te Papa in 1996 to give effect to section 7(i) of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act 1992, Section 7(i) of which states the following as a function of the Museum: *"To co-operate with and assist other New Zealand museums in establishing a national service, and in providing appropriate support to other institutions and organisations holding objects or collections of national importance"*.

A submission received from Te Papa advises that National Services Te Paerangi provides support to enhance the services of other organisations by working in partnership with museums, iwi and related culture and heritage organisations to build capacity, and sustain the services they provide to their communities, for the benefit of all New Zealand.

National Services Te Paerangi provides financial and human resource support for partnership projects to contribute to the achievement of agreed outcomes. This support may include strategic leadership, project planning and management, relationship development (strategic, operational and sponsorship), consultation, administration, network facilitation, and consultancy input from other areas of Te Papa's operations or from external experts. Support is not available for buildings or capital works, capital items or hardware, acquisition or conservation of moveable objects and artefacts or taonga, museum staff positions, or projects that have been completed.

Wherever appropriate, National Services Te Paerangi support is positioned to encourage and facilitate the leveraging of additional financial and/or human resource support for partnership projects from other relevant organisations/parties. National Services Te Paerangi support is also targeted to enhance regional and national networks or clusters.

The respective place of the two organisations within the sector is discussed further in sections 7 and 8 of this strategy statement and suggestions are made about ongoing roles that would work to the benefit of the sector.

4 The vision and goals for the museum sector in 2015

A challenging vision is proposed for this museum sector strategy. We propose that it be established for a ten year time period, with periodic reviews to ensure that it is still relevant and that progress towards its achievement is being made. Our vision for the museum sector is:

"By the year 2015, museums in New Zealand will be regarded by our people as the life-blood of their communities – from a cultural, social, environmental, and economic perspective – and a central focus of individual and community life by providing inspiring experiences that promote learning and understanding.

Museums will also be clearly seen and resourced as places where New Zealanders can learn about the bicultural foundations of our society, the richness of Maori and Pakeha culture, heritage and tradition, and the emerging Pacific and other multicultural influences on its future development."

The achievement of this vision will be dependent on New Zealand museums being an active participant in:

- Expressing New Zealand's rich and shared identity as a nation – who we are, where we have come from, and where we are going.
- Facilitating the social history of New Zealand and its underlying cultures.
- Displaying the interaction between our environment and peoples – and the notion of developing sustainable communities.

A major challenge for the sector is the need to effect a transformation in the perception of museums as being 'keepers of heritage collections' towards becoming an integral part of, and relevant to, the communities that they serve: in other words, a central focus of community life. In order to do this, museums must increasingly focus on, understand the needs of, engage with, and be adaptable to the changing needs of their audiences, whilst maintaining a high level of integrity, and the trust of the public at large. Museums will prosper in the future only if they are able to connect more effectively with their actual and potential audiences i.e. people.

Related to this, it is proposed that the sector consider a transformational change in the way that it regards collections. We have stated earlier that museums are the guardians or 'kaitiaki' of collections on behalf of communities. It is proposed as part of this strategy statement that the sector adopts the notion of a "distributed national collection" and move to identify elements of particular significance within that national collection. This will imply changes to the way that museums manage and fund the care, conservation and exhibition of their collection activities. It also implies that in future the sector will work more collectively and cohesively, and less as individual components of a loose federation.

Since we have identified a need for the museum sector to change current public perception and become a central element of community life, we do not consider it sufficient that the sector should seek merely to focus on "enhancing the local, regional, and national capacity and capability to manage collections and knowledge". The transformation that we propose is to change the way that we think about our museum collections and see them as parts of a whole, not as separate entities in themselves. This will enable the significance of particular collections to be recognized beyond the individual community they are located within, while still preserving their essential local character, relevance and guardianship. Most

importantly, it will give the sector a new incentive to put aside past differences and to work together towards a common purpose.

The sector must also seek to increase its visibility, in both the public and private arenas, speak with a unified voice, and be proactive, provocative, and relevant.

If this bold vision is accepted, the sector will need to develop realistic goals for the next five, ten, and twenty years, acknowledging that these goals and objectives should be subject to periodic review and redefinition. These goals should have targets within them that will allow the performance of the sector to be measured.

5 Values

The articulation of a set of shared values would assist to define the sector, and underpin the development of a common vision. These shared values may lead to the identification of synergies and alignments with related sectors such as libraries and archives, provide a common point for engagement, and highlight points of differentiation and complementary roles.

The following suggestions are offered as a starting point for identifying the shared values of the museum sector.

The museum sector:

- Believes that museums and galleries occupy a vital place in the community
- Is guided by the principle of partnership established by the Treaty of Waitangi in all museum work.
- Recognizes the role of communities in the care and management, research, and interpretation of their treasures and taonga
- Shares ideas and resources in collaborative projects both within the sector and with partner organizations that will further its goals and objectives
- Values expertise, research and scholarship, including mātauranga Maori
- Provides excellent museum services to enable our communities to tell their stories, and exhibitions that will inspire audiences now and in the future
- Promotes and upholds the highest professional museum practices and ethical principles
- Is a fair and equitable employer

6 Strategies that will achieve the vision

Strategy One: Honour the Treaty of Waitangi

The constitution of Museums Aotearoa already provides that the organization and its members will "respect and promote the dual heritage of the partners of the Treaty of Waitangi/ Te Tiriti o Waitangi". The Code of Ethics for museums that Museums Aotearoa has published states further that "Museums Aotearoa and its members should be guided by the principle of partnership established by the Treaty in all museum work". There is however more that can be done. Recommendations of a hui wananga that followed the widely acclaimed Te Maori exhibition in 1986 are still seen as relevant today, and deserve a response from the museum sector in order to provide a way forward for the relationship between our peoples and greater participation by Maori in museum development. These recommendations were:

- a) Maori should determine how their taonga should be presented and interpreted;
- b) Museums are the caretakers, not the owners of taonga. The mana of the taonga reside with the iwi from which it originates;
- c) The relevant iwi should be consulted on all matters regarding taonga;
- d) Maori taonga should be presented as a living culture not a relic of the past;
- e) Maori staffing levels should be increased;
- f) Museums with significant collections should effect cultural change to enable them to become bicultural institutions for the future.

Significant progress has, however, been made in parts of the sector to develop and enhance relationships between museums and iwi/Maori, the participation of iwi/Maori in museums and iwi cultural centre development, and the adoption of bicultural models of museum practice in New Zealand. There are a number of examples of museums that have adopted a strong bicultural focus both in terms of the museum experience that they deliver, and in the governance and management of their institutions. Likewise, there have been a number of iwi-led service developments in recent years. It is important that these initiatives continue and are enhanced.

Strategy Two: Provide for the interest and role of communities and iwi in contributing to the care of and management of collections

It is critical that museums develop effective relationships and partnerships with communities, including iwi/Maori, and that the involvement and acknowledgement of the role of communities in contributing to the care, management and understanding of collections and taonga is viewed as a primary function of the museum. There is an imperative for museums to be working with their communities proactively.

Museums should work with communities including iwi/Maori to address issues relating to the ownership/kaitiakitanga and ongoing management of taonga and collections to which they have spiritual and cultural connections. Iwi/Maori also hold a body of knowledge related to concepts, historical events and natural history collections. Increasingly iwi are seeking to develop iwi-led facilities (or where taonga) and museums have a role in supporting the development of skills by iwi to appropriately care for and manage taonga.



There are a number of resources available to the sector that provide guidance on the development and management of relationships with communities, including National Services Te Paerangi He Rauemi Resource Guides, and through the *Standards Scheme for New Zealand Museums Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana o Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa*. National Services Te Paerangi, has also assisted in terms of the identification of priority programme areas for activity through the triennial reviews conducted in consultation with the sector.

Increasingly iwi/Maori are looking to establish iwi-led or iwi-based initiatives such as iwi tribal/cultural centres or whare taonga. The Museums should therefore be encouraged to support iwi-led initiatives such as whare taonga. Rather than viewing such developments as a threat, museums should be encouraged to support iwi and maximize opportunities to develop partnerships. An important way in which museums can support such initiatives is through the loan of taonga. A recent example is the exhibition '*Kahungunu Ka Moe... Ka Puta...*', developed by Ngāti Kahungunu in partnership with the National Library of New Zealand, and the Hawkes Bay Cultural Trust to which Te Papa, and a number of other institutions loaned taonga.

The preparation of inventories of taonga or collections relating to a particular community, including whanau/hapu/iwi may provide the basis for front-foot engagement with iwi/Maori, and an opportunity to discuss collaborative projects.

Museums also need to consider collaborative projects with Pacific peoples in our communities, and with Asian countries, building on initiatives such as the Asia New Zealand Foundation Museum Awards that are helping to increase our museums' expertise in interpreting and displaying these collections.

Strategy Three: Create the concept of a 'Distributed National Collection' for adoption by the museum sector as a whole, and identify significant individual collections within that; develop a national taonga database.

The aim in creating the new concept for New Zealand of there being a "distributed national collection" is to increase the community's knowledge, enjoyment and appreciation of New Zealand's heritage through its collections. It is estimated that there are in excess of 10 million objects held in New Zealand museums, art galleries and historical collections. The collections that we have in our museum organizations enable New Zealanders to learn about and celebrate our national identity: how our nation was founded and what we are today. The heritage collections are however dispersed around the country: this presents a risk because there is no coordinated approach to their management.

The concept of a 'distributed national collection' provides an organising principle around which to develop strategies and programmes to promote care of, and access to collections. Implicit within the concept is the recognition that collections are resources which will only yield their benefits fully when they are maintained and made accessible. In saying this we recognise that universal access to collections may not be appropriate in some cases.

The concept is sufficiently flexible to encompass those collections held in libraries and archives as well as those collections of New Zealand cultural material held overseas. It is also a concept which can embrace both tangible and intangible heritage.

The 'distributed national collection' will need to be founded on a series of propositions, which may include the following:

- The recognition that collections held in public institutions are this country's storehouses of information held in common by the nation and its people, to sustain and nurture communities, and enable individuals to deepen their knowledge about themselves and the world in which they live;



- The notion that the distributed national collection, and the information it contains, is located across the nation and is not just held in the largest organizations;
- Respect for the unique characteristics and histories of individual organizations;
- A collaborative approach, reinforcing consistency between related disciplines and professional groups and supporting appropriate standards;
- Providing potential support for all museums, including those threatened by inadequate resources and detrimental political circumstances;
- The urgent need for adequate resources to improve the maintenance of collections, research, and enhanced access to collections;

The 'distributed national collection' is therefore both a concept and an organising principle which will bring together communities, collections and the learning which develops through the relationship of these elements.

The formation of a 'distributed national collection' implies that in the future the care of the nation's heritage objects will be a shared responsibility. Museums and their curatorial staff will need to work together across organisational boundaries to ensure that they are properly conserved and readily accessible to New Zealanders, by the innovative use of displays and exhibitions as well as using new access methods such as virtual technology.

The ten million objects held in our museums collectively tell the story of New Zealand's history and country, and contribute to our sense of national identity and pride. It follows that a suite of national policies relating to the care, management (including documentation), and preservation of natural and cultural heritage collections will also need to be developed by and for the museum sector. Increasing the conservation skills of people who care for these collections is also a critical factor in protecting this heritage. These matters should be amongst the goals that should eventually underpin this particular strategy.

Within the concept of a 'distributed national collection' we propose that it should also be possible to identify collections of particular significance that warrant special attention from a national perspective. Again, it does not imply that there would need to be changes of location or ownership. The aim is to enable the significance of particular collections to be recognized and for people across New Zealand to have many more opportunities to see and engage with the best of the collections. There is an opportunity for the sector to work together collectively to identify such collections of significance rather than to have external sources make the choice for the sector.

The significance of objects in museum collections will depend on the context or community the organization is located within, and will differ from region to region, community to community, amongst individuals, or whanau/ hapu/iwi, and will change with time.

The development of a Distributed National Collection will need to be a participatory process – individual institutions and the regional/local communities they serve should have a say in identifying the collections which are of national importance. Regional/local heritage organizations and their stakeholders should be regarded as having expertise in identifying and documenting the collections in their care, and further, in specifying those collections which best represent the stakeholders' interests in representation at a national level. It will also be a complex and resource-intensive process, thus requiring discussion between the sector and appropriate Government organizations to determine how best to proceed. Such an

7 See, for example, NZ ICOMOS: http://www.icomos.org/docs/nz_92charter.html

8 See "A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collections" 2001 available at http://sector.amol.org.au/publications_archive/museum_management/significance and <http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/designation/00desig.asp> which outlines the Designation Scheme in the UK implemented in 1997 under the auspices of the Museums, Libraries, Archives Council.



enterprise has been part of the discourse within the museum profession for many years.⁷ Recent policy developments for museums in Australia and the United Kingdom have seen markedly different approaches to this issue⁸.

We also note that in the early to mid-1990's an extensive process was conducted by the sector under the leadership of Te Papa to develop criteria and a process for identifying collections and objects of national importance. However this work was not progressed to fruition. It would be useful for the work previously undertaken to be reviewed as part of the implementation of this strategy.

Our proposal is for a national forum to be convened in May or June 2005 to prepare more intensively for the development of a Distributed National Collection and to identify the steps that will need to be followed to bring it to fruition.

A particular issue that deserves early attention in this context is the need to develop a national taonga database. This has already been proposed by kaitiaki Maori, and is on the work programme for Museums Aotearoa. Such a need would be given new impetus under this strategy. It should also be feasible to consider the development of an International Taonga Database, in order to make information on taonga that are held in institutions around the world available and accessible to iwi/Maori in New Zealand, and others who are interested.

Strategy Four: Promote the establishment of a New Zealand Collections Council

It is proposed that the museum sector should prepare a case, in close consultation with its counterparts in the heritage, libraries and archives sectors for the establishment by the Government of a Collections Council. The purpose of having a Collections Council would be to provide strategic advice to the government on the future directions, needs and priorities of the heritage collections sector and to identify priorities for the government in addressing these issues. The members of the Council would combine expertise in areas such as museums, art galleries, libraries, historic places, decorative arts and built heritage, archives, education and technology, and also bring a comprehensive understanding of collections issues.

There are a large number of agencies involved in providing support to the culture and heritage sector, both local and central government. An early task for the Council would be a review of existing funding and support to the sector both to increase awareness of support services, and to consider how this support should best be delivered. It would also need to consider carefully its roles and responsibilities in relation to existing bodies and services. The Council should be asked to consider whether in future it should become the Government's funding agency for the heritage and collections sector.

The objective of such a Council would be to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of New Zealand's collections and facilitate greater access to them;
- Encourage collaboration across the library, archive, art gallery and museum sectors;
- Establish an integrated policy for the development of heritage collections, and associated services;
- Provide a source of consolidated advice for the government on issues facing the collections sectors;
- Advise on new forms and programmes of support that might gain acceptance by the central and local government, philanthropic institutions and industry; as well as to seek to minimize duplication;
- Consolidate sector responses and activities on matters such as digitization, intellectual property, copyright, and collections conservation;



- Oversee training and professional development within the sector, including disseminating information on key issues and monitoring international developments.

It is important to state that the role of the Collections Council would be directed towards the whole 'collections sector' i.e. not limited to museums. It would however need to be resourced to develop projects relevant to museums and their communities and to advance local and national interests.

Also, while it is assumed that the proposed Council might in future undertake an operational role; such a role is not articulated at this stage. An issue for further discussion would be whether it should be mandated to undertake practical initiatives aligned to the development and maintenance of the projects associated with the Distributed National Collection.

The Council would play an important part in assisting the museum sector to realize its vision for the decade to 2015 that museums in New Zealand will be regarded as "the life-blood of their communities" and "a central focus of individual and community life by providing inspiring experiences that promote learning and understanding".

The proposal has been separately raised for discussion already by a counterpart organization in the heritage sector and appears likely to gain a good deal of support. It will be important for Museums Aotearoa and its membership to prepare a business case that can be proposed to the Government as well as the other political parties in 2005 for consideration as part of their programmes for the arts culture and heritage sectors.

Strategy Five: Develop closer linkages with local Government

The Local Government Act 2002 provides a strong context for local support for museums. The Act requires local authorities *to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities*. It creates an opportunity for museums to position themselves as key contributors to social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes for their communities. The sector should consider options for engaging with local bodies, as well as sector agencies such as Local Government New Zealand and the Society of Local Government Managers, to develop common understandings and approaches to the new obligations for local authorities under the Act.

The Government's policy on support for museums reflects its view that the primary responsibility for regional museums rests with the communities in which those museums are located. Engagement with local authorities should therefore be a key strategy for the museum sector, and part of the transformational change that is being suggested overall for the sector.

Some useful work has already been initiated by National Services Te Paerangi, to increase the dialogue between museum organizations and local authorities. There will be an ongoing role for a strong sector advocacy body to work with local authorities, Local Government New Zealand, and the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, to develop common understandings and approaches to the new obligations for local authorities under the Act, and to recognize the potential of museums to contribute to the outcomes they are seeking.

Efficiencies may accrue from greater coordination of central and local government resources available for seeding museum projects, with support currently available across a range of portfolios/sources. An analysis of existing support mechanisms may identify where there are gaps and opportunities for further public or private sector investment. The linkages that could be made between local museum and art gallery collections and the 'distributed national collection' would add urgency and meaning to such discussions.

This strategy has a strong alignment with the vision set out for the sector of museums being regarded as the lifeblood of their communities in the years ahead.



Strategy Six: Provide a support service for small museums

A high proportion of the nation's cultural material is held in leading provincial museums and art museums. Some of these institutions reach back to the 19th century. Typically these museums employ a small number of staff and they have a low resource base with which to operate. They often suffer problems associated with inadequate facilities. However, many of these museums are adept at turning such drawbacks into strengths and catalysts for innovation. Their leadership in areas of responsiveness to community relationships⁹, negotiating controversy, innovative programming¹⁰ and new paradigms for development¹¹ create considerable impact at local level and regularly affect perceptions and practices more widely. It is these very strengths which need to be better appreciated, valued and supported.

It is also vital that the overall strategy for the museum sector takes account of the needs of small and voluntary museums. Within the total of approximately 500 museums in New Zealand it is estimated that over 400 comprise volunteer-run and coordinated organizations.

Many museums rely totally on volunteer support. A key to the ability of small museums to maintain and enhance their operations for the future will come from seeking the closer cooperation and involvement of local government in their objectives and activities. Another priority is to encourage networking between museums, particularly at regional level, and to build on some successful initiatives that are already happening.

Another important step will be for regional museum strategies to be encouraged and developed. A useful initiative undertaken by National Services Te Paerangi as one of its partnership projects for 2003/04 has been the completion of the Northland museums strategy project. A part of this project was the development of a conceptual framework, which includes a statement about how the unique elements of the region can be expressed, and sets out a vision for the region as a series of interlocking cultural and natural experiences.

This framework is a tool that will assist museums in Northland and potentially other regions as well to identify a place for themselves, and to better define the product they are offering. A model has also been developed that categorizes museums based on their status and position, and offers institutions the opportunity to work towards greater status and improve their planning. All museums in the region have the ability to contribute more fully to the economic growth of the region, by developing a unique visitor experience, as well as improving their museological performance.

The most important initiative identified during the consultation with the sector however is for there to be a new programme to provide practical support for small museums. It is proposed that National Services Te Paerangi be encouraged to progress its current discussion with regional and larger metropolitan museums on ways in which to partner at a regional and national level to support smaller museums. Given the fragility of the small provincial and local museums, the metropolitan museums and Te Papa should work together to develop supportive partnerships with these institutions.

It is important however that these discussions heed the views being expressed by the smaller museums that such support must be practical and appropriate for their needs.

Museums Aotearoa has a role to play as well, not least as an 'honest broker' and advocate for the smaller museums, following on from its consultation with them during 2004.

9 See for example: The Company C Project at Tairāwhiti Museum; the exhibition Tapa: Heartbeat of the Pacific at Whanganui Regional Museum; the Origins series of community exhibitions at Te Manawa; the "Dob in an artist" project at The Dowse, among others.

10 See for example: Education Programmes at Tairāwhiti Museum.

11 See bicultural governance structures at Whanganui Regional Museum and Tairāwhiti Museum; the amalgamation of Library, Archives and Museum at Puke Ariki.

Strategy Seven: Develop new potential funding sources and support

We have noted above that many museum organizations are struggling to maintain current levels of revenue and identify new income sources that will provide ongoing operational funding. The sector currently relies heavily for both capital and operational funding on local authorities, and on other community sources (Community Trusts, grants and bequests). The levels of funding currently available from public and private sector sources are, however, not sufficient to ensure the long term viability of the sector or the intent of this strategy that museums work more closely together across organisational boundaries to ensure that their collections are properly conserved and readily accessible to New Zealanders through innovative displays and exhibitions.

During the sector consultation a range of useful ideas about new funding sources were discussed. These included developing more collection based merchandise, selling merchandise over the internet (i.e. e-commerce activity), establishing endowment funds, creating museums tours in conjunction with heritage and wine trail products already on offer, and charging for services that museums provide outside of access to collections.

More needs to be done to develop the case for increased support from central and local Government, and from corporate/private sources. In order to build its case for such support, the sector should consider commissioning or undertaking research into its contribution to both economic and social well-being, at a regional and national level.

It was noted in the discussion document¹² on which the museum sector consultation in 2004 was based that there has been only a limited amount of research into the effectiveness of the sector in recent years. The annual survey conducted into the museums sector by Creative New Zealand was discontinued in 1996. Recent endeavours to supplement this with information on the effectiveness of the sector by Museums Aotearoa, even on simple matters such as a collation of national visitor numbers, have not been successful because of a lack of cooperation from the sector.

Some useful data is available as a result of recent surveys of the cultural sector conducted by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Statistics New Zealand, and an analysis of census and other data collected by Statistics New Zealand. The need for further research on the sector is however urgent.

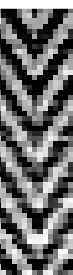
Museums Aotearoa will seek to develop improved linkages with tourism organizations such as the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism New Zealand and the Tourism Industry Association to pursue opportunities for future collaboration on research, project facilitation, and to take advantage of funding available within the tourism sector that assists the development of tourist facilities in New Zealand.

Strategy Eight: Promote best practice – Training, Standards, and Guidelines.

Giving life to the concepts that will underpin the 'distributed national collection', and to achieve the goals associated with the establishment of a Collections Council, will require the full engagement of committed and reflective practitioners. Museum staff require a sound understanding of professional philosophies and practices and the ability to adapt these for contemporary circumstances. Moreover, museum staff need to keep abreast of new skills, approaches, knowledge and methodologies. All museum staff need to demonstrate general, professional and museological competencies, though the depth and breadth of these competencies will vary considerably in relation to contexts in which they operate.

It follows then, that training and professional development must be provided in a variety of ways which match the changing needs of museum staff over time. This will include the formal provision of academic

12 "Towards a Museums Sector Strategy for New Zealand": Ross Tanner, March 2004



and vocational training offered by universities¹³ as well as workplace-based training and assessment provided under the auspices of NZQA. It will also include a range of informal learning opportunities provided through workshops, seminars and conferences currently organised through National Services Te Paerangi, Museums Aotearoa, the National Preservation Office, the NZ Professional Conservators Group, museum educators, and others. Opportunities to interact with peers and to develop professional collegiality through co-ordinated mentoring, internships and secondments are extremely valuable and need further encouragement on a national scale.

It is timely that we emphasize the significance of the National Qualifications Framework project that has been managed on behalf of the sector by National Services Te Paerangi; and the importance of the sector supporting an Industry Training Organization, and making a commitment to raising professional standards through training and skill development under the National Qualifications Framework. Once the Aviation Travel and Tourism Training Organization that has been chosen to have coverage of the sector commences its work in 2005, there will be an ongoing need for the sector to work together to ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to museum staff and volunteers in terms of identified needs. One mechanism where this can occur will be the creation of a Training Council to represent the sector within the ITO governance structure. However we also see a potential role for the professional museum association, Museums Aotearoa, to assist and discuss it further in the next section of this report.

The Training Council will not be able to meet all of the training and development requirements of the sector. There will need to be continued development of other complementary training provisions including through relevant tertiary providers and also the practical workshops such as those provided by National Services Te Paerangi and the National Preservation Office.

Furthermore, the training of professional conservators, including conservators working with marae-based taonga, has not been satisfactorily addressed in New Zealand since the demise of the Cultural Conservation Advisory Council.

It is also important to recognise the work that has been already undertaken in preparing standards and best practice guidelines for museum management in New Zealand (including He Rauemi Resource Guides, and the *New Zealand Museums Standards Scheme Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana a Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa*, developed by National Services Te Paerangi).

The standards scheme is a significant contribution to the museum sector; we not only endorse and encourage museums to implement it in their own organizations, but also encourage its adoption across the sector.

Specific targets relating to the uptake of the New Zealand Museums Standards Scheme Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana a Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa by the sector will be set as part of the implementation plans arising from this strategy.

Best practice must be continually updated as innovations in museum practice emerge and are developed. There will need to be a continuing investment from the sector in the maintenance and updating of the standards scheme. National Services Te Paerangi is currently considering a long term sustainable business model and operator for the Standards Scheme beyond 2005/06.

Further initiatives might include larger institutions forming clusters to implement the *Standards Scheme for New Zealand Museums Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana o Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa*; and regional training and development projects to implement the National Qualifications Framework with the selected Industry Training Organization.

13 Auckland University, Massey University and Victoria University are actively engaged in training museum professionals.

There is, further, a need to develop bicultural competencies within the museum profession to enable a range of cultural perspectives and contexts to be brought to all aspects of museum practice. This kaupapa should inform the development and provision of standards, guidelines, and training by the sector.

Strategy Nine: Sector wide strategic projects

As suggested in the Introduction to this Museums Sector Strategy statement, there is a need for organizations in the sector to work more closely together on matters that are vital to their collective interest. Topics needing early attention are:

- a skill needs analysis for the sector
- performance benchmarking
- research into remuneration levels for the various staff categories.

Some initial sector-wide strategic projects are suggested in the implementation tasks outlined below.

Strategy Ten: Develop Strategic Alliances

We have already noted that museums need to develop strategic alliances and work with related organizations and sectors (including internationally) to increase the resources and skills/expertise available across the sector, and to achieve common objectives.

It follows from the argument and strategies outlined above, particularly the creation of a New Zealand Collections Council, that consideration should now be given to aligning the museum sector more closely with the archives and library sectors, in order to achieve greater critical mass and efficiencies. There has been some useful contact developed with counterpart organizations in the libraries and archives sectors (LIANZA and ARANZ) during the development of this strategy. These contacts should now be reinforced and cooperation enhanced.

Museums and other heritage organizations should also seek to enhance their contribution to regional economic development (including through exhibition development and promotion, and research), and the combined group should collectively consider the best way in which to engage with relevant agencies such as regional economic development and tourism organizations towards the realization of common objectives and goals.

The sector should also consider the best ways in which to engage with new partners in relation to the emerging digital environment. An opportunity exists for a strong sectoral organisation to drive progress in improving access to digital resources, and to monitor the quality of digital content produced by the museum sector. Until now, National Services Te Paerangi has undertaken a leadership role in the digital environment on behalf of the sector and it appears appropriate at present that it continue to do so, assisted by Museums Aotearoa.



7 The role of Museums Aotearoa

The discussion in section 3 above lists a number of issues relating to the role of Museums Aotearoa, and its place within the museum sector.

There has been a clear view expressed by the sector during consultation on the development of this strategy for Museums Aotearoa to become a strong professional association that advocates on behalf of the museum sector, supports the professional development of its members, and delivers tangible membership benefits.

The key functions of a professional association are to:

- (i) Be a clearing-house for information, including in relation to skills development and training opportunities, and on terms and conditions for employees and volunteers.
- (ii) Promote a code of ethics for the profession, and professional standards.
- (iii) Be an advocacy and lobby body for the sector.
- (iv) Organize a regular sector conference.
- (v) Promote and facilitate sector co-ordination and information and skill sharing, including through a newsletter and/or journal.
- (vi) Act as a conduit to/from international museum organizations.

Museums Aotearoa already undertakes several of these roles. It does not however currently act as a clearing house for information in relation to skills development. Work to facilitate the museum sector's participation in industry training has been undertaken by National Services Te Paerangi, and this resulted, at the end of 2004, in the choice of the Aviation Tourism and Travel Training Organization (ATTTO) to take on industry training coverage of the museum sector. ATTTO will register the museum-related training standards and qualifications that have already been developed, and further such standards, on the National Qualifications Framework so that training providers can offer them to museum staff and volunteers. There is therefore an opportunity for Museums Aotearoa to work closely with ATTTO to promote training and skill development programmes throughout the sector, represent the views of its membership on training and skill development matters to the new Museum Training Council that ATTTO will establish, and to provide information to the sector about skills development and training opportunities. This could occur through the development of appropriate pages on the Museums Aotearoa website, written with the needs of the information seekers in mind.

Museums Aotearoa has also enhanced its advocacy role on behalf of the sector over the past year e.g. in making a submission to the Select Committee considering the Government's proposed Charities Bill, and to the Institute of Chartered Accountants of NZ about the financial reporting standards that require valuation of museum collections. This sector advocacy role should be strengthened as sought by most of those consulted during the development of this strategy. It should be understood however that Museums Aotearoa will undertake only those responsibilities or roles as are consistent with and relevant to its members' interests.

Other roles that Museum Aotearoa could assume include:

- Promotion of the museum sector standards scheme, which is currently managed by National Services Te Paerangi, particularly to the smaller museums (see further discussion on this point in Section 8 below);

- Collecting and analyzing benchmark statistics, including visitor numbers, salaries, performance, and services. There may be an opportunity, in part, to address the need for development of key sector statistics within the existing Cultural Statistics Programme jointly operated by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Statistics New Zealand;
- Assuming a leadership role in facilitating the sector to caucus on issues affecting the sector, for example the forthcoming charities legislation, and other matters such as insurance and the valuation of taonga and collections;
- Facilitating and encouraging existing and new professional groups within the sector to provide informal collaboration and skill sharing;
- Pursuing further opportunities to enhance the professional development of its membership.

It was also suggested in one submission received during the strategy development process that the current fee structure for membership of Museums Aotearoa could be re-examined in order for the Association to increase its membership base from individuals. Individuals employed or volunteering in institutions that are institutional members of the Association receive benefits of Museums Aotearoa without being an individual member, and as a result, there is little incentive for individuals to join. In addition, while institutional members take a leading role there is limited opportunity for individuals to become involved in the Association's activities.

Such a review might usefully lead to reconsideration of the governance of Museums Aotearoa to ensure that its governance structure enables it to adequately meet the expectations of its members and perform as a high quality professional organization to deliver results from this significant sector strategy and to help to achieve the sector's vision and goals.

8 The role of National Services Te Paerangi

As noted above, National Services Te Paerangi was established by the Board of Te Papa in 1996 to give effect to section 7(i) of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act 1992, Section 7(i) of which states the following as a function of the Museum: "*To co-operate with and assist other New Zealand museums in establishing a national service, and in providing appropriate support to other institutions and organisations holding objects or collections of national importance*".

The operational framework and delivery strategies established for the provision of national services by Te Papa through its National Services Te Paerangi division have focused on building capacity to enable museums to improve their services and the sustainability of their operations.

Priority programme areas have been reviewed with the sector every three years for their continuing relevance. The last triennial review was undertaken in 2002/03, informing project priorities for 2003/04 to 2005/06. Current priority areas are:

- (i) **Training and Skill Development** – Personnel up-skilled through sustainable regional and national training initiatives.
- (ii) **Standards Implementation** – Organizational standards in all aspects of providing museum services improved based on the *Standards Scheme for New Zealand Museums Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana o Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa*.
- (iii) **Kaupapa Maori Iwi Development** – Increased iwi capacity and capability to deliver museum/culture and heritage services and to develop relationships with iwi, museums and related organizations.
- (iv) **Strategic Regional and Community Development Initiatives** – Increased collaboration and coordination to develop regional and community strategies for culture and heritage services to become more central to the identity, social and economic fabric of communities.

National Services' substantial contribution to the establishment of training standards and qualifications for the sector through the National Qualifications Project is likely to result in the establishment of an ITO for the sector and it taking over responsibility for ongoing training and skill development programmes from mid-2005. There will however be an ongoing need for support of its activities and promotion of training and skill development from a representative organization within the sector. It has been proposed above that Museums Aotearoa could undertake as part of its ongoing role, regular training and skill needs analyses. This would suggest that Museums Aotearoa could in future take on the ongoing role of liaison on behalf of the sector with the ITO.

It has also been suggested above that the role of a professional association would normally be to develop and promote professional standards for adherence by its membership. This is an activity that until now has not been undertaken by Museums Aotearoa. It does however hold a small amount of funding to promote the museum sector standards scheme particularly to the smaller museums. This could indeed be extended, if the sector so wished, to a more extensive involvement appropriate to its role as a professional museum association.

Given the desirability for Te Papa's National Services Te Paerangi and Museums Aotearoa to be complementary in their roles and mutually supportive, National Services Te Paerangi's forthcoming

triennial review will address the respective roles of each organisation, particularly in the context of views expressed by the sector during the consultation phase of this strategy.

The scope of this review will include how National Services Te Paerangi, working with all parts of the sector, can enhance its effectiveness in providing appropriate support to other institutions and organisations holding objects or collections of national importance. One area for National Services Te Paerangi to focus on will be to advance the current work with regional and metropolitan museums and art galleries on ways in which to support smaller museums.

National Services Te Paerangi support has been targeted to enhance regional and national networks and clusters by providing financial and human resource support for partnership projects and by leveraging additional financial and/or human resource support for these projects from other relevant organisations/parties. This appears to be an appropriate role for Te Papa to continue to pursue.

9 Implementation tasks

Arising from the individual strategies set out above are several important implementation projects that need early attention by Museums Aotearoa and National Services Te Paerangi:

- (i) Engage in processes with museum Boards and staff over the coming months which will elaborate the principles and directions expressed in this strategy, and gain widespread acceptance of them to assist implementation. Such a debate could reinvigorate museum policies and practices, creating better opportunities to protect and project cultural heritage in a coherent and coordinated manner.
- (ii) Convene a national forum in May or June 2005 to prepare more intensively for the development of a Distributed National Collection and to identify the steps that will need to be followed to bring it to fruition.
- (iii) Develop projects that will progress the maintenance of, and access to collections. The objective would be to promote strong professional practice and improved services for users. If museums are able to see themselves within the new policy framework they can be expected to respond with imagination, vigour and flair to projects which advance both local needs and contribute to broader national interests.
- (iv) Prepare a submission to the Government, in close consultation with its counterparts in the heritage, libraries and archives sectors for the establishment of a New Zealand Collections Council.
- (v) Coordinate and prepare a response from the museum sector to the recommendations of the hui wananga that followed the Te Maori exhibition in 1986 in relation to museums' partnership with Maori and their responsibilities for care of the taonga entrusted to them.
- (vi) Progress the development of a national taonga database. Moreover, the preparation of inventories of taonga or collections relating to whanau/hapu/iwi may provide the basis for direct engagement with iwi/Maori, and provide an opportunity to discuss collaborative projects. It should also be feasible to consider the development of an International Taonga Database, in order to make information on taonga held in institutions globally available and accessible to iwi/Maori in New Zealand, and others who are interested.
- (vii) Progress the national project (initiated by National Services Te Paerangi) aimed at advancing the understanding of non-Western knowledge and classification systems such as mātauranga Maori and how such systems might be recognized and provided for as a central aspect of museum practice in New Zealand.
- (viii) Undertake a sector-wide skill needs analysis (which should be repeated approximately every five years) in order to inform the development of appropriate programmes to address identified training needs. This process should seek to ensure the best utilization and coordination of existing services, such as those offered by National Services Te Paerangi and the National Preservation Office, and the new services being engaged by the sector through the Aviation, Tourism and Travel Industry Training Organization from 2005. National Services Te Paerangi and also Museums Aotearoa will work with the ITO in 2005 to update skill development priorities for the sector.
- (ix) Take an active involvement in leading government and private sector initiatives that have the potential to create opportunities for museums resulting from advances in information and communications technology and the online environment. This would include the Government

digital strategy, the 'e-regions' programme being developed in consultation with local government by a group of regional economic development agencies, and various private sector 'ice-breaker' or 'media-lab' initiatives.

- (x) Develop a national strategy for the development of museums as centres for life-long learning. This strategy, or as a separate project, should encompass the development of an e-learning strategy for New Zealand museums.
- (xi) Commission or undertake research into museums' contribution to both economic and social well-being, as a basis for advocating on behalf of the sector with government (central and local), and develop the case for increased support (including from corporate/private sources).
- (xii) National Services Te Paerangi to progress its current discussion with regional and larger metropolitan museums and art galleries on ways in which to partner at a regional and national level to support smaller museums. The aim is to provide a new programme to provide practical support.
- (xiii) Initiate discussion with the archives and library sectors, in order to achieve greater critical mass and efficiencies by collaborating more effectively together. Such discussion should incorporate the preparations for the establishment of the Collections Council.
- (xiv) Enhance access to collections through the development of a national strategy for touring exhibitions. This will be assisted by the development of a website-linked database that is currently being undertaken by Museums Aotearoa of exhibitions that have been or are being developed for touring purposes
 - to develop simple systems for sharing information on available travelling exhibitions.
 - to create an accessible environment for information sharing and cooperation.

The Internet offers excellent opportunities to achieve these outcomes. The following three systems have been identified as potential ways for sharing information under the umbrella of Museums Aotearoa:

- Internet based touring exhibition database.
- Internet based discussion forums.
- Exhibition marketplace: meet, greet and swap.

10 Conclusion

This statement of a new strategy for the museum sector has set out a bold new vision for the museum sector and some challenging individual strategies that will enable it to achieve that vision. The strategy challenges the sector to effect a transformation in the perception of museums as being 'keepers of heritage collections' towards becoming an integral part of, and relevant to, the communities that they serve: in other words, a central focus of community life. In order to do this, museums must increasingly focus on, understand the needs of, engage with, and be adaptable to the changing needs of their audiences, whilst maintaining a high level of integrity, and the trust of the public at large.

Museums will prosper in the future only if they are able to connect more effectively with their actual and potential audiences. They must be relevant to the daily lives of the people in the communities they seek to serve.

Related to this, the strategy proposes that the sector consider a transformational change in the way that it regards collections. It is proposed that the sector adopt the notion of a "distributed national collection" and move to identify elements of particular significance within that national collection. This will imply changes to the way that museums manage and fund the care, conservation and exhibition of their collection activities. It also implies that in future the sector will work more collectively and cohesively, and less as individual components of a loose federation.

The transformation that we propose is to change the way that we think about our museum collections and see them as parts of a whole, not as separate entities in themselves. This will enable the significance of particular collections to be recognized beyond the individual community they are located within, while still preserving their essential local character, relevance and guardianship. Most importantly, it will give the sector a new incentive to put aside past differences and to work together towards a common purpose.

To achieve this will require effective leadership at all levels in the sector and a willingness to work together to a much greater extent than has previously been apparent.

The strategy also proposes that there be increased effort from museums to develop effective relationships and partnerships with communities, including iwi/Maori, and that the involvement and acknowledgement of the role of communities in contributing to the care, management and understanding of collections and taonga is viewed as a primary function of the museum.

The museum sector will also seek now to prepare a case, in close consultation with its counterparts in the heritage, libraries and archives sectors for the establishment by the Government of a Collections Council. The purpose of having a Collections Council would be to provide strategic advice to the government on the future directions, needs and priorities of the heritage collections sector and to identify priorities for the government in addressing these issues.

A statistical overview of the museum sector

As part of the development of the strategy, we attempted to draw on available information to 'paint a portrait' of the museums sector in New Zealand. An ideal picture would show the number of visitors and admissions, including international visitors; the actual and potential impact of 'cultural tourism' on museums and galleries; the number of museums and galleries; employment in the sector; income and expenditure trends; museum collections; numbers of volunteers engaged in the sector, and the numbers and types of exhibitions held during the period (permanent, temporary, and travelling). As noted, we found only limited current information on which to draw.

(i) Visitors and admissions

The New Zealand Framework for Cultural Statistics defines museums services as:

"the collection, acquisition, registration, research into, conservation, communication and exhibition of the material evidence of people, their culture and their environment, including the natural world, for the purposes of study, education and enjoyment by the general public and/or specialists. Included are the operation of history, natural science, combined general science and history, applied science and technology, transport, maritime, military and other specialist museums, science centres, art museums, art galleries and historical theme parks".¹⁴

Based on this framework, Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry for Culture and Heritage have undertaken a series of surveys, the latest of which is the Cultural Experiences Survey undertaken in the first three months of 2002, and is based on the respondents' experience during the year 2001. The results, which were published in a report in 2003¹⁵, provide a snapshot of the level of engagement by New Zealanders with cultural activities, including the museums sector as defined above. It is supplemented by expenditure information from the Household Economic Survey and thus provides an expansive view of New Zealanders' cultural activities.

A summary of the 'heritage' category of activity shows that¹⁶:

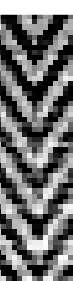
- an estimated 2.1 million New Zealanders, or 77 percent of the population aged 15 or over, experienced at least one of the heritage activities asked about in the survey in the previous 12 months.
- visiting museums or art galleries was the most popular heritage activity. An estimated 1.34 million New Zealanders, or 48 percent of the population aged 15 or over, visited an art gallery or museum in the 12 months before the survey.
- Fifty-one percent of New Zealand women made visits, compared with 46 percent of New Zealand men.

14 New Zealand Framework for Cultural Statistics, Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, 1995, p.31

in New Zealand, Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2003

15 A Measure of Culture: Cultural experiences and cultural spending

16 Ibid, page 35-42



- The proportions of people visiting museums or galleries increased from 49 per cent of 15-24 year olds to 54 percent of people aged 35-44. After this age, the proportions of people visiting a museum or gallery declined, to 39 per cent of people aged 65 or over.
- Fifty-one per cent of European/Pakeha people visited a museum or gallery. The proportions of other ethnic groups ranged from 27 per cent for Pacific peoples, to 49 per cent for 'other' ethnic groups¹⁷.
- Education was the most important variable determining whether or not people experienced heritage activities. More than three quarters of those with educational qualifications experienced such activities, compared with two thirds of those without them.
- Where people live affected the proportions experiencing heritage activities. Wellingtonians were more likely to have visited museums than residents of other regions. The popularity of heritage activities in Wellington may be explained by the popularity of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.
- Two thirds of visitors to historic places and museums or art galleries visited only once.
- Lack of time was the main reason given for not visiting a museum or gallery more often. The lack of any local museums or galleries, transport problems, and cost of entry were also significant reasons quoted.
- Overall, just over three quarters of those who had visited museums or galleries were interested in visiting exhibitions with a New Zealand theme.

More detailed information from the survey is available from the publication cited.

It is interesting to note at this point that the information summarized above does not correlate easily with the results of separate statistical research conducted under the auspices firstly of Creative New Zealand¹⁸ and then subsequently by Museums Aotearoa between 1990 and 1999. Annual museum surveys were undertaken from 1990 by Creative New Zealand using a sample of around sixty New Zealand museums and galleries. Creative New Zealand completed its investment in this annual survey with the publication of 1990-1996 data in May 1996. Following this, Museums Aotearoa invited McDermott Miller Limited to assist in reactivating the annual museums survey. The results of their research were published in September 1999¹⁹, and comprised 45 responses to 94 questionnaires (a 47% response rate). This document reported that in 1998, visitors to exhibition spaces stood at 4.3 million compared to 3.3 million in 1997. This total excludes visits by school children in booked groups and attendance at touring exhibitions at external venues.

Of the total of 4.3 million admissions, visitors from New Zealand are reported to contribute 78% of admissions. This would suggest that there would have been 3.3 million admissions from New Zealanders in the period under review. This is not borne out by the later work conducted by Statistics New Zealand etc. Clearly there is a need for clarification or further research into this area.

(ii) The impact of 'cultural tourism'

The McDermott Miller research cited above suggests that 22 percent of admissions to museums and art galleries in 1998 were from international visitors. This is somewhat lower than the 28 percent shown in the last Creative New Zealand Survey, which reported data for 1995/96. However 'cultural tourism' has been specifically identified in the New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010 (NZTS) as an area requiring further development in order to maximize its potential.

17 The categories are: European/Pakeha, Maori, Pacific peoples, Chinese, Indian, and 'other'.

18 E.g. New Zealand Museums Facts and Trends, Philip Donnelly (Economic Consultant), Creative New Zealand, May 1997

19 New Zealand Museum Sector Monitor, Part 1: Visitor Information for Financial years 1996/97- 1997/1998 and June-December 1998, McDermott Miller Limited for Museums Aotearoa Inc., 3 September 1999



To meet some key recommendations included in the NZTS, research was undertaken to enhance the understanding of the role of cultural tourism in the tourism sector, and domestic and international visitors' demand for cultural tourism experience. Colmar Brunton undertook a survey²⁰ for Tourism New Zealand in 2002. This confirmed that the 'interactive traveller' should be the primary target for Tourism New Zealand's international marketing activity. Interactive travellers are more interested in a range of activities including cultural products and experiences, have stronger perceptions about what New Zealand has to offer in terms of individual cultural products, and are high users of the Internet as a source of travel information.

Of particular interest is the finding that 49 percent of all travellers interviewed in the survey who had actually visited New Zealand said that they were interested in visiting museums when travelling internationally, and 60 percent would visit sites of importance to a country's history or heritage. For the interactive international traveller these percentages increased to 52 per cent and 67 per cent respectively. Given that the number of international visitor arrivals in New Zealand is forecast by the NZTS to grow to 3.2 million per year by 2010 on even a base case scenario, the potential for increased admissions to the museums sector is significant. We will refer again to the potential of this market later in this document.

(iii) Number of museums and art galleries

There does not appear to be definitive data on the number of museums and art galleries in New Zealand. The "Directory 2003" published by Museums Aotearoa (currently being updated) lists some 440 organizations. Of these, around 400 appear to be best classified as museums and 40 as art galleries, although it may be assumed that some museums will combine both heritage and art collections.

(iv) Employment in the sector

A further report in the series published by Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry for Culture and Heritage uses data from the 1996 Census to investigate employment in the cultural sector in New Zealand.²¹

At the 1996 Census, 1305 people were employed in museums and art galleries (excluding commercial or dealer galleries)²². This is 39 per cent more than 1991 and follows a 7 per cent decline in employment in museums and art galleries over the previous census period (1986 to 1991). The proportion of women employed is 55 percent.

Thirty two per cent of people employed in the museums and art galleries work force comprises people in cultural occupations, the majority of these being art gallery and museum curators. Other cultural occupations employed in the sector include: commercial artist: sculptor, painter and related artist; archivist; display and window dresser, librarian; and library assistant.

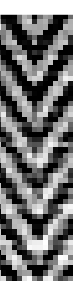
The majority of people employed in non-cultural occupations in museums and art galleries are corporate managers, office clerks and personal and protective services workers (a category which includes tour guides and security and catering workers). Half of the museums and galleries workforce was employed in Auckland and Wellington in 1996 (compared to 42 percent of total employment). Just over a quarter (26 percent), or 333 people, was employed in Wellington. In 1996, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa employed around 250 people.

At the 1996 Census, 420 people identified themselves as an art gallery and museum curator, 40 percent more than in 1991. The growth has been most marked for female curators. In 1996, 66 per cent of curators were employed in museums and art galleries, with a further 10 percent in art dealers. In all 86

20 Demand for Cultural Tourism—Summary of Research Findings, Colmar Brunton Social Research Agency. See www.tourisminfo.govt.nz.

21 Employment in the Cultural Sector, Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, September 1998

22 Ibid, page 27



per cent were employed in a cultural industry. Just over a quarter of curators (26 per cent) were employed in the Wellington region, more than twice the proportion on total employment (12 per cent). In contrast, only 21 per cent of curators were employed in the Auckland region compared with 30 per cent of total employment).

(v) Income and Expenditure

There does not appear to be recent aggregated data available on the income or expenditure (capital and operating) of the sector. The most recent material available appears to be that contained in the report published by Creative New Zealand in May 1997²³. This data is likely to be considerably dated by now, some eight years later, and is therefore not included in this description of the sector. McDermott Miller Ltd. was to distribute further questionnaires in 1998 covering the areas of exhibitions, museums resources (staffing, collections, education resources, promotion and marketing) and financial performance, but this research did not eventuate.

(vi) Museum collections

A further area of interest for the development of any sector strategy would be to know the extent of additions to museum collections over the recent past. This would include the extent and value of donations of artworks and artifacts, as well as any purchases made. Again, some reference to this was made in the Creative New Zealand 1997 research, while the report noted that few of the museums surveyed could respond to the questions, and consequently it was not possible to produce meaningful data in every case. This applied particularly to the question of accessions and deaccessions from collections.

(vii) Volunteers

The Creative New Zealand survey reported that there were 2140 volunteers actively involved in the programmes of surveyed museums during 1995/96. This area of research does not seem to have been repeated since. It will be important in terms of telling a story of museums to include information on the role and number of volunteers in the sector.

(viii) Exhibitions

We have been unable to identify any research or survey material which would provide information on the number of exhibitions mounted by the museum sector in recent years. The last such research is provided in the 1997 Creative New Zealand report²⁴. This showed that the number of permanent and temporary exhibitions mounted by responding museums during 1995/96 (500) declined slightly compared with 1994/95 (505). But this number can be expected to have increased since then, probably substantially.

23 Op. cit.

24 Op. cit.

Terms of reference

A museum sector strategy for New Zealand

Building a stronger future for the sector

Introduction

Caring for our local, regional and national heritage, and making it accessible to the community, is essential to a civilized society. But museums and galleries face significant and real challenges in playing a dynamic role in our cultural life as centres of excellence in which people can learn experience and enjoy, and be stimulated to think about their place in the world. The museum sector has considerable resources of collections, buildings, people, and expertise, but it must continue to develop these and make better use of its existing strengths to meet modern standards and expectations. Appropriate resourcing is required to sustain and enhance the excellent services that New Zealand's museums and galleries are committed to providing. It is also important to recognize and celebrate the diversity and richness of New Zealand museums and art galleries.

The aim in developing a strategy for the sector by the sector is to establish clear goals and identify means of achieving them. The strategy will be prepared throughout 2004, with a view to engaging related sectors and the government on the development and implementation of coherent policy and structures for the museum sector.

Objectives

- To arrive at a unified vision that strengthens the role in New Zealand society of museums, galleries and other holders of objects and collections.
- To explore and encourage opportunities for alignment and collaboration, both within the sector and with other related sectors, and the government.
- To utilize existing resources more wisely and attract increased resourcing.
- To provide a context for engagement with central and local government, including on the development of coherent policy for the museum sector.
- To consider the appropriate arrangements to support implementation of a museum sector strategy.

Brief

To consult with the sector and key stakeholders, report on issues and options, and make recommendations that support achievement of the objectives.



Scope

The strategy will cover all organizations with stewardship of objects and collections. This includes museums, galleries, iwi museums, libraries and archives holding heritage collections. Consultation has endeavoured to include:

Museums, galleries, libraries and archives
Sector stakeholders

Key individuals, iwi, territorial local authorities,
Creative New Zealand, relevant associations including
Local Government New Zealand, ARANZ, LIANZA,
TIANZ.

Central Government agencies

Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Te Puni Kokiri,
National Library, Archives New Zealand,
Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Education,
Department of Conservation

Personnel

The development of the museum sector strategy has been led by a Steering Group of institutional leaders. The members are:

Sir Paul Reeves	Chairman
Dr Fiona Ciaran	Aigantighe Art Gallery
Dr Rodney Wilson	Auckland War Memorial Museum
Priscilla Pitts	Dunedin Public Art Gallery
Garry Moore	Mayor of Christchurch
Anthony Wright	Museums Aotearoa
Suzanne Porter	Puke Ariki
Dr Seddon Bennington	Te Papa Tongarewa
Te Taru White	Te Papa Tongarewa

The Steering Group is supported by the Chief Executive of Museums Aotearoa, Ross Tanner, who has managed the necessary research and the consultation programme, and has written the report under the guidance of the Steering Group.

List of regional meetings, submissions and organisations consulted

Regional meetings

1. Taranaki/ Manawatu/ Hawkes Bay [2 April, 2004, Palmerston North]
2. Auckland (smaller museums) [20 May 2004, Auckland]
3. Metropolitan museums and art galleries [31 May 2004, Te Papa]
4. Nelson/ Marlborough [2 June 2004, Stoke]
5. Waikato/ Rotorua/ Bay of Plenty [4 June, Rotorua]
6. Southland [14 June, Invercargill]
7. Otago [15 June 2004, Dunedin]
8. Canterbury [22 June, 2004, Christchurch]
9. Kaitiaki Maori hui [30 June-2 July 2004, Rotorua]
10. Auckland (larger museums) [7 July 2004, Auckland]
11. Northland [8 July 2004, Whangarei]
12. West Coast [19 July 2004, Shantytown, Hokitika]
13. Wellington/ Wairarapa [13 August 2004, Lower Hutt]

Submissions and comments received

Archives and Records Association of New Zealand

Canterbury Museum

Cotter Medical History Trust

Department of Conservation

Edwin Fox Society Incorporated

Jubilee Fire Museum, Masterton

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

NZ National Maritime Museum

National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Matauranga o Aotearoa

Otago Museum

Tasman Bays Heritage Trust

Tourism New Zealand



Dr Neil Algar, Matamata Historical Society
Richard Arlidge, Tauranga Art Gallery
Clemency Boyce, Te Manawa
Peter Bull, The Kauri Museum
Dr Fiona Ciaran, Aighantighe Art Museum
John Coster, Tauranga District Council
Rachel Davies, Tauranga Museum,
Dean Flavell, Tauranga Museum
Albert Lovell, The Kauri Museum
Liz Matthews, Northland Medical Museum
John Klaricich, Whaiwhatawhata
Libby Sharpe, Whanganui Museum
Helen Telford, The Suter Te Aratoi o Whakatu
Kelvin Day, Christine Whybrew, Diana Gibbons and Anna-Marie White, Puke Ariki
Laura Vodanovich, Auckland Museum
Marlin Elkington, Iwi Advisory Komiti for the Tasman Bays Heritage Trust and Isle Park Museum

A joint submission was received from:

Susan Abasa, Lecturer in Museum Studies, Massey University
David Butts, Senior Lecturer, Museum Studies, Massey University
Julie Catchpole, Museum Consultant, Palmerston North
Major Chas Charlton, Director, Queen Elizabeth The Second Army Memorial Museum
Jane Legget, Heritage Consultant, Auckland
Greg McManus, Director, Rotorua Museum of Art and History
Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa
Mike Spedding, Director, Tairāwhiti Museum
David Woodings, Director, Southland Museum and Art Gallery Niho o Te Taniwha



Any comments or correspondence
relating to this strategy should be sent to
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