



# NATIONAL FILM & SOUND ARCHIVE

## NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

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The National Film and Sound Archive is part  
of the Australian Film Commission (AFC),  
the Australian Government agency charged  
with ensuring the creation, availability and  
preservation of Australian screen content.



Australian Government



COLLECTION POLICY & STATEMENT OF CURATORIAL VALUES

## & STATEMENT OF CURATORIAL VALUES



## FOREWORD: A CURATORIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE NFSA

A collection policy is the most important document of an archive. Together with its mission statement, it declares the archive's goals and objectives, its philosophical grounds, its vision. It is through the collection policy that the public understands why a collecting institution exists, what are the ideas governing its activities, what are the principles endorsed by those who work in it. This thoroughly revised version of the National Film and Sound Archive's Collection Policy reflects the new structure of the NFSA under the curatorial framework established with the return of the organisation to its original name. But what does 'curatorial' mean, and why is this word so important to us?

In a nutshell, a curatorial activity entails a high degree of personal accountability and sense of strategy. In addition to having a thorough knowledge of the archival field, the curator goes beyond its protocols or procedures and develops a long-range cultural framework, an overall view of what the archive may or should become one hundred years from now, beyond the imperatives and the limitations of the present. A good curator thinks on behalf of posterity; a visionary curator gives a voice to the expressions of cultural dissent, challenges all the common assumptions on posterity, turns them into an opportunity to lay the foundations for possible worlds, and takes responsibility for it. The collection policy is the working tool of the cultural engineer in the archive of the future.

As with all working tools, a collection policy is not an entity fixed in time. It evolves with society, and it reacts differently to different historical circumstances. As the ideology of 'content' has pervaded the world of recorded sounds and moving images with its notion of culture as a commodity, this Collection Policy promotes a different, 'long view' approach, based on an equal balance between the three activities of an archive: acquisition, preservation and access. According to this policy, all should have equal weight and nurture each other for the sake of cultivating a better, more diverse cultural landscape where freedom of debate is as important as consensus. A landscape where music and films are not 'content' but 'works'; where 'context' is more meaningful than the simplistic mantra of 'access'; where the 'experience' of music or film gives dignity to an otherwise amorphous 'client'.

The best way to test the validity of a tool is to use it over time and review it periodically. This is what we intend to do every 18 months by listening to your suggestions. Our aim is to make the NFSA Collection Policy a more efficient way to engage with those who *experience* audiovisual *works* and interpret their *context*: all of us, now and in the next century.

Paolo Cherchi Usai  
Director, National Film and Sound Archive

National Film and Sound Archive:  
Collection Policy, and Statement of Curatorial Values

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# STATEMENT OF CURATORIAL VALUES

## What is a curator?

Curators formulate and develop the intellectual and cultural policy of archives and museums. Their role is to acquire and preserve objects, and to research, identify, and interpret them for the benefit of the community. They establish coherent and objective curatorial standards and policies, which in turn inform archival procedures, protocols and techniques.

The collaborative nature of the relationship between curators and archivists is key to the life of a collecting institution. The archivist is the custodian of the standards governing the management of a collection; the curator is the collection's spokesperson. These roles are necessarily intertwined, as a curator is expected to embrace archival standards, and an archivist should be aware of, and be able to promote, the cultural significance of the collection. Before deciding upon a given policy, the curator must consult the archivist in relation to its compliance with the best available archival practice.

Curators and archivists have distinct and yet complementary roles; from this standpoint, they have equal professional standing in a collecting organisation. This balance of power ensures that no curatorial decision is made without proper consideration of the safety and integrity of the collection.

## What is an artefact?

In curatorial terms, an artefact is a work to be acquired, preserved, and made accessible. There are three elements to a cultural artefact: the content of the work, i.e. its subject matter, events and sounds to be presented to an audience; its context – the social, cultural, technological and political factors affecting the environment in which the work has been created; its experience, as determined by the media in which the work was and is heard or seen by its public. The combination of these three determines the cultural significance of the artefact.

## NFSA CURATORIAL VALUES

Acquisition, preservation and access are equally important features of a curatorial vision. None of these areas of activity will be developed to the detriment of the others.

### Collecting the artefacts – respect for the items and their diversity

All work formally under the responsibility of the NFSA is as important to the collection as any other work, regardless of its cultural identity, nationality, or access status.

Curators are bound to respect the diversity of ideas, values and beliefs in the community, and should not impose their own in deciding which works are to be collected. They are responsible for developing a collection that draws on and represents the diversity of cultural, political, social, religious and other ideas of individuals and groups in the past and present society, not just the dominant ideas of their time.

### Handling the artefacts – respect for the item's integrity

No work in the collection will be altered, manipulated or modified under any circumstance (even by its author) for any reason whatsoever, be it of a cultural, political, racial, religious or economic nature. While new works may be created through the use of one or more existing works in the collection, the new work should never alter, manipulate or modify the existing collection items.

As soon as a work becomes part of the national collection, each of its components is potentially an 'original' and should be treated with all the care necessary to ensure its survival for future generations. The 'original' work (as determined as such by the curator) should never be touched except for the creation of preservation and access elements.

No duplication whatsoever of the original work should be made without prior adequate measures to ensure the stability of the collection item.

Any preservation work must be reversible; it must not involve further alteration of the original work, and it must be carefully documented.

No duplication, transfer or migration of the original work for preservation or access purposes will be allowed before a work is accessible in its original format or medium, insofar as the original format or medium exists and is available.

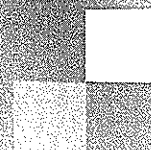
### Experiencing the artefacts – respect for the item's cultural identity

Curators must ensure that the work can be experienced in its original medium and format, or at least in a form as close as possible to the way it was intended to be seen and/or heard at the time of its creation.

The work may be also made accessible in other media, as long as a choice is always given (insofar as possible) between its experience through the original medium and through a new one.

The difference between the original presentation of a work and its modern reproduction must be understood and articulated.





**ONE** INTRODUCTION

# COLLECTION POLICY

## 1.1 Overview

1.1.1 The National Film and Sound Archive (the NFSA), a Division of the Australian Film Commission (AFC), is the national audiovisual archive of Australia. The NFSA plays a key role in documenting and interpreting the Australian experience and actively contributing to the development of the audiovisual culture and industry.

### Mission Statement

**The National Film and Sound Archive collects, preserves, and aims to ensure the permanent availability of, the nation's audiovisual heritage.**

1.1.2 In fulfilling its mandate, the NFSA is conscious of its responsibility to preserve the Australian heritage and of its unique ability to make available a record of Australian cultural experiences and society through audiovisual media, including—but not limited to—recorded music, radio, television, film, new media forms and related documentation. The cultural record held in the NFSA is Australia's history, documenting the nation's memories for future generations.

1.1.3 The NFSA is a leader in the preservation, presentation and promotion of screen and sound culture in Australia. Within the limits of the resources at its disposal, the NFSA staff makes judgments and choices about how screen and sound material relevant to Australia's culture is collected, stored, preserved, interpreted, presented and made available. The NFSA's decisions as a publicly accountable organisation are based on a framework of policies, which are open to public scrutiny.

1.1.4 This Policy has been developed with reference to a number of documents issued by international agencies. Copies are available through the following websites:

- Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA)  
[www.amianet.org](http://www.amianet.org)
- Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM)  
[www.aiccm.org.au](http://www.aiccm.org.au)
- Australian Society of Archivists (ASA)  
[www.archivists.org.au](http://www.archivists.org.au)
- International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA)  
[www.llgc.org.uk/iasa](http://www.llgc.org.uk/iasa)
- International Federation of Film Archives (FIAP)  
[www.fiafnet.org](http://www.fiafnet.org)
- International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT)  
[www.fiatifta.org/](http://www.fiatifta.org/)
- Southeast Asia-Pacific Audio Visual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA)  
[www.seapavaa.org](http://www.seapavaa.org)
- Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archive Associations (CCAAA)  
[www.ccaaa.org](http://www.ccaaa.org)
- UNESCO  
[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)
- UNESCO Memory of the World Program  
[www.amw.org.au](http://www.amw.org.au)

1.1.5 A summary of the key ethical principles included in this document is contained in the NFSA Code of Ethics reproduced in Appendix A. The NFSA welcomes comments that will assist in the periodic review and refinement of this Collection Policy. Comments should be addressed to: The Director, National Film and Sound Archive, PO Box 2002, Acton ACT 2001, Australia.

## 1.2 Key Messages

1.2.1 The NFSA:

- a) collects, preserves, and provides public access to, the national audiovisual heritage
- b) stimulates and participates in interpretation and appreciation of the national and international screen and sound culture and heritage
- c) is an active participant in contemporary screen and sound industry issues and debates
- d) documents and protects Australian indigenous culture and history.

## 1.3 Collection Policy

1.3.1 In order to define its business and guide decisions, the NFSA's Collection Policy—along with its Code of Ethics and Service Charter—outlines the principles by which the NFSA operates. The Collection Policy is supplemented by guidelines that address particular activities and services.

1.3.2 The context for these policies and the practical implications for their implementation are provided in the NFSA's three-year Strategic Plan, which is reviewed and published annually.

## 1.4 The NFSA's History

1.4.1 The origins of the NFSA date back to the National Historical Film and Speaking Record Library, which was established by Cabinet decision on 11 December 1935, as part of the Commonwealth National Library. Work was continued by its successor, the National Library of Australia, in what ultimately became the Library's National Film Archive and Sound Recording sections. A Cabinet decision of 26 March 1984 created, as a new Commonwealth institution, an 'autonomous National Film and Sound Archive' to which the staff and collections of these sections were transferred, and also established an Advisory Committee for the National Film and Sound Archive to report on the future development of the institution. The Committee's report, *Time in our hands*, tabled in Parliament in November 1985, set out the NFSA's initial philosophy and policy framework.

In November 1992, a complete set of policies for the NFSA was published. The present document is the latest development in a series of revisions and updates since that time.

In June 1999 the Archive's name was changed to ScreenSound Australia. In July 2003 ScreenSound became a Division of the Australian Film Commission. The name reverted to National Film and Sound Archive in December 2004.

## 1.5 The NFSA Collection

1.5.1 In 1935 a small collection of 35mm films was assembled, presumably together with some sound recordings. The collection was revived around 1950 as a subset of the National Library of Australia's (NLA) film division, whose primary purpose was to run a 16mm lending library (currently known as the National Film and Video Lending Service). It grew slowly but steadily in the 1950s and 1960s, and took off in the 1970s when video formats were also added to the collection. The collecting of sound recordings was reestablished in 1973, when the NLA began to collect all sound formats.

- 1.5.2 The Collection of film and sound materials grew rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s, with the acquisition of major collections, the introduction of voluntary deposit arrangements, and specific campaigns such as *The Last Film Search*.
- 1.5.3 The National Library of Australia began acquiring materials related to the audiovisual media—such as photographs, posters, oral histories, scripts, vintage equipment, published and unpublished documentation and memorabilia—from the late 1950s onwards, as part of the NLA's 'historical film collection'. Today, these account for about half the items in the NFSA collection.
- 1.5.4 The use of the Collection expanded rapidly from the 1970s through the 1990s, with the upsurge in interest in heritage artefacts and historical materials. In 2004, the National Film and Video Lending Service – a collection of approximately 17,000 titles, mostly on 16mm film – was transferred from the NLA to the AFC and its curatorial management, development and operations were assigned to the NFSA.

## 1.6 Distributed National Collection

- 1.6.1 The NFSA's collection is part of the Distributed National Collection, a concept embracing the holdings of all major libraries, archives and museums in Australia. Agreements were made in 1991 to formalise the roles of major institutions and encourage a collaborative approach to collection development and management.
- 1.6.2 While the NFSA does not directly fund the activities of other collecting institutions, by virtue of its status as the national audiovisual collecting body it has the prerogative of playing a coordinating role in the audiovisual archiving field in Australia and of advising on audiovisual collecting, preservation and access work done elsewhere in the country.

## 1.7 Cultural Context

- 1.7.1 The NFSA acknowledges and respects the legal and moral rights of Indigenous owners of tradition in relation to the ownership of cultural materials. While the NFSA recognises current legal rights of ownership over Indigenous materials, it also understands that there is a complex blend of historical relationships and negotiations which resulted in the recording of Indigenous culture and in the accumulation of Indigenous materials.
- 1.7.2 In providing access to collection material, the NFSA will be sensitive to and take into account the cultural and social context of items in the collection.

## 1.8 International Context

- 1.8.1 The term 'audiovisual heritage' is used throughout this document according to the definitions provided in *Time in Our Hands* (Canberra: National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, 1985); Birgit Kofler, *Legal Questions Facing Audiovisual Archives* (Paris: UNESCO, 1991), pp. 8-9; Ray Edmondson, *Audiovisual Archiving: Philosophy and Principles* (Paris: UNESCO, 2004), p. 21. In this context, audiovisual heritage is defined by, and at the same time defies, national boundaries. As such, it is much more than a corpus of artefacts defined by the territory where recorded sound and moving images were made and by the identity of those who contributed to their creation. A national heritage is also defined by the experience of the people who took benefit from cultural works in general, regardless of their nationality, and turned their knowledge into creativity. The NFSA recognizes this reality and is committed to ensure that its collection adequately represents the Australian audiovisual heritage within the context of audiovisual culture as a global phenomenon.

- 1.8.2 The NFSA is committed to the acquisition, preservation of, and access to representative, rare (i.e. hard to replace) or unique examples of works created outside Australia (details on the NFSA international acquisition policy are provided in section 2.2. of Chapter 2, Acquisition Policy, as well as in Chapter 6, International Policy).
- 1.8.3 The NFSA participates in the international audiovisual archival community, contributing actively to the world body of expertise in audiovisual archiving. The NFSA represents Australia in the audiovisual archival field through dialogue, professional exchange, formal professional association and co-operative partnerships and alliances.
- 1.8.4 The NFSA adheres to and promotes the Code of Ethics of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAP); it conforms to the UNESCO *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images* (27 October 1980) and to other international protocols in the field. International participation contributes to the NFSA's cultural, technical and operational development. The NFSA views its activities as part of a co-operative global effort to collect, preserve and provide access to the screen and sound culture and heritage worldwide.



**TWO** ACQUISITION  
POLICY

## 2.1 Goals and Objectives of the Acquisition Policy

- 2.1.1 The NFSA aims to develop a collection of audiovisual and related materials of enduring cultural significance.
- 2.1.2 A film, sound recording, radio or television program may have many attributes (such as information, entertainment value, historical content, creative or artistic work, political or social values, or scientific or technical achievement). The NFSA recognises the equal importance of all these aspects, and aims to collect materials that will help achieve one or more of the collection acquisition goals and objectives described in the accompanying guidelines. The principal aims are to build a collection that is a:
- cultural resource and document
  - historical resource and record
  - record of Australian creative and technical achievement in the audiovisual context
  - reflection of the role, nature and status of audiovisual media in society.
- 2.1.3 All proposed acquisitions will be evaluated in terms of their furtherance of the NFSA's charter and mission statement. Criteria for consideration include the proposed item's potential to add to the strength or improvement of the collection, the physical and financial resources required for its care and preservation, and its cultural, aesthetic and historical significance.
- 2.1.4 The NFSA will adhere to the most rigorous standards of respect for the cultural history and heritage of all individuals and groups whose cultural property has come before the NFSA for acquisition consideration.

## 2.2 The NFSA Collection Objectives

- 2.2.1 The NFSA has a unique mandate to build a representative collection of Australian and international audiovisual works and materials, and to preserve and make accessible this shared audiovisual heritage. In the context of this document, the term 'Australian' refers to works created by or involving Australian people.
- 2.2.2 The NFSA does not intend to duplicate the preservation or access activities of other institutions, in Australia or abroad. The one exception is in building a high quality representation of international audiovisual culture. This collection may duplicate material which is held and preserved elsewhere in the world, but is not readily available in Australia from other national or local sources. The purpose of the international collection is primarily, but not exclusively, for access and research. Curators may also acquire and preserve international works if they are the only surviving copies, or if they determine that copies of these works held abroad are not adequately preserved or are in danger of disappearing.
- 2.2.3 The NFSA's primary aim is to develop a comprehensive collection of Australian works and materials representing the history, technology and culture of the audiovisual media, from their origins to the present time. The NFSA will also collect international material selectively, as resources permit, and not to the detriment of Australian works and materials. International material may also include works with a particular Australian or regional association, influence or context; material strongly influential in Australia that would otherwise not be accessible; or the holding of material in trust for the region (see also 1.8.3 in Chapter 1, Introduction, and 6.3.1 in Chapter 6, International Policy).

## 2.3 Curatorial Responsibility

- 2.3.1 Acquisition objectives are managed within the NFSA's overall curatorial structure where the functions of acquisition, preservation and access are supported in equal balance. Mindful of this balance, curators have the authority to decide which works will be acquired for the National Collection. They will strive to acquire complete works, in their final, best quality and/or commercially released versions, and in the media in which they were intended to be experienced and perceived by their audiences. In addition, the curators have sole authority to assess the exceptional circumstances under which it may be advisable or necessary to acquire elements other than the complete works (such as rushes, outtakes of moving image works, multitracks or unreleased sound recordings), or to acquire works in formats or media other than the original ones, in the event that acquisition or exhibition of the works in their original formats or media proves to be impossible to achieve.

## 2.4 Key Collecting Principles

- 2.4.1 The following principles will apply to all collection development decisions:
- The NFSA aspires to acquire the comprehensive output of Australian moving image and recorded sound production. This aspiration remains a constant principle despite the realities of complementary acquisition roles of other organisations and the logistics of retrieval and acquisition.
  - Primary collection priority and preservation will be given to the Australian national heritage and to the avoidance of unnecessary duplication. 'Australian national heritage' is defined here (in order of acquisition priority) as the complex of all audiovisual works a) produced by Australians, in Australia and abroad; b) created in Australia; c) experienced by Australians.
  - The collection will primarily concentrate on works of significance to the nation. In this context, the term 'significance' implies the active contribution of a given audiovisual work to the context and growth of the nation's audiovisual heritage, irrespective of where, when or by whom the audiovisual work was created. The collection should also be an accurate reflection the diversity of Australian cultures.
  - Indigenous Australian material, both current and retrospective, will be acquired by the NFSA for its collection and in collaboration with other archival organisations, with recognition of the significant cultural issues involved. The NFSA recognises the ethical issues surrounding ownership and exhibition of cultural property. (See the NFSA's Indigenous Collections Policy for more information.)
  - The NFSA will develop and maintain management practices to ensure that cultural property is treated appropriately. Specifically, the NFSA will:
    - research with all due diligence the provenance of works being considered for acquisition
    - identify collection works of questionable provenance
    - identify collection works to which another party may claim lawful ownership.
  - The collection will include a representation of international production to assist the Australian public in the appreciation and interpretation of both contemporary and heritage audiovisual culture. These aspects of the collection will be supported primarily, but not exclusively, for access purposes. They will also be supported for preservation purposes through a curatorial assessment of the rare, unique or endangered nature of a given audiovisual work which may not be easily accessible through the NFSA's archival contacts abroad. On this topic, see also Chapter 6 on International Policy.

- g) The NFSA will select—in partnership with other agencies when appropriate—and preserve 'born digital' works and websites relevant to the audiovisual cultures and industries in Australia.
- h) The NFSA intends to acquire audiovisual works in their original carriers, formats and media known or yet to be invented. The importance of the carrier or format, its context (for instance, a 24 hour stream of radio broadcasting) and its experience is also recognised when applicable, and best practice is observed in its preservation and public access.
- i) Supporting material (including but not limited to scripts, posters, stills, publicity and other documentation, equipment and other artefacts) will be collected as complementary and integral to understanding Australia's audiovisual heritage. The NFSA will collect moving image and audio apparatus of historical value, and the documentation associated with current and obsolete equipment, formats and processes.
- j) The responsibility to implement acquisition policies resides with the NFSA's curators and their teams. Where appropriate, curators may consult external experts in determining priorities and the significance of possible acquisitions; however, curators are directly and ultimately accountable for the significance of the acquisitions and for the priorities they have established for the NFSA.

## 2.5 Acquisition Methods

2.5.1 The NFSA will acquire material for the National Collection by donation, deposit, purchase and exchange, or by bequest. It may also receive unsolicited material for which it cannot take responsibility until curators have assessed its value to the National Collection.

2.5.2 The NFSA recognises and respects all intellectual property and moral rights in material acquired for the national collection.

### 2.5.2 Acquisition by Donation

#### 2.5.2.1 Overview

Donations to the NFSA are permanent gifts of collection items. The NFSA welcomes donations of works that match its acquisition criteria. Unlike works on deposit, the NFSA acquires title to, and control over, the physical items. Unless the donated works are in the Public Domain, the intellectual property of the works donated to the NFSA remains with their legal owners. The NFSA will respect both the privacy of donors and the legitimate interests of copyright holders.

#### 2.5.2.2 Intellectual Property Rights in Donations

In some cases, the NFSA may also acquire the intellectual property rights for the donated works. However, the NFSA will exercise caution in relying on the assurances of the donor that the donor has the right to transfer intellectual property rights in the works to the NFSA along with the physical objects themselves.

#### 2.5.2.3 Donor Tax Considerations

The NFSA will provide to the donor a written receipt confirming the NFSA's acceptance of the gift and including a description of the gift and the date the gift was received. The NFSA will not provide, either verbally or in writing, appraisals of donated works. It will offer to direct intending donors to information on the Government's Tax Incentives for the Arts scheme and its list of registered valuers.

#### 2.5.2.4 Term of Agreement: Deaccessioning

Unless otherwise agreed in writing with the donor, the NFSA reserves the right to deaccession donated material after a specified and agreed amount of time only if it is a duplicate of existing collection material or if it is unusable or irreparably decomposed due to the natural and unavoidable process of decay of the carrier, contacting the original donor whenever appropriate and possible. The NFSA may dispose of such material by returning it to the donor when practical, by sale, transfer to another institution, or by other methods as outlined in the Deaccessioning Policy, 7.2.1.1.

### 2.5.3 Acquisition by Deposit

#### 2.5.3.1 Purpose of Deposit Agreements

The owner of a work may wish to transfer it to the NFSA for preservation or storage purposes while retaining title, intellectual property rights, and a degree of control over the material. Ideally, the NFSA should receive fair value in exchange for providing such preservation and storage services and should seek funds to offset any incremental operational costs incurred because of the deposit. The NFSA Management may accept, upon the recommendation of the curators, such items on deposit within the limits set out in this policy.

#### 2.5.3.2 Consideration: Fair Value Exchange

Recognising that the NFSA's storage and preservation resources are of considerable value to owners of archival quality items, the NFSA will carefully evaluate every deposit proposal to ensure that the NFSA receives adequate consideration, or fair value, in exchange for accepting items on deposit. This fair value may include the right to:

- a) duplicate the material and add the duplicate to the NFSA's own collection, while acknowledging all intellectual property rights
- b) make the work or copy of the work available to scholars and researchers or otherwise use the work for archival purposes
- c) exhibit the material (or a copy of the work), whether in galleries or, in the case of moving images, in the NFSA's theatres, with the permission of the copyright owner(s)
- d) publicise the fact that the NFSA holds the material on deposit.

#### 2.5.3.3 Financial Considerations

The NFSA will assess the financial impact of each proposed deposit agreement to determine whether the acquisition will incur significant incremental expenses.

#### 2.5.3.4 Access to the Material by the Depositor

The deposit agreement must specify the access to be granted to the depositor. Specifically, the agreement must address the frequency with which the depositor may obtain access, the amount of advance notification required, whether the material may be temporarily removed from the NFSA's premises, and any administrative fee to be charged to grant such access to the depositor.

#### 2.5.3.5 Time Limits on Deposit Agreements

Deposit agreements should specify the date or conditions under which the work is to be returned to the depositor. As a minimum, the agreement must give the NFSA the right to return the material to the depositor with reasonable notice, and identify a similar right for the depositor to withdraw the material permanently with reasonable notice.

In the event that the depositor cannot be located or the material is otherwise undeliverable, the NFSA may:

- a) accession the work as NFSA collection material
- b) deaccession the work with no further obligation to the depositor
- c) deaccession the work and retain it for other use within the NFSA.

#### 2.5.3.6 *Deterioration of Works on Deposit*

The depositor must acknowledge that all collection items eventually are bound to natural, gradual deterioration, even when held in environmental conditions meeting contemporary standards of preservation care. The NFSA will not take responsibility for the deterioration of deposited works that have been held in appropriate environmental conditions.

#### 2.5.3.7 *Return of Works on Deposit*

All deposit agreements will identify the conditions under which materials on deposit may or will be returned to the depositor. Such conditions include:

- a) failure of the depositor to provide agreed-upon financial support
- b) advanced state of deterioration of the material
- c) receipt of information indicating the provenance of the material is in dispute
- d) receipt of a claim of lawful ownership of cultural property by a third party
- e) an order by a court of competent jurisdiction to surrender the material
- f) advance written notification by the depositor requesting return of the material.

#### 2.5.3.8 *Licensing for Commercial Use*

The NFSA may not license deposited works for commercial use without the express written consent of the depositor. The NFSA may not rely on the depositor's assurances regarding copyright and other intellectual property rights unless the depositor indemnifies the NFSA against third party claims of infringement of copyright or similar rights.

### 2.5.4 **Acquisition by Purchase**

#### 2.5.4.1 *Overview*

In evaluating a proposed acquisition for purchase, the NFSA will seek to ensure that a) it acquires the works it intends to acquire; b) it acquires clear title to the works, c) pays a fair price, and d) obtains the works on carriers of appropriate format and condition.

#### 2.5.4.2 *Description of the Work to be Purchased*

The NFSA will make every effort to include in the purchase, along with the work itself, key documentation concerning the item carrying the work. Such documentation may include, for example, exhibition history, loan history, digitisation and other forms of duplication, third party challenges to its provenance or to the intellectual property rights in the work, third party claims of lawful ownership of cultural property, condition reports, publicity regarding the work or the work's creator, and past appraisals of the items.

#### 2.5.4.3 *Purchase Price*

The NFSA will pay no more than fair market value (insofar as it can be assessed) for works it acquires by purchase. All associated costs (such as accessories, variants, documentation, customs, shipping, handling and insurance) will be addressed explicitly in negotiating the purchase.

### 2.5.5 **Acquisition by Bequest**

#### 2.5.5.1 *Overview*

Living artists, producers, collectors and others may wish to name the NFSA as an intended recipient of works or other property upon their death. Many such bequests have been made known to the NFSA during the artist, producer or collectors' lifetime. When there is a long-standing professional relationship, or when the NFSA has participated in the development of the terms and conditions surrounding the bequest, the expectations and requirements of both parties are well known to each other. In these instances, the NFSA can confirm the relevance of the bequest material to the national collection and hence verify the benefits of the bequest for all concerned.

#### 2.5.5.2 *Requirements in Perpetuity*

From a collections management viewpoint, the principal concern regarding bequests arises when bequests are intended to be permanent but also include special requirements or conditions. In general, the NFSA will not undertake commitments that it may not be willing or able to meet in perpetuity.

Special requirements that the NFSA will generally not undertake include minimum conservation treatments to be performed, limitations on access to the works, length of time the NFSA must keep the works; restrictions on subsequent holders should the works be deaccessioned, and special vault environmental conditions.

#### 2.5.5.3 *Unexpected Bequests*

When the bequest is unexpected, the work or works must receive the same scrutiny and consideration given to any proposed acquisition. If the gift does not meet the NFSA's Acquisition Policy, the NFSA may:

- a) refuse the bequest
- b) accession the works
- c) select from the bequest and dispose of items which have not been selected.

### 2.5.6 **Unsolicited Gifts and Portfolios**

2.5.6.1 The NFSA cannot take responsibility for unsolicited works it receives. Staff, interns, volunteers or commissioners who receive such materials should deliver them immediately to the curatorial staff for further decision. The NFSA reserves the right to accession such unsolicited material into the national collection, to return to sender if practical to do so, or to dispose of the material if it does not meet the NFSA acquisition criteria.

2.5.6.2 Because the NFSA receives a large volume of such unsolicited material, the NFSA cannot commit to pay the cost to return the material to the sender.

## 2.6 **Collections Acquisition Guidelines and Procedures**

2.6.1 Detailed Acquisition Guidelines provide a practical guide to implementing the Acquisition Policy and information about the NFSA's collection acquisition priorities for specific parts of the collection. Acquisition documents provide information about how material may be acquired and which formats are preferred. When making a selection decision, material is sought in the condition, formats and quantities best suited to preservation and access requirements. At present, no legal deposit legislation for audiovisual productions exists in Australia. Donation, voluntary deposit, purchase, copy in exchange or off-air dubbing are all methods used to acquire collection materials, depending on the circumstances.



- 2.6.2 Deselection, deaccessioning and disposal procedures outline the careful approach taken to address this serious process. Curators have the authority to determine, subject to final approval from their supervisors, which elements should be deaccessioned, with a clear and well-documented explanation of the reasons for their decision. Further details can be found in the *Deaccessioning Policy* at Chapter 7 of this document.
- 2.6.3 The NFSA will keep appropriate records on the movement of its collection material. It aspires to establish a central, designated registration function which will record all items considered for acquisition, donation, loan, deposit or use for access purposes whenever such items enter or leave the NFSA. Such documentation includes records of sale, gift and deposit; accurate descriptions of the items, including condition reports and (when appropriate) photographs; storage location of the items; and information regarding provenance, intellectual property rights, and cultural property ownership. The collection registration function will maintain records of the final disposition of every proposed acquisition, whether accepted or rejected.

## **THREE** PRESERVATION POLICY



### 3.1 Scope

3.1.1 The NFSA's National Collection of sound and moving image material is held in public trust, and the stewardship of this collection carries with it the presumption of permanence and care. Collection preservation, along with collection acquisition and collection access, is one of the three keystones of archival collection management.

3.1.2 Preservation is defined here as the overall complex of principles, methods, techniques, procedures and practices necessary to:

- a) maintain the integrity of the material
- b) restore or stabilise its content
- c) maintain safe and secure storage conditions
- d) provide access to the National Collection in the future as well as the present.

3.1.3 The NFSA's holdings include audio recordings, film, television and digital-born moving images, home movies, photographs, audiovisual equipment, books, scripts, papers, costumes, posters, memorabilia and other related documents which contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural background of the production, release and promotion of audiovisual works. This preservation policy is a general document intended to guide fundamental preservation efforts for the National Collection. It endorses the principle that all collection items formally accepted as part of the NFSA collection deserve adequate maintenance, care, and preservation treatment. Notwithstanding the curatorial prerogative to formulate and implement preservation priorities, no decision in these matters will be based upon an *a priori* discrimination based on the relative value of certain works, media, or collection in relation to others. Specific practices and procedures for each type of work in the collection have been developed and are applied by the Senior Curators in consultation with the Chief Curator and the Head of Preservation and Technical Services.

### 3.2 Key Concepts

#### 3.2.1 The Nature of Collection Material Deterioration

3.2.1.1 The ability of the NFSA to arrest or impede deterioration of audiovisual works is influenced by the inherent durability of the audiovisual material itself. While deterioration proceeds at different rates in different materials (and may occur at different rates in the same material at different stages in that material's deterioration process), deterioration over time is inevitable. Maintaining collection materials in conditions of low temperature and relative humidity extends the life of these materials.

#### 3.2.2 Preservation Strategies, Practices and Tools

3.2.2.1 The NFSA's preservation strategy is to use all available measures to protect the integrity of the collection, to maximize the life expectancy of the materials in it, restore what can and should be restored and ensure the greatest possible access over the longest period of time for the largest number of items in its collections.

3.2.2.2 The preservation strategies, practices and tools employed by the NFSA include, but are not limited to:

- a) identifying and organising the collection according to medium, carrier type, status and condition via a risk management strategy and supporting plans that include regular assessment, analysis and reporting of performance
- b) minimising risk by redundancy, with duplicate components or copies, multiple storage locations, and the application of diverse technologies

- c) preserving the works of the sound, moving image and artefact heritage either on stable formats and media or by a system of migration from one format and carrier to the next
- d) placing appropriate limits on access
- e) maintaining high standards of collections handling and exhibition
- f) adhering to appropriate storage standards, and developing and maintaining a d Conservation Master Plan and Disaster Preparedness Plan.

#### 3.2.3 Prioritising Preservation Efforts

3.2.3.1 Programs for transfer or conversion of audiovisual material will be based on a priority system according to:

- a) the recorded or predicted client usage, the intrinsic and relative cultural and heritage value of the work, and its ability to contribute to the NFSA's mission
- b) the stability, fragility, condition and the probable cost of preserving the collection material over time
- c) whether duplicate preservation masters already exist or can be produced
- d) the expected life span and related obsolescence of the medium and the treatment options presently available and/or likely to become available in the future.

3.2.3.2 Factors also influencing prioritisation of long-term preservation include the limitations of physical facilities and staff, and the financial resources needed to take appropriate preservation action at the time that such action is needed.

#### 3.2.4 Acquisition

3.2.4.1 Any work proposed for acquisition will be evaluated in terms of the NFSA's ability to store and care for the work properly. The condition of the work, its restoration treatment history, and the physical and financial resources required for its present and future care and preservation will have a bearing on the decision to acquire the work or not. The best quality, most complete and original format of the work must always be sought for preservation in the National Collection.

#### 3.2.5 Access

3.2.5.1 The duty to preserve the NFSA's collections must be balanced with the duty to provide access for researchers and the general public. Conditions that foster long-term preservation may work against access and vice versa, and the NFSA must manage this balance in the best interests of both the public and the material. The access granted to researchers, the general public and all others, whether through on site exhibitions, travelling exhibitions, direct viewing or online computer access, will be governed by long-term care considerations. Short-term access should never jeopardise preservation, which enables access in the future.

### 3.3 Ethics

3.3.1 Preservation respects and maintains the integrity of original material.

3.3.2 The original work will not be altered, manipulated or edited under any circumstances. Any copies that are edited or modified constitute a new work, whose creation will not entail the alteration of the original or of the preservation elements. Reproduction systems will be optimised to ensure a faithful rendition of images and sound as they were originally intended to be seen and heard, including accurate playback equalisation and transfer functions. The NFSA will aspire to accurately maintain, align and calibrate recording and

dubbing or transfer systems according to agreed standards, including the effects of blank media or raw stock.

3.3.3 The original material is retained after copies are made. This is done in recognition that future technologies are likely to be developed that will enable improved recovery of original audiovisual content over that which is currently available. It is recognised that some carriers will reach a point of severe decomposition beyond any conceivable means of recovery, at which point they will be disposed of. Carriers, sounds and moving images or technology may be retained for purposes such as collection artefacts or as items for research. Subject to curatorial decision, carriers originally held for preservation purposes may also be disposed of where better copies make their way into the National Collection and where they can fulfil the role for a particular preservation status.

3.3.4 Any preservation treatment or restoration that is carried out is based on best available international archival practice. Preservation treatment or restoration procedures are chosen so as not to cause any irreversible side effects, to bring the carrier closer to its original condition, or—where no other means of restoration can be used—to salvage the sounds and moving images themselves. Preservation treatment or restoration will be documented in writing for each item, to account for any changes that have been made to an artefact or to the technical quality of the moving images and recorded sounds. Documentation on the preservation treatment undertaken for each item will include the date of treatment, the name and title of the person(s) undertaking the work, the equipment used and the decisions made.

3.3.5 The NFSA will apply electronic or digital restoration to a signal or to a duping or working copy, leaving the original item or preservation copy intact in instances such as:

- sonic filtering or restoration to reduce or remove noise
- removal or reduction of scratches and noise, frame stabilisation, restoration of colour balance
- digital restoration of film.

### 3.4 Multiplicity of Copies and Storage

3.4.1 In order to minimise the risk of loss or failure of a medium or carrier, or of local disaster, more than one component or copy will be retained in more than one storage location, using multiple storage technologies as required. This practice will also be applied to the movement of collection items: original material and copies will not be transported together in the same consignment.

3.4.2 Typically, a duping copy is acquired or copied from an original, while stable preservation elements and duping copies are procured or kept where original items are unstable.

3.4.3 Where appropriate, risk will be spread between complementary technologies, formats and media such as analogue and digital, magnetic and optical, or different formats and materials.

3.4.4 Access will be facilitated by means of 'expendable' client access copies, replication or on-line services. Access copies (including 'virtual copies' for networked or online systems) are made or acquired in cases where sufficient demand is anticipated.

3.4.5 Various copies or components of archival material will be clearly identified, labelled and catalogued to correctly confirm their status.

3.4.6 The principle of selecting the most appropriate format to suit the intended use or purpose of the content applies as equally to new data forms as it does to traditional audiovisual

media forms. High resolution, high bit rate data standards will be used for archival preservation as appropriate. Lower standards may be used for access distribution, where the bandwidth of the transmission network is a key influence in the standard used.

## 3.5 Formats and Media

3.5.1 Where the medium and format are relatively stable, such as for properly formulated and processed film, and for most shellac and vinyl audio disc pressings, the appropriate strategy is to store carriers in optimal conditions, and maintain the equipment, the technology and the expertise necessary to reproduce them in the long term in their original medium and format. In the event that a medium or format becomes obsolete, the effort to ensure stability of the collection items has the aim of facilitating accurate reproduction of the works by other means. However, the search for alternative methods of preserving or duplicating audiovisual works will not be undertaken to the detriment of the original preservation and duplication techniques, insofar as they are available or can be developed through research and technological investment.

### 3.5.2 Stability

3.5.2.1 Preservation media for copying or developing the collection will be selected on the basis of their inherent or manufactured stability. Blank media or raw stock for preservation copying will be procured in such a manner as to ensure consistent quality, and will be subject to acceptance testing for stability and performance.

3.5.2.2 Where a choice of carrier is available for incoming materials, the NFSA will select the most suitable for long-term preservation under the best current technological circumstances. The NFSA will encourage producers to use the most stable media.

3.5.2.3 Items in the collection will be regularly assessed to determine their condition. Established formats will be monitored on a cyclical risk management basis as part of collection maintenance in order to determine priorities for preservation. Standards for condition and life expectancy will be researched and maintained in close conformity with international industry and archival standards. As machine-readable artefacts, audiovisual carriers can only convey information as long as they are in good condition. It is therefore imperative that preservation practices are based on accurate standards for condition and life expectancy. The NFSA will contribute to the development and promulgation of such standards.

3.5.2.4 New formulations or carrier types will be subject to research and monitoring, both in storage and in use, to determine possible modes of failure and life expectancy. Where necessary, stability and accelerated aging tests will be carried out on blank stock or deselected carriers.

### 3.5.3 Format

#### 3.5.3.1 Overview

The NFSA will endeavour to limit the number of formats in the collection to those best suited to maintaining the works in the collection. The NFSA will make its decisions on the basis of a thorough program of research, analysis and assessment.

#### 3.5.3.2 Selection

The most stable media and format and/or the best quality elements will be acquired for the collection.

### 3.5.3.3 Maintenance

Machinery for reproducing and handling preservation (and duplication) formats will be supported with adequate preventative maintenance, spare parts and documentation for the projected life of the media and format.

Preservation (and duping) material will only be played and (where appropriate) wound on suitable machinery maintained in optimum working order, based on best practice information technology and engineering specifications.

## 3.6 Storage

3.6.1 Environmental conditions in the NFSA's vaults will meet the requirements of the various materials in its collection. All collection items will be stored using the most appropriate storage equipment and archival containers to minimise risk of harm, whilst allowing the required levels of security and access. Standards published by FIAF and other recognised authorities in the archival field will be used for the design, construction and maintenance of collection storage vaults.

### 3.6.2 Storage Assessment Reviews

3.6.2.1 Conservators and curators will conduct annual assessment reviews concerning storage facilities and practices. This assessment will address the full range of conservation issues. The results of these assessment reviews will be presented to the Director in a written report each year.

### 3.6.3 Vault Environmental Conditions

3.6.3.1 The NFSA will maintain environmental conditions appropriate for the materials held in each of its vaults. Temperature, relative humidity, pollutants, air exchange rate and air circulation, as well as the maximum allowable fluctuation in these conditions, will be monitored regularly and meet standards developed by NFSA conservators and other recognised archival authorities for each collection.

### 3.6.4 Storage and Collection Movement Practices and Procedures

3.6.4.1 The Vaults Manager, the Curators and Archivists are jointly responsible for establishing proper storage practices and procedures.

3.6.4.2 The physical location, movement and security of all collection items when being moved are part of the Preservation Policy in so far as they potentially impact on an item's preservation and life expectancy.

### 3.6.5 Security

3.6.5.1 The NFSA will provide an appropriate security system in its vaults and will develop and maintain security practices and procedures designed to minimise the risk of theft of, or damage to, collection material, both within the vaults and during any movement to other sites.

3.6.5.2 The number of staff who have access to the vaults will be strictly limited. The only staff who may have routine access to all vaults in addition to the designated staff of Preservation and Technical Services are the Director of the NFSA, the Chief Curator, and the Manager of Facilities and Services or his/her nominee/s. Emergency personnel such as local fire departments will have access to all NFSA sites including the vaults in order to respond to emergency situations. In the event of an alarm activation, the on-call Facilities Officer will

be contacted. If any situation arises that might place collection material at risk, the Vaults Manager will be contacted.

## 3.6.6 Fire Detection and Suppression

3.6.6.1 A combination of detectors sensing smoke, heat and dust are installed in vaults and archive study areas where appropriate. All detectors are connected to a central control panel to enable coordinated response by staff and emergency personnel.

3.6.6.2 The Vaults Manager and the Manager of Facilities and Services review alarm notification procedures and staff order of notification annually. Alarm systems are connected to a 24/7 monitoring service. In all vaults, a dedicated line to the fire brigade and or security monitoring services is provided. Fire detection and/or suppression devices are installed in all vaults. Thermal and smoke detectors are installed outside the vaults. All vaults have Disaster Supply Bins, which include plastic sheeting to protect material from water damage.

## 3.6.7 Conservation Master Plan

3.6.7.1 The Head of Preservation and Technical Services, in collaboration with the Chief Curator and the Senior Curators, is responsible for developing and annually reviewing a Conservation Master Plan and coordinating its implementation. This plan and annual updates will be developed and presented to the Director.

3.6.7.2 The master plan includes:

- a) projected future vault and workspace requirements
- b) planning specifications for future vault construction
- c) application of new technologies to preservation efforts
- d) prioritisation of conservation and preservation efforts
- e) evaluation of building HVAC systems and equipment
- f) assessment of quantity and quality of staff conservation resources
- g) review of the Preservation Collection Policy
- h) review of the Disaster Preparedness Plan.

## 3.6.8 Disaster Preparedness Plan

3.6.8.1 The NFSA maintains a Disaster Preparedness Plan, which sets out the procedures to be used to protect staff and to minimise damage to the collection in the event of an emergency. The establishment and review of the Disaster Preparedness Plan is the responsibility of a permanent committee that includes the Chief Curator, the Senior Curators, the Head of Preservation and Technical Services, the Vaults Manager, and the Manager of Facilities and Services.

3.6.8.2 The Disaster Preparedness Plan includes detailed descriptions of collection recovery procedures to be followed for each type of material in the collection. These recovery procedures provide guidelines for both immediate and longer-term recovery measures. Staff call-in procedures and current telephone numbers are included in this document. Contact details for emergency support services, from other cultural agencies (as per the DISACT Memorandum of Understanding) and commercial organisations, such as cold storage facilities, freeze drying facilities, emergency supplies and tools, and others, will also be listed.

3.6.8.3 The Disaster Preparedness Plan provides for a Disaster Mobilisation Committee to be activated if a disaster of major proportions has caused or is about to cause widespread

damage or loss of collection material or destruction of major portions of the NFSAs secure vault storage capacity.

- 3.6.8.4 The Disaster Mobilisation Committee identifies the functions and duties needed in such emergencies and will set out in detail the job responsibilities, titles, equipment requirements, and the individuals on staff who will perform these functions when the Disaster Mobilisation Committee has been activated. Staff call-in procedures and current telephone numbers will be included in this document.
- 3.6.8.5 The Disaster Preparedness Plan provides guidelines on appropriate responses to various emergency situations such as fire, flooding, pest infestation and bomb threats. Responsibility for taking appropriate actions to secure the National Collection lies primarily with the Director in consultation with the Chief Curator, the Curators and the Head of Preservation and Technical Services.

### 3.7 Transfer, Digitisation, Conversion

- 3.7.1 Where formats and machinery are changing rapidly, media are less stable and the future of technology uncertain (for example, digital video), an ongoing process of cloning or migrating audiovisual works is in place.
- 3.7.2 **Standards for Transfer, Digitisation or Conversion of Audiovisual Works**
- 3.7.2.1 If material is to be copied, printed or dubbed to another medium or format, (for example, 2" Quad to SPBetacam; Vinyl LP to digital file), or converted from one system to another (for example, acoustic to electrical, analogue to digital) for the purpose of preserving the works, the transfer or conversion process will seek to ensure there is no avoidable loss or degradation of audiovisual information. Standards require particularly active management in face of the challenges involved in sustaining obsolete technology capability and the ever-extending technology chain resulting from new technology platforms establishing themselves in the marketplace. To this effect, the NFSAs will make a sustained effort to maintain a collection of obsolete audiovisual transfer equipment and to keep it in working order.
- 3.7.2.2 Standards for storage, treatment, conservation, rejuvenation, restoration and transfer will be researched, developed and maintained according to international archival best practice.

### 3.7.3 Migration Systems

- 3.7.3.1 In the digital domain, automated storage systems will allow transfer of information without significant loss from generation to generation. The specifications of the system to which material is being transferred will meet or exceed those of the source, with no avoidable or apparent loss or degradation of audiovisual information. The system will maximise efficiency and effectiveness of data migration by such means as automated monitoring of data integrity, fail safe back-up, rapid transfer speed and links to collection management systems. Development will always take into account the NFSAs assessment of the best system for the future, incorporating recommended international best practice.

### 3.8 Virtual Preservation

- 3.8.1 The NFSAs capabilities for preserving more volatile media such as on-line interactive multimedia will depend on both leadership and cooperation with creators and service providers, as well as on traditional methods of acquiring and preserving physical components. Within the context of global online services, material may be preserved or made available in a number of locations in many forms, but a source or centre of responsibility will be stipulated for each work.

- 3.8.2 Where the experience of media requires a particular setting, such as the viewing of nitrate film in a contemporary theatre, auditioning acoustic recordings on a gramophone or phonograph, or interacting with multimedia on a particular computer platform, the experience involved in recreating the event will be maintained whenever possible along with the audiovisual information contained in the works.

## 3.9 Research and Innovation

- 3.9.1 Research and innovation are recognised as crucial components to support preservation objectives. Typically, these activities will cover scientific archival research in relation to materials; collection management environments and technical standards; engineering innovation and development; systems, process and procedures reform. Collaboration with other archives and with the international archival community will be pursued in as wide a variety of practical ways as possible.

## 3.10 Staff Training and Work Areas

- 3.10.1 To help safeguard and provide access to film, video, audio and 'born digital' works in the National Collection, the NFSAs preservation and technical services staff must have relevant expertise to cover a broad spectrum of responsibilities. This includes maintaining equipment and conversion facilities for both contemporary and obsolete formats, restoration, identification, scientific archival research, risk assessment and conservation treatments, as well as transfers, duplication, and production.
- 3.10.2 Staff will receive appropriate training for the tasks and activities they undertake. Skills will be identified according to accepted international archival practice. Where new or innovative approaches are proposed and apparently do not exist elsewhere, the NFSAs will endeavour to test its approaches through peer assessment in accordance with best archival practice principles.
- 3.10.3 All efforts will be made to ensure that collection security and movement systems, staff training and usage standards reflect the importance of the preservation of all materials and recognise the importance of each collection item.
- 3.10.4 Work and storage areas will be designed, constructed, fitted out and equipped with the aim to achieve:
- optimum processing of material
  - accurate judgement or assessment of quality of material
  - minimum risk to staff and collection material.
- 3.10.5 Work, storage and exhibition areas will be kept free of food and drink, harmful contaminants, pollutants or vermin, and harmful radiation including sunlight.
- ### 3.11 Responsibilities for Preservation Policy and Procedure
- 3.11.1 The Senior Curators have the authority to decide, in consultation with the NFSAs Director, Chief Curator and the Head of Preservation and Technical Services, the preservation procedures to be implemented towards the Collection as a whole or to specific components of the Collection.
- 3.11.2 The Senior Curators are expected to gather advice from Preservation and Technical Services about the costs of preserving, restoring, duplicating or reconstructing any given work for special purposes, and about the technical implications of their decisions. The Senior Curators are responsible for ensuring that the works in the Collection are preserved according to the highest possible technical and intellectual standards, and will endeavour



to preserve the works and make them accessible in their original medium and format for future generations insofar as those media and formats exist or can be recreated.

- 3.11.3 No duplication, transfer or migration of the original work for access purposes will be allowed without prior preservation and accessibility in its original medium and format, insofar as the original medium and format is available for preservation and access purposes, as jointly determined by the Senior Curators, the Chief Curator, and the Head of Preservation and Technical Services. In the case of analogue formats, the original work (defined here as the master of the original work, or any given item acquired by the NFSA which is closer to the master of the audiovisual work, regardless of its medium, format, condition or original intended use) will be used exclusively for the creation of preservation elements and will never be used directly for the creation of access copies. Such access copies shall be created exclusively from a copy of the preservation elements, specifically created for access purposes.

4

## **FOUR** ACCESS AND OUTREACH POLICY

## 4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The NFSA's Access and Outreach Policy addresses not only the formal exhibition of collections in the NFSA's galleries and theatre(s) but also a number of other means by which the public may view, study and enjoy the Collection within or outside the premises of the NFSA. In keeping with its mission to ensure the permanent availability of the Australian audiovisual heritage, the NFSA offers the greatest possible collection access, consistent with the proper care of the items and the respect for intellectual and cultural property rights of all.

4.1.2 Mindful of the inherent compromise between access and preservation, the NFSA seeks to balance its mandate to make the Collection available and its obligation to preserve the Collection. Responsibility for maintaining this balance rests with the Director of the NFSA; this policy provides guidance to the Director, curatorial staff and others in achieving this balance.

## 4.2 Access and Public Programs Objectives

4.2.1 The objectives of the NFSA Access and Public Programs services are to:

- a) provide access to, and use of, the National Collection and access to public programs that are responsive to audience and client needs and are implemented according to the highest technical and intellectual standards
- b) enhance the understanding and interpretation of Australia's unique audiovisual heritage and, through the promotion of the National Collection, show its relevance to the broadest possible constituency and the broadest possible range of interests
- c) promote public awareness and support of the NFSA's programs, services, activities and role as a national archive, and clearly identify the NFSA's presence in these activities as part of the overall AFC's strategy and purpose
- d) make the NFSA and the National Collection accessible to as wide an audience as possible through diverse use of archival resources by government and cultural institutions, commercial and community organisations, the education sector, and individuals
- e) deliver collection material according to the highest possible technical and intellectual standards. Promote curatorial ethics in handling the audiovisual heritage, thus encouraging the presentation of the collection in a manner as close as possible to the original audiovisual experience
- f) encourage and facilitate relationships and participation in the development and deployment of public programs within the NFSA and in collaboration with other Divisions of the AFC or with other institutions
- g) build relationships with, and complement the work and activities of, the cultural community, the audiovisual industry, and their related organisations.

## 4.3 Curatorial Responsibility

4.3.1 These objectives are managed within the NFSA's overall curatorial structure where the functions of acquisition, preservation and access are supported in equal balance. Mindful of this balance, curators will:

- a) ensure that there is a clear connection between the display of an audiovisual work and the mission of the NFSA, and that the inclusion of a work in an exhibition or access program is consistent with the intellectual integrity of the exhibition or access program itself

- b) provide the widest possible access to the collections through both formal exhibitions and a wide variety of other methods
- c) serve as a resource for teaching, research, scholarship, inspiration, entertainment, creation of new works
- d) be limited only by good preservation practice, respect for intellectual property rights, and the unique characteristics of each collection
- e) ensure that good curatorial practice is applied to all forms of technology and creative expression
- f) ensure that cultural property is treated appropriately.

4.3.2 The NFSA may limit access to works in the collections if:

- a) the material is judged to be too fragile to handle
- b) the material is extremely valuable and rare
- c) the NFSA does not have a preservation master or preservation element of the work
- d) the requestor has demonstrated carelessness or has otherwise put collection material at jeopardy during previous instances
- e) the requestor refuses to comply with the NFSA's policies or procedures
- f) there are donor or depositor imposed restrictions on access
- g) there is the risk of damage to, or loss of, the work in the collection.

## 4.4 Strategies

4.4.1 The NFSA will meet these objectives in two ways:

- a) **Access to the Collection:** The NFSA will provide access to collection materials and information about the audio, film and television artists and industries past and present, in response to domestic and international audience and client demand for broadcast, program production, research and individual use.
- b) **Public Programs:** The NFSA will aim to deliver innovative and integrated public programs such as onsite or touring exhibitions, presentations, screenings, outreach activities and products, alone or in partnership with other Divisions of the AFC, cultural institutions, industry partners, or community organisations.

4.4.2 These strategies will be implemented in accordance with the AFC service charter, which identifies its values, standards of programs and service delivery, with periodical monitoring and evaluation of performance.

### 4.4.3 Access to the Collection

4.4.3.1 In providing access to the National Collection and to information that supports research into the audiovisual culture, industry and their heritage to the broadest possible audience, the NFSA will take the following into account:

- a) One of the most important goals and objectives of the NFSA is to serve as a source for creativity, research, scholarship and learning. Access for these purposes will be limited only by good preservation practice, respect for intellectual and cultural property rights, the unique characteristics of each collection, and the availability of archival and curatorial staff to monitor such access and to support visitor research.
- b) Subject to preservation requirements, and unless specific requirements to the contrary are attached to particular items, collection items may be consulted, auditioned or viewed at any of the NFSA's premises on an individual basis without legal or contractual formalities.

- c) Access to items in the collections for commercial use may be permitted if such activity:
  - does not violate any party's intellectual property rights
  - does not violate any donor- or depositor-imposed restrictions
  - does not jeopardise the NFSA's not-for-profit status.
- d) The NFSA may provide, usually for a fee, reproductions of collection material. Such reproductions do not transfer to the researcher or producer copyright or other intellectual property rights, or otherwise constitute permission for the researcher to publish or display the reproduction beyond the contracted use specified. Only the Director or the Chief Curator may waive the fees charged for reproductions on the advice of Senior Curators, Section Heads, or the Chief Programmer.
- e) The NFSA charges fees for professional reproduction services based upon competitive market rates and subject to prior clearance of all copyright and other relevant claims.
- f) The NFSA charges fees for services such as photocopying and reproductions, in accordance with the NFSA's schedule of fees. Bona fide research assistance for initial access is free of charge. The NFSA provides access on-site and—where possible—by postal mail services, email, fax, telephone and online.
- g) The NFSA does not warrant or represent that any material in its collection is free of copyright restrictions; nor does the NFSA indemnify anyone against any claim of infringement of any third party's rights. With the exception of works whose copyright has already been cleared by the NFSA, such as titles included in the National Film and Video Lending Service, the researcher or borrowing institution is responsible for securing copyright clearances and paying copyright fees to the holder of the copyright.
- h) Some of the material in the NFSA Collection is of a confidential or sensitive nature that will require certain restrictions on access for regulatory, commercial, security or cultural reasons. These restrictions will be assessed by the Curators in charge of the collections in consultation with the Chief Curator. Refer in particular to the NFSA's Indigenous Collections Policy for specific examples.
- i) The NFSA's policy is to provide the widest possible access to the collections through both formal exhibitions and a wide variety of other methods. This policy also addresses the opportunities presented by new developments in digital technology to provide access for a national and international audience. In several collections, researchers can access digitised reproductions of collection items on in-house desktop workstations, and some of the NFSA's digitised files are available for research purposes on the NFSA's webpage of the AFC website. Research material is also available on other formats including, but not limited to, videocassettes, compact discs, audio tape and digital files.
- j) Access to the NFSA collection is also available through the NFSA offices in Sydney and Melbourne and in the Access Centres of other capital cities, and is to be further increased in regional and remote areas of Australia, as well as internationally, through online collection databases and collaboration with other Divisions of the AFC.

#### 4.4.4 Public Programs

- 4.4.4.1 The NFSA presents formal gallery and theatre exhibitions designed to give the visitor a broad presentation of the many aspects of audiovisual culture and its preservation. It also presents lectures, audiovisual works, workshops, and symposia on a range of audiovisual and archival topics. The NFSA develops and delivers this range of public programs on a stand-alone basis, in collaboration with other Divisions of the AFC or with other institutions in Australia and abroad in a variety of venues and locations in order to ensure maximum

benefit to the audiences. Subject to available resources, these activities might at any given time include but not be limited to:

- a) presentations, on-site education programs, screenings, performance works and interactive activities aimed at providing access to and enhancing the understanding of Australia's unique audiovisual heritage and its preservation. Presentations and screenings will also be available for the general public visiting the NFSA's premises
  - b) exhibitions will be curated by the NFSA, either on a stand-alone basis or in collaboration with other Divisions of the AFC and with external organisations. The NFSA will also deliver travelling exhibitions; when appropriate, the NFSA will host exhibitions that have been curated by other organisations whose aims and activities are consistent with the NFSA's mission
  - c) the NFSA will participate in collaborative exhibitions in which items from one or a number of other collections are brought together to create exhibitions of greater scope, depth, or clarity than would be achievable otherwise. All standard procedures for movement and exhibition of collection material will be followed in such collaborations
  - d) the NFSA's Public Programs Unit and the Chief Programmer, who share responsibility for conducting public programs, will be trained in the requirements of the NFSA's collection policy. Although the NFSA generally will use redundant material for these purposes, it may use collection items themselves within the limitations of good preservation practice and with the approval of the curators and/or the Chief Curator
  - e) the NFSA may collaborate with colleges or universities in developing and teaching coursework leading to formal degrees. With the approval of the NFSA's Director, the NFSA may offer its facilities, collections, and staff expertise in support of such degree-granting programs. The NFSA policies governing general access to its collections will apply as well to degree-granting collaborative efforts
  - f) outreach activities – to be held on a stand-alone basis, in collaboration with other Divisions of the AFC or with other institutions, nationally and internationally – will aim to engage with audiences in their own locations and will include archival screenings, music programs, cultural festivals and seminars. Their range and scope will be developed in response to the needs of national and international audiences
  - g) a product range designed specifically to deliver access to the collection and related archival holdings will be developed in collaboration with other Divisions of the AFC or with other professional entities and organisations. These activities will make available audiovisual works and materials which would not normally be available in the commercial marketplace.
- 4.4.4.2 The NFSA endeavours to work with other Divisions of the AFC and other peak bodies to provide public programs that target groups with special needs in the community, and to provide training to staff in order to give them the skills necessary to serve these groups. The NFSA also endeavours to utilise new technologies where appropriate, and where it maximises the reach of delivery of the NFSA collection. The NFSA will manage the use of these technologies in ways which clearly articulate and inform audiences about the original technical and intellectual experience and context.

#### 4.5 Knowing and Growing the Market

- 4.5.1 The NFSA seeks to reach the broadest possible community. In order to achieve this goal, the NFSA will actively pursue partnerships and collaborations with individuals, companies and organisations, as well as other Divisions of the AFC, to disseminate the collection and to deliver the NFSA's key messages (see the Introduction to the Policy Documents). The



NFSA will identify the needs and key issues of its clients and target audiences, and evaluate trends in developing its projects, products and programs.

4.5.2 For these purposes, the NFSA has identified the following main client groups and will continue to analyse and expand its client base:

- a) national and international industry representatives, including licensees, producers, creators or other partners such as broadcasting networks and film exhibitors who seek collection material and technical services for use in new programs or projects, and through whom collection material is disseminated to a wider public
- b) visitors and patrons who come to the NFSA screenings, exhibitions and events—whether held in Australia or abroad, individually or in groups—and to exhibitions, screening programs and events that the NFSA supports or delivers in partnership with other providers or Divisions of the AFC
- c) multicultural groups such as Indigenous and ethnic minority communities
- d) academic and private researchers, special interest and community groups and organisations
- e) purchasers of NFSA products
- f) business partners and stakeholders, including sponsors and other cultural and collecting institutions both in Australia and abroad
- g) organisers of events and activities involving the NFSA
- h) electronic users who access the NFSA via the internet or comparable avenues
- i) media representatives.

4.5.3 The NFSA will undertake visitor and client surveys to evaluate and continually improve the performance and outcomes of its programs, presentations, products and services.

## **FIVE** INDIGENOUS COLLECTIONS POLICY



## 5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 The NFSA has a major role in preserving and transmitting the Indigenous memory in audiovisual form and therefore in contributing to communication and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- 5.1.2 The NFSA respects the rights of Indigenous owners of tradition and those depicted in relation to the ownership of cultural materials. While the NFSA recognises current legal and traditional rights of ownership over Indigenous materials, it also recognises that historically there is a complex blend of relationships and negotiations which resulted in the recording of Indigenous culture and the accumulation of Indigenous materials. These processes have not always been handled with due acknowledgement of traditional ownership and recognition of cultural sensitivities.
- 5.1.3 In this context, the NFSA has developed the following policy in relation to its goals, responsibilities, staffing, collections and client community. The NFSA will be proactive in seeking to address:
- a) the moral and practical issues related to Indigenous peoples as the owners of their knowledge
  - b) questions of preservation and access to audiovisual material documenting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures
  - c) matters of education, training and professional integrity in the handling of such materials
  - d) appropriate recognition of Indigenous peoples and their cultures within the operation and management of the NFSA Division of the AFC
  - e) integrated employment options within the NFSA for Indigenous people
  - f) repatriation opportunities and remote community liaison regarding Indigenous materials and issues.

## 5.2 Context

- 5.2.1 An estimated 15,000 or 3.5% of the films, recordings and programs held by the NFSA include depictions of Indigenous peoples, cultures and experiences presented from a variety of perspectives and historical attitudes. The NFSA has a responsibility to ensure that the collection is as far as possible comprehensive, inclusive and reflective of all perspectives, and works collaboratively with other audiovisual collections (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Strehlow Research Centre, Film Australia, state libraries and others) to fulfil this goal. The NFSA recognises that the collection includes works which are sensitive to particular Indigenous communities, which needs to be handled with special care.
- 5.2.2 In developing and managing such material in its collection, the NFSA will follow good professional practice. In particular, the NFSA will ensure that formal mechanisms exist to provide an informed Indigenous viewpoint for NFSA management, and that the Indigenous Section's curatorial staff are responsible for the acquisition, preservation and access to the Indigenous collections, in collaboration with the other curators of the NFSA. Indigenous Section curatorial staff will work with the archive staff to achieve the following additional goals:
- a) encourage and promote Indigenous participation in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of relevant policies
  - b) negotiate with relevant Indigenous communities and representative bodies regarding the development and management of Indigenous components of the national collection

- c) keep the National Collection under progressive review to identify all holdings related to Indigenous life and cultures to confirm and record current legal, intellectual and community interests
- d) consult, through relevant government agencies and Indigenous communities, concerning the works related to Indigenous life and cultures held by the NFSA, and seek advice on appropriate access and handling policies
- e) promote the growth, preservation and (when appropriate) the availability of the Indigenous collection, and provide clients with an explanation for any conditions governing access. These issues may include strict permissions to be gained from an identified Indigenous community prior to any access to visual or sound materials
- f) consult experts and representatives of the Indigenous communities in order to receive informed advice and recommendations for ongoing policy development and the implementation of appropriate archival actions and services, and ensure that Indigenous cultures are represented within the NFSA Advisory Committee.

## 5.3 Legislation and Indigenous Intellectual Property Issues

- 5.3.1 Copyright law protects the interests of the producers of audiovisual materials, but the interests of those whose culture is described are often not. The NFSA acknowledges that legislation does not currently recognise that cultural groups may be traditional owners of, or have a heritage or cultural interest in, material that relates to that cultural group, even though that group may not hold copyright. The NFSA believes, however, that it has a role in contributing to the debate on how to recognise the rights of the peoples of association with the material, and is seeking ways to do this. Therefore, the NFSA will:
- a) work cooperatively with related collecting bodies (archives, museums, libraries) to share information on initiatives involving management and use of Indigenous cultural documentation
  - b) actively contribute to appropriate government initiatives related to Indigenous issues
  - c) develop awareness within the NFSA of the issues related to the cultural and property rights of Indigenous peoples and consult with other AFC Divisions and with Government bodies investigating such issues, and with appropriate Indigenous peoples on the application of those rights
  - d) develop ways, through appropriate consultation, to promote safekeeping of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property from uses not authorised by the relevant peoples of association
  - e) ensure that the context and integrity of the Indigenous works and other material are clearly understood to avoid misinterpretation
  - f) negotiate with Indigenous communities when it has been independently established that materials held by the NFSA have been inappropriately taken from the control of such communities or created by theft or deception. This negotiation may include options to return material to the specific community; to provide copies of the material to the community for reference and consultation, or to commit to the NFSA's ongoing preservation of that material with continued reference to the relevant community
  - g) consult on the identification of secret and sacred materials and the development of suitable management practices with the most appropriate representatives of the particular Indigenous communities involved and with the copyright owners, if any, of such material
  - h) assist Indigenous communities in planning, providing and maintaining suitable keeping places for audiovisual works and other materials.

## 5.4 Access and Use of Indigenous Materials

- 5.4.1 The NFSA is committed to the provision of equitable access to the national audiovisual collection. Access to the national collection at the NFSA is provided on request and is governed by copyright and in some cases by verified identification of specific cultural sensitivities. The term 'access' relates to the physical process of identifying and consulting material as opposed to 'use', which may result from access and which entails the active incorporation of that material into an event or production. Forms of access to, and use of, Indigenous materials include, but are not limited to:
- research: private or commercial access where, due to the volume of material held at the NFSA, the researcher may or may not be fully informed in advance about their nature or subject matter
  - screenings and audiovisual presentations to Indigenous communities
  - screenings and audiovisual presentations to the general public, such as cinema societies or public exhibition venues
  - broadcast via radio or television transmission
  - use of complete items or extracts in new productions such as documentaries or news items.
- 5.4.2 In relation to Indigenous subject matter, sensitivities have greatest force when the works and other materials accessed include recordings and/or depictions of secret and/or sacred events recorded with or without permission. In the past, some Aboriginal peoples have given secret information to respected researchers, not realising that the information would be published and made available to the general public. In such circumstances, an item need not be readily available to everyone simply by virtue of its prior publication, and may require specific permission from the relevant peoples of association.
- 5.4.3 Also the public screening, broadcast, or use of some Indigenous works and other materials in contemporary productions may cause distress to members of Indigenous communities without their necessarily being secret or sacred. This can be due to the lack of appropriate context or to the misrepresentation of locations, open (unrestricted) ceremonies or practices, or it may relate to depictions of deceased people. In accordance with the NFSA's Access and Public Programs Policy, the NFSA has a responsibility to preserve and make accessible Australia's audiovisual heritage but must also respond appropriately to such culturally sensitive materials. In practical terms, this means that access and use of such material may require:
- a specific disclaimer or warning prior to broadcast or other public dissemination based on contextual information provided by the NFSA
  - provision of context and sourcing information for the material within a production
  - contact with a specific Indigenous community as a courtesy
  - acknowledgement of a specific Indigenous community as a courtesy.
- 5.4.4 To encourage an awareness of the Indigenous heritage material held in the NFSA for both the Indigenous community and the wider community, and to indicate the NFSA's commitment to recognition of cultural rights and responsibilities, the NFSA will, as appropriate and practicable:
- develop through negotiation the means to make its resources, facilities and services accessible, relevant and visible to Indigenous peoples. For example, the NFSA will advise specific Indigenous communities of relevant footage in the national collection for both information and future management

- encourage accessibility by actively fostering positive relationships between the NFSA and the Indigenous communities. This may be done by outreach programs in cooperation with Indigenous communities and other Divisions of the AFC, repatriation of relevant materials, and the establishment of a consistent and genuine consultation process at the curatorial level, regarding appropriate recognition of traditional ownership issues
- develop strategies that allow the NFSA to explain any conditions governing access to clients, including—in some circumstances—recognition of cultural claims as well as purely copyright claims
- respond to the issue of sensitive holdings where access may need to be restricted or subject to particular conditions
- ensure that all staff fully understand, and are able to apply, the access conditions involved, and that sensitive material is handled only by appropriate curatorial staff. Management systems will be designed to prevent inappropriate handling
- respond appropriately to any request from an Indigenous community for copies of material of specific relevance to the community for its use and retention.

## 5.5 Description and Classification of Materials

- 5.5.1 Subject headings, classification systems and terminology used in indexing are designed to provide easy access to materials in libraries, archives and information services. The NFSA is responsible for the preservation, accessioning, physical management and provision of access to the national audiovisual collection. To improve access to information about Indigenous holdings in the national collection, the NFSA will:
- develop subject headings, guidelines and forms of intellectual description which are consistent with the culture and sensitivity of Indigenous peoples, and which promote effective identification and retrieval
  - consult at the curatorial level with the NFSA Advisory Committee and with representatives of Indigenous cultures to help identify sensitive materials that may need special access restrictions or further clarification prior to release for any purpose
  - initiate consultation with Indigenous communities regarding material that has been identified as relevant to that community
  - ensure that all online public catalogue references clearly identify restricted materials and provide a straightforward means for clients to understand the nature of those restrictions
  - identify effective labelling, storage and security mechanisms that allow for ready location of all Indigenous items and clear direction as to appropriate handling, access and use.

## 5.6 Staffing, Education and Training for Professional Practice

- 5.6.1 The inclusion of Indigenous peoples within organisations can change organisational culture for the benefit of all. The NFSA is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity, and consistent with these will:
- aim to reflect the composition and cultural diversity of the client/community population in its staffing profile
  - be proactive in developing employment, career development and promotional pathways for Indigenous peoples in all aspects of the NFSA's work. In doing so, the NFSA aims to take account of prior learning and/or qualifications in other fields

- c) involve members of the Indigenous community in the selection of staff
- d) ensure that Indigenous staff members receive appropriate training for the work of the position in which they have been employed, and have access to support strategies such as mentoring and study opportunities
- e) actively engage with other cultural collecting organisations to seek the development of a comprehensive approach to employment of Indigenous staff across the cultural span
- f) provide cross-cultural training courses for NFSA staff
- g) provide advice and examples of professional practice in access services, cataloguing, acquisition, collection management and other areas, on matters of concern to Indigenous peoples
- h) involve Indigenous peoples in both design and delivery of programs and seek advice and contribution from relevant Indigenous representatives in the recognition and appropriate use of traditional Indigenous language in NFSA records.

5.6.2 This policy has been developed through consultation with the AFC's Indigenous Division, the NFSA Division's independent Indigenous Reference Group, relevant organisations and by reference to some existing publications, including *Previous Possessions, New Obligations* (Council of Australian Museum Associations) and *Indigenous Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services* (published by the Australian Library and Information Association for the Indigenous Library and Information Resource Network).

## SIX INTERNATIONAL POLICY



## 6.1 International participation

- 6.1.1 The NFSA views its activities as part of a cooperative global effort to collect, preserve and provide access to the world's audiovisual culture and heritage.
- 6.1.2 The NFSA will participate in the international community, actively contributing to the world body of expertise, adhering and promoting the Code of Ethics of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), the International Council on Archives (ICA), the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and other international audiovisual organisations, and subscribing to UNESCO, CCAAA and other international protocols in audiovisual archiving. Recognising that participation also contributes to the NFSA's development, the NFSA will represent Australia in the audiovisual field through dialogue, professional exchange, formal professional association and co-operative partnerships and alliances.
- 6.1.3 These connections, together with the advance of technologies for image and sound delivery from abroad, will increase the potential availability of material from other sources and help to refine collecting and disposal priorities as well as preservation activities.
- 6.1.4 The NFSA will aspire to further develop and strengthen its position as a leading audiovisual archive. The body of the NFSA's experience, its acknowledged expertise and broad ranging involvement in a wide variety of audiovisual media and archiving functions puts the NFSA in a position to achieve this.
- 6.1.5 The NFSA will actively pursue participation in leading national and international bodies interested in audiovisual archiving, in accordance with their published rules or charters.
- 6.1.6 Active involvement internationally will be pursued through partnerships with Australian organisations and by presenting the NFSA to the international world in a vigorous manner. International partnerships may involve working with other Divisions of the AFC, other Australian government and private sector entities, leading international organisations representing audiovisual interests and industry groups, and standards-setting authorities.
- 6.1.7 As one of the major audiovisual archives in the South East Asia-Pacific area, the NFSA recognizes the importance of its relationships within the region and its strategic role as a supporter and mentor to other archives and archivists. The NFSA will seek to play an active role in professional associations operating within the region.
- 6.1.8 In participating in the international environment, the NFSA seeks to support countries developing their own audiovisual archiving infrastructure to suit their own particular requirements.
- 6.1.9 Through innovative use of technology, communications and targeted travel, the NFSA will endeavour to engage with the global archiving and broadcasting industry community. The NFSA will actively encourage international colleagues to visit the NFSA facilities and other Divisions of the AFC.
- ## 6.2 Professional Development, Training and Standards Setting
- 6.2.1 The NFSA is strongly committed to the ongoing development of the professional discipline associated with audiovisual archiving. The NFSA will take an active role in assisting the professional development of audiovisual archiving practice, both in Australia and abroad. The open sharing of knowledge is seen as a pre-requisite to support this involvement. (See Chapter 8 on Professional Standards Policy for more information.)

- 6.2.2 Key fields of interest for international participation include:
- curatorial issues
  - preservation and technical services
  - collection management disciplines
  - access services
  - education and professional development.
- 6.2.3 Requests for the NFSA to provide its services to institutions and individuals abroad on a fee-for-service basis may be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, the NFSA's primary commitment is to its own collection and the audience it serves.
- 6.2.4 The NFSA will seek to maximise its involvement in the professional development, training and standards for audiovisual archiving through the skilful exploitation of technology and communications opportunities.
- ## 6.3 International Support Relationships
- 6.3.1 The NFSA is committed to providing leadership, advice and practical preservation support to other nations in its region as appropriate. This may entail the NFSA actively collecting and preserving high priority audiovisual items in trust for another nation when that nation faces serious limitations in its own preservation capacity (on this topic, see also the Acquisition Policy). It may also entail training and developmental support for those nations to establish that capacity. All such initiatives will be implemented on a case-by-case basis with consultation with the nations involved and with regional archival organisations and authorities.
- 6.3.2 The NFSA will play an active role in assisting those who wish to access material not available from its own collection by referring them to locations that might satisfy requirements, including international locations.
- ## 6.4 International Access to the National Collection
- 6.4.1 The NFSA recognises the growing international interest in materials held in its national collection. The NFSA will actively support this increasing interest through the provision of the same services that apply to Australian-based interests, on a stand-alone basis or with the cooperation of other Divisions of the AFC, organisations such as UNESCO, and other cultural entities. In accordance with the Statutes and Rules of FIAF, NFSA's access holdings are accessible to other FIAF members (for non-commercial purposes only) at no cost other than handling, freight, and copyright clearance where appropriate. (See Chapter 4 on Access and Outreach Policy for more information about access to collection items.)
- ## 6.5 Repatriation of Collection Materials
- 6.5.1 Foreign audiovisual works disseminated in Australia are a fundamental component of the nation's heritage, as they constitute a creative body that has affected and influenced Australian audiovisual makers, artists, and the audience in general. As such, this part of the Australian audiovisual heritage should be acquired, preserved, and made accessible by the NFSA (see also section 1.8.3 in Chapter 1, Introduction, and section 2.2 in Chapter 2, Acquisition Policy).
- 6.5.2 Repatriation of foreign works will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and will be subject to the creation of duplicate elements to be kept at the NFSA. Prior authorisation from the copyright owners and from the donors of the works will be required when applicable. In some instances, the inherent cultural value of certain original artefacts may require the

retention by NFSA of the original elements and the provision of duplicate elements to the receiving archive (at the receiving archive's cost). When returning an original audiovisual work to its country of origin, the NFSA will request that the receiving archive provides NFSA with a copy of the same work in a medium and format identical (where possible) to the original, and/or with one or more works preserved by the receiving archive.

- 6.5.3 In all other cases, the NFSA will create (at the receiving archive's cost) a duplicate element of the work to be repatriated, and retain the original. Curators of the NFSA collections may exceptionally consider the opportunity of a short-term loan (to be formally stipulated in advance) of the original elements to a foreign archive for the purposes of duplication. Even in this case, the NFSA will request a copy of the preserved or restored work together with the return of the original elements. Participation of the NFSA in a restoration project on a foreign film which includes material from the NFSA should be formally acknowledged in all newly created elements and in the documentation and publicity material surrounding their public presentation.

7

## **SEVEN** DEACCESSIONING POLICY

## 7.1 Overview

7.1.1 In fulfilling its mission, the NFSA constantly seeks to refine and improve the focus of its collections. Deaccessioning is primarily a means to ensure that the quality, depth and breadth of the NFSA's holdings reflect and support its charter, mission and goals.

### 7.1.2 Curatorial Responsibility

7.1.2.1 Deaccessioning works from the National Collection is a serious decision, which must be evaluated with extreme caution. Curators have the authority to determine, subject to final approval from their supervisors, which elements should be deaccessioned, with a clear and well-documented explanation of the reason for their actions.

7.1.2.2 Deaccessioning works from the NFSA for any reason other than those listed below is subject to a written request to the Chief Curator. It should be noted that deaccessioned works may still be used by the NFSA for educational, training, technical, scientific or research purposes. Whenever possible, the NFSA will endeavour to make a first offer of deaccessioned works owned by the NFSA to fellow archives (for purchase, exchange or gift), and will turn to other non-profit organisations or individuals if the former option is unsuccessful. Unless otherwise specified in the donation agreements, the NFSA has no obligation to notify the copyright owners of the deaccessioning process if the physical elements of the works are legally owned by the NFSA; conversely, the NFSA will notify the owners of works deposited with the NFSA, and will reach a mutually agreeable decision on how to treat the return or disposal of these elements.

## 7.2 Deaccessioning Guidelines

### 7.2.1 Criteria for Deaccessioning

7.2.1.1 Accessioned material may be considered for deaccessioning if:

- a) it is not relevant to the mission of the NFSA
- b) it has been lost or stolen and is not recovered
- c) it duplicates other items in the collection
- d) it is in a state of advanced deterioration
- e) it cannot be provided with necessary conservation treatment
- f) it is of poor quality either intrinsically or relative to other items
- g) it is of questionable provenance
- h) it is a variant having no value as part of a series.

### 7.2.2 Approval Process

7.2.2.1 Curators, who may accept recommendations from other professional staff, initiate the process of deaccessioning. Professional advice may also be sought from outside consultants.

7.2.2.2 A written proposal to deaccession an item will be submitted by the Senior Curator—with a recommendation by the Chief Curator—to the NFSA Director.

### 7.2.3 Public Trust and Special Interest Claims

7.2.3.1 The NFSA recognises that it holds its collections in public trust for the use, education and enjoyment of all. The NFSA also is mindful that special interest groups may have claims that are, or are believed by the claimants to be, superior to the public interest.

7.2.3.2 When special interest groups demand that NFSA collection material be removed from the public sphere and given to private holders, the NFSA will exercise the high level of sensitivity to both its public trust and the rightful claim of ownership of cultural property by special interest groups. Each instance of such claims by special interest groups will be decided on its own merits by the Management of the NFSA.

### 7.2.4 Record Keeping

7.2.4.1 Complete and accurate records of each deaccessioned item and the circumstances of its deaccessioning will be maintained in the NFSA's collection management system as well as its file registry. Where appropriate, these records will include:

- a) a photograph of the item
- b) the records regarding the acquisition of the item by the NFSA and transfer of ownership
- c) a history of the item's exhibition by the NFSA
- d) preservation or conservation treatment received by the item while owned by the NFSA
- e) a final condition report
- f) the date the item left the NFSA
- g) the name of the subsequent owner of the item
- h) the amount of the proceeds from the sale of the item, if any.

## 7.3 Disposal methods and Procedures

### 7.3.1 Disposal Methods

7.3.1.1 The NFSA may dispose of deaccessioned material only through one of the following methods:

- a) return to donor when a donor can be located
- b) surrendering the material because of cultural property issues
- c) using in NFSA programs, or in programs of other Divisions of the AFC
- d) donating to another non-profit collecting institution
- e) trade with another non-profit collecting institution
- f) destroying the material
- g) selling at a private or public auction (exclusively for deaccessioned duplicates)
- h) selling to a private buyer (exclusively for deaccessioned duplicates).

7.3.1.2 The instances mentioned in f) and g) will be applied only after NFSA can demonstrate that it has offered deaccessioned duplicates to other non-profit collecting institutions prepared to pay all the costs of the transfer, and there have been no takers. The funds generated by the auction or sale of the deaccessioned material will be used exclusively for the purposes of acquiring new items for the National Collection.

### 7.3.2 Disposal Procedures

7.3.2.1 Generally, the NFSA will endeavour to use the deaccessioned material in the programs of the NFSA or of other Divisions of the AFC. As a second option, the NFSA will give preferential consideration to non-profit collecting institutions that can demonstrate the ability to care for and preserve the deaccessioned item properly and that can provide beneficial public and scholarly access. The last option is to obtain the highest price possible for deaccessioned material, subject to the limitations spelled out in 7.3.1.2. When an



item has been identified for deaccessioning due to terminal and irreversible physical deterioration, physical destruction is the single effective option for disposal.

### **7.3.3 Restrictions on Recipients**

7.3.3.1 No individual who is an employee of the NFSA or of other Divisions of the AFC, or a Commissioner of the AFC, may receive deaccessioned material from the NFSA.

### **7.3.4 Appraisals**

7.3.4.1 Unless a deaccessioned item is to be given away or sold at public auction, an appraisal must be obtained from an independent outside appraiser before the item is sold. The purpose of this appraisal is to ensure that the sale price reflects the market value of the item.

## **7.4 Proceeds from Disposal**

### **7.4.1 Approved Uses**

7.4.1.1 Proceeds from the disposal of any deaccessioned item may be used only for the acquisition of new items.

## **7.5 Donor Requirements**

### **7.5.1 Notification: Acknowledgement**

7.5.1.1 Every effort will be made to notify any living donor whose material has been approved for deaccessioning, except in those cases where a donor has previously agreed to the NFSA having full disposal rights for deaccessioned material. Acquisition of items purchased from the proceeds of deaccessioning will acknowledge living donors of the deaccessioned material if the donor approves such acknowledgement in writing.

### **7.5.2 Minimum Holding Period**

7.5.2.2 Unless otherwise agreed with the donor, the NFSA will hold donated items for a minimum of three years, after which time the NFSA may deaccession the item and sell it or otherwise dispose of it with no further obligation to the donor.

## **7.6 Cultural Property**

### **7.6.1 Claims of Lawful Ownership**

7.6.1.1 The NFSA acknowledges its responsibility to the public to insure that claims of lawful ownership of cultural property made by third parties are rightful and fact-based. The NFSA will not violate this public trust by permitting collection items to leave the NFSA until certainty exists that such claims of lawful ownership by other parties are valid.

### **7.6.2 Legal Representative of Claimants**

7.6.2.1 In the event that a claim of rightful ownership of cultural property by a third party is successful, the NFSA will deliver the item in question to the claimant upon presentation of satisfactory evidence that such claimant is legally entitled to receive the item. If multiple or conflicting claims have been made, the NFSA will hold the collection item until the conflicting claims have been resolved to the satisfaction of the NFSA Management.

## 8.1 Developing the NFSA's Professional Standards

8.1.1 The NFSA's Professional Standards Policy and its underlying principles have been developed with reference to the conventions, recommendations and codes of national and international organisations. The NFSA actively contributes to the debate on such principles and codes, and monitors and adopts them into the NFSA's practices as appropriate. Links to the websites of some of the national and international organisations that the NFSA uses as reference points are provided in Chapter 1 (1.1.4).

## 8.2 Professional Standards and the NFSA

8.2.1 The following reflects the professional standards the NFSA will apply to its collection and people.

### 8.2.2 The NFSA Collection

- 8.2.2.1 In building, preserving, safeguarding and making accessible the NFSA collection of audiovisual material, the NFSA will:
- store material, especially original or preservation master material, in the best conditions available to the NFSA and continually strive to assess and improve those conditions
  - catalogue collection material having regard to international standards of control for audiovisual collection materials (see also Section 8.2.3)
  - seek to retain the integrity of the original material when copying material for preservation purposes, and will not edit, manipulate or distort the nature of the work being copied (see also Chapter 3, Preservation Policy)
  - endeavour to deliver collection material to the highest technical and intellectual standards appropriate for particular uses, and encourage users to present material in a manner consistent with the original sonic or viewing experience. In delivering such access, the NFSA will also take into consideration the underlying principles of access and equity (see also Chapter 4, Access and Outreach Policy).

### 8.2.3 Collection Data Standards

- 8.2.3.1 High quality collection data affects all aspects of the work of an archive from acquisitions, through preservation and storage, to interpretation and the provision of access. Data records are created and maintained according to guidelines informed by international standards. The excellence and richness of data records in terms of consistency, accuracy and completeness, is a shared goal and responsibility of all involved in creating and capturing information about the collection. While the responsibility for establishing data entry standards and managing data quality lies with accessioners, the curator's strength is in providing descriptive and contextual data needed to identify and distinguish a work. Together, they collaborate on the information required to capture the intellectual and technical description of a work. To achieve fully effective data standards the NFSA will:
- create data for its database according to guidelines informed by international standards
  - develop and maintain data entry guidelines and procedures that will meet best practice in audiovisual archival description, and will contribute to the development of such guidelines and procedures in the national and international contexts
  - create records for all items received into the collection, and progressively create records for items previously acquired and not entered into the database. Records will be created at the most appropriate level needed for the NFSA to deliver its commitments to the National Collection in relation to preservation, the provision of access, vaults management and movement tracking

- make its catalogue publicly available nationally and internationally, and share data where this will serve to further its goals
- recognise the cultural and practical necessity of maintaining an authoritative record of the whole national production of moving image and recorded sound, and maintain and make publicly available such a record via filmographies, videographies, discographies and similar projects for all audiovisual media.

### 8.2.4 The Role of the NFSA

- 8.2.4.1 The NFSA collection is part of the broader national collection. Within this context, the NFSA will:
- encourage the responsible preservation of and provision of access to audiovisual collections held by other organisations, by providing advice and assistance where appropriate (see also Chapter 9, Advice to Other Organisations)
  - participate as a member of the global audiovisual archiving community. The NFSA views its collection development as part of a cooperative global effort to preserve and provide access to the world's screen and sound culture and heritage
  - conduct itself as a group of good international citizens, taking an active role in assisting the professional development of audiovisual archiving practice, both in Australia and abroad
  - aspire to be an organisation that stimulates debate on audiovisual archiving issues. The NFSA will actively promote archival issues, needs and practices within the Australian Film Commission, the Australian audiovisual industries and community, to the Government, and to the public in general.

### 8.2.5 The NFSA's Staff

- 8.2.5.1 In seeking to meet the professional standards outlined in this policy, the NFSA will:
- in addition to the AFC's formal organisational values, require the highest standards of personal behaviour from its employees and expect them to operate at all times in accordance with the AFC's Service Charter, the FIAF Code of Ethics, the Conflict of Interest Guidelines, and the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct (Public Service Act, 1999)
  - seek to ensure that its staff does not indulge in activities that may compete or conflict with (or would appear to conflict with) those of the NFSA and the AFC in general. In particular, the NFSA will actively discourage staff from engaging in the building of private collections of materials that overlap or appear to overlap with those in the National Collection
  - strive to endow its staff with the skills and knowledge necessary to reach their highest potential and to ensure the NFSA collection is managed professionally. This will be achieved through a process of targeted training and professional development programs, by providing resource material, by encouraging staff to belong to relevant professional associations and to attend seminars, conferences and forums, compatibly with the goals and objectives of the NFSA and its required outcomes; and through the exploitation of technology and communications opportunities
  - promote a culture in which staff—with the active endorsement of their managers—will be encouraged to research the collection, develop and share their knowledge and curatorial expertise of the national and international audiovisual heritage, publish material about the content of the collection and become actively involved in screen and sound culture.

(Refer to Appendix A: NFSA Code of Ethics for further detail)



## 8.2.6 The NFSA's Professional Culture

- 8.2.6.1 In developing and enhancing a professional culture within the organisation, the NFSA will:
- promote professional values such as intellectual rigour, precision, clarity, curiosity, personal responsibility and accountability. The NFSA will also encourage collaborative, creative, and challenging debate
  - aspire to further develop and strengthen the NFSA's international position as a leading audiovisual archive and seek to achieve international best practice in the NFSA's operations
  - commit to an ongoing process of benchmarking against relevant organisations and techniques; maintaining awareness of new developments in technology and audiovisual issues; ensuring—with the endorsement of NFSA's management and curators—attendance at and participation in conferences and meetings in Australia and abroad, and active participation in relevant international federations
  - value and promote a cooperative and accessible relationship with those who relate to the NFSA's role and activities. As a national custodial body, the NFSA reaches and depends upon a wide constituency and support base
  - develop and maintain active links with libraries, archives and museums—at the international, national, state and regional levels—and their professional associations in Australia and abroad.

## 8.3 Management and Care of the Collections

- 8.3.1 It is the curators' duty to take all possible steps to ensure that the governing body of their archive adopts a written acquisition policy. It is therefore a curator's duty to recommend revisions of that policy at regular intervals. Curators must ensure that the policy, as formally adopted and revised by the governing body, is implemented, and ensure that their colleagues are fully acquainted with it.
- 8.3.2 It is the curators' primary responsibility to do all in their power to fully protect all items in their care against physical deterioration whether on display, in store, subject to research or conservation procedures or on loan elsewhere. Curators must apprise their supervisor of the recommendations made to them by specialists in the field and enforce all safeguards subsequently adopted.
- 8.3.3 All items within a curator's care must be recorded, including the circumstances and conditions of acceptance and such other information as is necessary to complement the item, in an appropriate, secure and permanent form capable of easy retrieval.
- 8.3.4 There must always be a strong presumption against the disposal of items to which an archive has assumed formal title. Any form of disposal, whether by donation, exchange, sale or destruction requires the exercise of a high order of curatorial judgement and should be recommended to a curator's supervisor only after full expert and legal advice has been taken.
- 8.3.5 A curator may not delegate curatorial functions to persons who lack the appropriate knowledge and skill.
- 8.3.6 Curators must never discourage legitimate research into the collections under their care by those qualified to perform it.
- 8.3.7 All research undertaken in the archive should relate to the institution's collections or objectives.

- 8.3.8 Curators have a clear duty to consult professional colleagues outside their own institution when their expertise and that of their immediate colleagues is insufficient to ensure the welfare of items in the collection under their care.

## 8.4 Accessibility of Data

- 8.4.1 It is the curators' responsibility to safeguard the confidentiality of sensitive data contained in the records which they maintain. Sensitive data consists of information to which uncontrolled access might put at risk rare, unique or vulnerable material, and of personal details and statements the disclosure of which could lead to legal action. Curators may disclose such information only to enquirers whose reputations, interests and intentions they have established beyond reasonable doubt to be consistent with the needs of conservation.

## 8.5 Personal Activities

- 8.5.1 The acquiring, collecting and owning of items by curators for their own private collection is not in itself unethical, but it should be discouraged. Serious dangers are implicit when curators or their staff collect for themselves items similar to those which they and others collect for their archive. In particular, no curator or curatorial staff should compete with their institution either in the acquisition of items or in any personal collecting activity. Extreme care must be taken to ensure that no conflict of interest arises.
- 8.5.2 On appointment, curators or the members of a curatorial staff with a private collection must provide their supervisor with a description of it, and a statement of their collecting policy. Any agreement between curators and their supervisor on matters concerning the private collection must be scrupulously kept.
- 8.5.3 On no account may a curator solicit a personal gift or bequest from a member of the public.
- 8.5.4 Dealing (buying and selling for a profit) in material which is collected by the curator's institution is an unacceptable practice for all curators and their staff.
- 8.5.5 Curators must be fully aware that to undertake identification and authentication outside their duties for personal gain with the intention of establishing the market value of an item is fraught with danger. If it is to be done, curators must declare such intention beforehand to their supervisor, and be at pains to observe the highest standards of academic objectivity.
- 8.5.6 Curators are not normally qualified to undertake valuations and must therefore be aware of any implications of using their position for direct or indirect personal profit. In the course of their duties, curators will, from time to time, be required to have regard to the financial value of items. In such circumstances, a curator must always pay attention to the possible implications arising from this practice.
- 8.5.7 Curators must obtain the written consent of their supervisor before undertaking private work from which personal financial gain may accrue. Even when consent has been obtained, such activities should not be allowed to interfere with the discharge of their official duties and responsibilities.

## 8.6 Responsibilities and Services to the Public

- 8.6.1 The acquisition of archive items from members of the public must be conducted with scrupulous fairness to the seller or donor.
- 8.6.2 Although circumstances exist where curators may refuse to identify an item, as a general rule they are expected to do so when, they are asked by a member of the public in the

course of their employment. A curator must not withhold significant facts about the item or deliberately mislead the enquirer. If a curator's knowledge of the item is incomplete, this should also be stated.

- 8.6.3 In compliance with the UNESCO *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*, curators must not identify, accept on loan or acquire by any means, an item which they have good reason to believe was acquired by its current owner in contravention of the terms of that *Convention*, or by any other illegal means.
- 8.6.4 Curators must not reveal information imparted to them in confidence during the course of their professional duties (see also 8.4.1).
- 8.6.5 Archive items on public display, with all forms of accompanying information, should present a clear, accurate and balanced exposition and must never deliberately mislead. These principles apply also to books and information published or otherwise disseminated by the archive.
- 8.6.6 Material sold in the archive shop should be of a standard and nature relevant to, and compatible with, the aims and objectives of the archive service.
- 8.6.7 Curatorship of material of ritual significance is a sensitive undertaking, and a curator must be aware of the possible impact of such activity on humanistic feelings or religious beliefs. Curators must therefore take all reasonable steps to avoid giving rise to public outrage or offence in their management of such material.
- 8.6.8 In cases where their professional advice is sought, a curator must ensure that such advice is consistent with archival or museological principles and as far as possible in the best interests of the enquirer.

## 8.7 Relationship with Commercial Organisations

- 8.7.1 It will often be a legitimate part of a curator's duty to work with commercial organisations, whether they be vendors, suppliers, producers, distributors, exhibitors, auctioneers or dealers, in respect of possible acquisitions, potential sponsors, or the media (press, radio, television). However, in all such dealings, a curator must never accept from such sources a personal gift in whatever form which might subsequently be interpreted, whether rightly or wrongly, as an inducement to trade with one organisation to the exclusion of others. Equally, in the course of their duties, should curators be asked to advise a member of the public on an appropriate commercial organisation to be approached, the utmost care must be taken to ensure that no personal prejudice could subsequently be inferred from such advice.
- 8.7.2 In the area of commercial sponsorship, there will be an agreed relationship between the archive and the sponsor, and a curator must ensure that the standards and objectives of the NFSA are not compromised by such a relationship.
- 8.7.3 When providing information for the media, a curator must ensure that it is factually accurate and, wherever possible, enhances the reputation of the NFSA (see also 8.6.5).

## 8.8 Relationship with Professional Colleagues

- 8.8.1 A curator's relationship with professional colleagues should always be courteous, both in public and private. Differences of professional opinion should not be expressed in a personal fashion. Particular care must be taken to avoid any dispute coming to public notice so as to bring discredit on the persons concerned and the profession at large.

- 8.8.2 When acquisition policies and collecting areas overlap, the curators concerned should draft a mutually satisfactory agreement. This should then be referred to the governing bodies concerned for approval, either as a substantive change or as an appendix to their acquisition policies. Where conflict with other archives over the acquisition of an item is likely, curators must take all possible steps to ensure that the issue is amicably resolved.
- 8.8.3 In the course of their duties, curators form working relationships with numerous other people, both professional and otherwise, within and outside the archive in which they are employed. Curators are expected to conduct these relationships with courtesy and fair-mindedness and to render their professional services to others efficiently and at a high standard.

# **NINE** ADVICE TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS



## 9.1 The National Audiovisual Collecting body

9.1.1 The NFSA aims to develop a comprehensive collection of Australia's audiovisual heritage. However, there are many other organisations in Australia that collect audiovisual material and the NFSA is committed to a collaborative and non-competitive approach to collection acquisition, preservation and provision of access.

## 9.2 Objectives

9.2.1 The NFSA seeks to:

- a) minimise duplication of effort in audiovisual archiving. (The NFSA has a legislative distinction between its own collecting policies and the collecting policies of the National Archives of Australia, and has cooperative arrangements with specialised collecting institutions such as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the Australian War Memorial in relation to subject specific audiovisual materials.)
- b) encourage the responsible preservation of, and provision of access to, audiovisual collections held by other organisations, by providing information, advice and assistance, where appropriate.

## 9.3 Provision of advice

9.3.1 The NFSA provides audiovisual archiving advice and assistance, including to neighbouring nations as appropriate, by:

- a) participating in national and international professional archiving networks
- b) taking a leading role in the provision of education in archival, curatorial and preservation theory, methodology and practice
- c) contributing to the Community Heritage Grants program coordinated by the National Library of Australia
- d) offering access to staff expertise in a variety of forms, ranging from direct consultation to information disseminated via internet.

The NFSA section of the AFC website provides:

- a) general advice on collection development, management and preservation matters
- b) guidance for collection management and storage climate control
- c) an online help service for specific advice on the preservation of high heritage collection items
- d) a National Registry of Audiovisual Collections, now in development.

9.3.3 The NFSA's primary responsibility is to collect, preserve and make accessible its own collections. Under no circumstances will advice and assistance to other organisations be provided to the detriment of the NFSA's timely and efficient fulfilment of its responsibilities towards the NFSA's holdings and the audience it serves.

access	Physical and/or intellectual exhibition or delivery of audiovisual materials and related documentation based on confirmed level of copyright protection.
access – open	Archive collection material which has no restrictions and which may be made readily available for general exhibition purposes though on or off-site viewing.
access – restricted	The term applies to archive collection material whose access requires special technical precautions and requirements, or which has secret, offensive or sensitive content and which is only available for audition, viewing or reproduction after appropriate clearances have been received from copyright and /or traditional owners.
access – appropriate	Access to audiovisual materials and related documentation based on confirmed level of copyright and negotiations with traditional ownership and peoples of association are required to ensure that legal and cultural interests are covered. See Chapter 5, Indigenous Collection Policy.
acquisition	The formal process of collecting cultural works and artefacts for the purposes of inclusion in a collection, preservation, long-term access to the work or artefact and/or to its content.
artefact (cultural)	A human-made object which gives information about the culture of its creator and users.
audiovisual	Moving images and/or recorded sounds embodied in any medium now known or yet to be invented. 'Audiovisual' includes—but is not limited to—the formats of film, video and audio tape, video and audio discs, computer files and machine readable or encoded data embodying sound and/or moving images; the distinctive technologies by which their content is reproduced and made accessible; the context in which the content is created and disseminated; and its experience by an individual or collective audience.
Australian works, artefacts, materials	There is no conclusive definition of what is or is not 'Australian'. The NFSA regards material produced in, by or about Australia or Australians or experienced by Australians as 'Australian material'. Ongoing curatorial judgments are needed to monitor the application of the concept.
business	In an Indigenous context, the term refers to matters of private, community or sacred significance. See Chapter 5, Indigenous Collection Policy.
carrier and content	Audiovisual media include images and sounds (the 'work' or 'content') recorded on film, magnetic tape, discs or other materials ('carriers'). Because physical decay and/or format change mean that most carriers have a limited shelf life, preservation of the 'work' or 'content' eventually requires copying to another carrier. Whenever possible, this process must result in the creation and availability of the 'work' or 'content' in the same format and on the same media in which the original works were created. In some cases, the copying process may involve technical judgements, and the original media or carriers may have attributes that cannot be copied; curatorial judgments as to their appropriateness are therefore necessary. For access purposes, replaceable copies may be made in formats or media other than original one (depending on demand) as long as permanent availability in the original media and format is guaranteed wherever possible.

classification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application of index terms such as subjects, formats, class and genre, to facilitate the retrieval of works.;</li> <li>2. Classification of level of restriction; or, classification of material as either 'Restricted' or 'Open'; 3. Classification applied to material broadcast or screened, such as audience level (G; PG; MA; etc.) and type of content (Violence, Coarse Language, etc.).</li> </ol>
conservation	All the activities necessary to prevent or minimize the process of physical degradation of the artefact, whether such an artefact is newly produced by the archive or is an already existing object acquired by the archive. An underlying principle of the conservation process is that the activities described above should be carried out with minimal intervention or interference with the artefact.
deaccession	The permanent removal of collection items from the national collection with accompanying documented record.
deposit	Collection material placed on 'deposit' with the NFSA for safekeeping. Unlike material that is purchased or donated, the physical item on deposit remains the property of the source until such time as the source may transfer ownership to another person, community or organisation.
depositor	The person, organisation or company that deposits audiovisual material with the NFSA for safekeeping. Unlike material that is purchased or donated, the physical item on deposit remains the property of the depositor until such time as the depositor may transfer ownership to another person, community or organisation.
DISACT	The Disasters ACT Network (DISACT) was established by collecting institutions in Canberra to improve disaster preparedness, facilitate training, establish partnerships for resourcing efficiencies and to provide local mutual assistance in the event of emergencies affecting public collections.
disclaimer	Introductory text or announcement inserted at the beginning of a film, video, sound recording, television or radio broadcast and digital-born work, or given as accompanying text in the presentation of documentation items. For materials with Indigenous subject matter a disclaimer may be, as a minimum, a warning that Indigenous persons depicted may have since passed away.
Distributed National Collection (DNC)	The Distributed National Collection is the concept of a cooperative network approach to identifying and managing audiovisual collections across Australia. This includes the holdings of all major libraries, archives and museums in Australia which have agreed to a collaborative and non-competitive national approach to collection development. The NFSA exercises a coordinating role in the audiovisual field, and facilitates collecting, preservation and access work done by other institutions. While keeping an overview of the national screen and sound heritage, the NFSA adheres to the goal of minimising duplication of effort.
documentation	The material produced before, during or after the completion of a film or sound production, providing meaningful information on audiovisual works, their creation, exhibition, reception, and influence. It includes—but is not limited to—scripts, publicity materials, stills, business and private papers, and press clippings.

donation Collection material that is gifted without charge to the NFSA, so that the physical item becomes the property of the organisation. The work(s) and other materials included in the item may still be subject to copyright, and/or may require the agreement or clearance of the traditional owners before access to and/or use of the work may occur.

donor A person, organisation or company that donates material to the collection by gift or legacy. Material that is donated becomes the physical property of the NFSA, although the content of the item may still be subject to copyright.

duplication The set of practices related to the creation of a replica of an audiovisual work, either as backup of existing original or preservation material, or as a means to provide access to the audiovisual works. While the duplication process is performed with the goal of obtaining a copy as close as possible to the source, such a process is a necessary but not sufficient requirement of the preservation and restoration processes. A duplicate may be restored, but not subject to enhancement.

education programs Programs and activities that foster inquiry about, and understanding of, the cultural life and environment of Australia through its audiovisual heritage.

enhancement A separate and distinct process of rearranging or adding content, altering sound fields, or adding qualities such as colour, reverberation or effects which were not part of the original production, but which may increase contemporary appeal. A new enhanced work is a recreation, not a restoration, and should not take place to the detriment of the availability of the original audiovisual content and experience.

heritage (cultural) Physical features, both natural and artificial, associated with human cultural activity. These include sites, structures and objects possessing significance—either individually or as a grouping—in history, architecture, archaeology or human cultural development. Cultural resources are unique and non-renewable. Cultural heritage is also defined as ‘our legacy from the past, what we live with today and what we pass on to future generations’ (UNESCO World Heritage).

Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights The Indigenous Australians’ rights to their heritage. Heritage consists of the intangible and tangible aspects of the whole body of cultural practices, resources and knowledge systems developed, nurtured and refined by Indigenous people and passed on by them as part of expressing their cultural identity. See Terri Janke, *Our Culture: Our Future. Report on Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights (1998)*.

internal data only Specified fields in the cataloguing database which may not be viewed on the NFSA’s online catalogue. These include, but are not limited to, internal notes and source and method of acquisition, and are not available for general public consultation. Any record displayed in the online catalogue will not include information held in the ‘internal data only’ fields.

interpretation The act of explaining items in the collection, making clear their context, experience, meaning and cultural significance.

item A discrete physical copy (including the original) of a work or part of a work (for instance, a sound negative) on one or more carriers.

licensee A person, organisation or company that is granted a license to use items from the collection in a public manner (usually by way of display, screening, broadcast etc).

migration Transferring data *en masse* onto a new system capable of carrying the same data, in a similar but not necessarily identical form.

moral rights The right to be named as creator and the right for the work to keep its integrity. Moral rights link to copyright, and presently apply in Australia under the *Copyright Amendment (Moral Rights) Act 2000* which came in to effect on 21 December 2000. The Act introduces comprehensive moral rights protection in Australia for authors of literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works and filmmakers (producers, directors and screenwriters). See also ‘traditional ownership’.

National Collection (The) The group of objects acquired by the NFSA as defined by its Collection Policy. The National Collection consists of various formats including—but not limited to—film, television and recorded sound and radio broadcasts. In addition, the National Collection includes associated documentation (that is, material produced before, during or after completion of a moving image or sound production, including scripts, publicity materials, stills and other artefacts).

outreach The provision of programs off site aimed at achieving access, educational and awareness-raising objectives.

peoples of association Indigenous people with traditional rights to audiovisual works, and Indigenous people depicted and/or related to persons depicted in audiovisual material.

presentation A live event designed to deliver information about the national collection. A presentation may include seminars, interactive discussions, guided tours and the experience of items from the collection.

preservation The overall complex of procedures, principles, techniques and practices necessary for maintaining the integrity and organising the intellectual experience of a recorded sound or of a moving image on a permanent basis. The purpose of preservation work is three-fold: ensuring that the surviving collection artefact is no further damaged or altered in its format and content; bringing it back to a condition as close as possible to its original state; providing access to it, in a manner consistent with the way in which the artefact was meant to be exhibited and perceived. Taken individually, other activities such as duplication, restoration, conservation, reconstruction (where appropriate), access and exhibition in proper conditions, are possible or necessary but not sufficient actions aimed at achieving preservation. Enhancement is not part of the preservation process. The purpose of preservation is to enable access to the sound and image heritage in the long as well as short term. As such, short-term access should not be achieved at the expense of preservation that enables access in the long-term future.

preservation (active) See also ‘Preservation’. Physical treatment of carriers or artefacts in their original format (for instance, cleaning or consolidation), a condition for restoration and transfer of the works (duplication, printing).

preservation (passive) See ‘Conservation’. The storage, packaging and all the other non-interventionist means of prolonging the life of a carrier or artefact in its original form. It includes—but is not limited to—cyclical maintenance (such as monitoring condition or respooling).

preservation and access	Material may be acquired either with the intention of preservation (and subsequent access), or solely for access purposes. In the latter case, preservation is assessed against the likelihood that the work is or will be adequately preserved by another organisation, in Australia or abroad, so that the NFSA does not need to duplicate that task.
preservation component	The original or earliest generation held by the archive; the best technical quality element; the most complete, and/or the most stable or robust. A preservation copy contains a complete, unedited and unaltered transfer of the content of an unstable original component.
product	Objects created for sale, using material from the collection, including (but not limited to) videos, compact discs and paper-based items.
provenance	The history of ownership of a collection or item, which may include ownership of the physical item, the creative and production history, and the intellectual property rights.
public domain	The legal status of material in which no copyright currently exists.
public programs	Suite of public activities designed to foster and increase awareness of the audiovisual heritage, and to interpret it for the benefit of diverse audiences, nationally and abroad.
purchase	Collection material that is financially and legally acquired by the NFSA, so that the physical item becomes the property of the organisation. The work(s) and other materials contained in the item may still be subject to copyright, and/or may require the agreement/clearance of the traditional owners before access to and/or use of the work may occur.
repatriation	The return of materials to relevant organisations and communities as either copies ('work' or 'content') or originals ('physical items'). Repatriation in an Indigenous context may also sometimes imply that the physical location of the item remains unchanged, but the recognised status of ownership changes (for instance, ownership may transfer from an organisation or collector to an Indigenous community while the item itself remains in the same location, such as a designated collecting institution, for safekeeping and archival storage).
research	Private, educational or commercial investigation into archival holdings to identify material and subject matter which may subsequently be requested for further access, reference or incorporation into publication, production or private archives.
restoration	The set of technical, editorial and intellectual procedures aimed at compensating for the loss or degradation of the audiovisual artefact, thus bringing it back to a state as close as possible to its original condition when created and/or released. The restoration process is not complete if it does not jointly address the content, the technological context, and the distinctive experience linked to its accessibility. In the absence of one or more of these components, the process may be called 'simulation', 'recreation', or in limited cases 'duplication'.
sacred	The term relates to spiritual, religious and/or ancestral beliefs and practices, regardless of whether or not they are secret or restricted. Certain sacred rituals are open to everyone (including outsiders by invitation). See Chapter 5, Indigenous Collections Policy.

secret	The term refers to information that under customary law is made available only to the initiated; or information that can only be seen by men or women, or particular people, within the culture. See Chapter 5, Indigenous Collections Policy.
sensitive materials	Material with content which may or may not be secret or sacred, but which may be considered derogatory or invasive of the privacy of individuals, and may cause offence or damage to individuals or communities.
touring exhibitions and programs	Exhibitions, screenings, presentations and other activities at venues throughout the nation and abroad.
traditional ownership	The rights of an Indigenous community, family or individual to maintain control over intellectual, cultural, spiritual and physical property of an audiovisual work by virtue of customary law. Traditional ownership is not subject to legislation in the way that copyright and moral rights are in Australia. This is particularly the case with audiovisual recordings of traditional Indigenous communities. Traditional ownership involves an ethical dimension to these rights, meaning that they may be broader than the specific legal definition of moral rights. Ownership of the content of such audiovisual recordings may remain the intellectual property of the person(s) who have been recorded or who have authorised the performance, or their descendants. In such cases, the NFSA strives to document this information sensitively, accurately and responsibly, and when providing access to and/or use the material, to respond to the requirements of the Indigenous community, family or individual (traditional owner). See Chapter 5, Indigenous Collections Policy.
use	Active incorporation of collection material held by the NFSA into an event, production, publication or presentation. Use is always subject to the confirmation of prior clearance from identified rights holders, when applicable.
work	A distinct, identifiable cultural or intellectual creation that may have one or more parts.





11

## **APPENDIX A**



# NFSA CODE OF ETHICS

## Preamble

The NFSA is a Division of the Australian Film Commission. As part of a publicly accountable organisation with the specific mandate to acquire, preserve and make accessible the national screen and sound heritage, the NFSA must make value judgements about how that heritage is defined, selected, preserved, documented and made accessible. Because resources are limited, choices must also be made about standards, services and priorities. These decisions are based on a comprehensive framework of policies, which are open to public scrutiny.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The NFSA's Code of Ethics complement the APS Values and Code of Conduct, which all AFC employees employed under the Public Service Act are required to uphold. As it works towards its objectives, the NFSA undertakes that all employees will uphold and embody the following values in their work. These values demonstrate the NFSA's commitment to integrity and professional ethics.
- 1.2 This code has also been prepared with reference to the Codes of Ethics of the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM), of the Council of Australian Museum Associations (CAMA), and of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), as well as to the Code of Conduct for Museum Curators (UK).

## 2. Principles

- 2.1 NFSA staff shall conduct themselves in accordance with the mission, values, policies, obligations and status of the NFSA as a Division of the Australian Film Commission.
- 2.2 NFSA staff shall not engage in trade or business which could compromise their professional integrity.

## 3. Responsibility to the Public

- 3.1 Staff shall take every reasonable opportunity to encourage awareness of the NFSA's role and work within the Australian Film Commission by communicating factual information to members of the public.
- 3.2 Dealings with the public shall be characterised by efficiency, courtesy, accuracy and honesty (see also 4.3).
- 3.3 Where staff encounter confidential information in the course of their duties (such as in recording or transcribing oral histories, or servicing client projects), they shall honour such confidences without exception. Further, they shall exercise circumspection in discussing such information with their colleagues.
- 3.4 Staff shall observe, without exception, the contractual and copyright obligations which attach to collection materials and shall familiarise themselves with these obligations to the extent that they are relevant to their duties.

3.5 Personal expertise notwithstanding, staff shall not offer valuations, authentications or similar opinions on cultural material. Irrespective of their accuracy or otherwise, such opinions can involve conflict of interest and be used subsequently by their recipient in negotiations with the NFSA Division or other entities.

3.6 Staff shall not, in a personal capacity, provide paid consultancy services within the general ambit of the NFSA's coverage without the Director's express approval. The NFSA may be entitled to the fees arising therefrom.

## 4. Responsibility to the AFC as Employer

- 4.1 Consistent with APS regulations, staff may exercise their professional skills in their own time gratis or for a reward.
- 4.2 Speeches and articles prepared by staff in their official capacity shall be submitted to the Director for clearance as a matter of course, as shall material prepared in private capacity but impinging on the NFSA's functions. Other material is a private matter. However, the degree to which any staff member (especially senior staff) will still be perceived to be representing the NFSA – regardless of circumstance – is a matter of judgement in which onus is placed on the staff member to assess the situation and act accordingly. (APS guidelines on public comment are also relevant.)
- 4.3 Fees for articles, publications, speeches or services performed in or prepared during working hours are appropriated by the NFSA. Where prepared and presented in the staff member's own time, however, fees may be retained with the Director's approval.
- 4.4 Confidentiality, stipulated or implied, shall be faithfully observed, subject to any legal obligation to inform the police (for instance, in cases of suspected stolen property) or other appropriate authority.
- 4.5 Staff involved in acquiring collection material for the NFSA shall ensure that the transaction is fully documented in accordance with approved policy and procedures. In negotiating the acquisition, staff shall not in any way intentionally mislead the supplier as to the terms of acquisition, value or identity of the item(s) in order to gain advantage either for the NFSA or the supplier.
- 4.6 Staff shall respect the integrity of collection materials and observe relevant policies and procedures. In dealing with collection items, they shall take all reasonable precautions against accidental damage, theft, misuse, loss, degradation or misadventure, and shall have regard for the responsibilities and limitations imposed on them by their respective skills and formal duties.
- 4.7 Staff shall not appropriate collection items or the organisation's property for personal purposes except insofar as the collection and services of the NFSA are accessible to them as members of the public, and on the same terms.
- 4.8 Because of the apparent conflict involved, staff shall not engage in the building of private collections in a manner which could be perceived to be inconsistent with the policies, priorities and interests of the AFC. At the Director's discretion, staff members shall declare and detail any private collecting activities relevant to the NFSA's coverage. (See also the AFC Conflict of Interest Policy.)

## 5. Professional Responsibilities

- 5.1 The free sharing of knowledge and experience to aid the development and enlightenment of others, and the enhancement of the profession of audiovisual media archiving, is regarded as a fundamental professional attribute and is therefore expected of all staff.
- 5.2 At the same time, staff shall duly respect the right of bona fide researchers, who are actively working in a defined field, to own and enjoy the benefit of their work without exploitation by others. Staff, in turn, have the right to avoid undue exploitation of their own knowledge and expertise for self-interested reasons.
- 5.3 Staff shall act in a spirit of collaboration, not competition, with fellow institutions. They shall encourage good relations with such institutions and their staff.
- 5.4 The preservation, well-being and rational development of the national collection in the public interest is a fundamental motivation informing the conduct of all staff members.
- 5.5 Staff shall avoid situations which could be construed as an abuse of professional position. Such situations could include:
- a) conduct bringing the NFSA, and the AFC in general, into disrepute;
  - b) exploiting official position for personal advantage;
  - c) acceptance of personal gifts or rewards (beyond conventional hospitality or trivia); or
  - d) improperly recommending dealers, suppliers or other third parties to members of the public, and are amplified in official Public Service guidelines.

In view of the often highly personal nature of relationships with NFSA's constituency, and the potential for abuse and misunderstanding, the need for care and integrity is paramount.