

Archive Forum

FOUNDATION STATEMENT

Vision

That Australians embrace a national audiovisual archive fulfilling world's best practice, defined, secured and empowered by enabling legislation, enjoying status, recognition, and public identity comparable with the best standards of other national collecting institutions.

Nature of the Archive Forum

1 *Archive Forum* is an independent, informal and publicly identifiable grouping of professional individuals, serving in their private capacity, *who support the work of the Archive and its staff, and are motivated to see the original promise of its creation – as envisioned in "Time in our hands" - fulfilled.* It welcomes the interest of others who, by joining its mailing list, indicate their broad support of its purpose

2 *Archive Forum* aims to see established a fully developed, legislatively based, accountable, soundly governed and intellectually strong national audiovisual archive, rich in research, which builds on the considerable achievements to date of the National Film and Sound Archive and its staff. It aims to work in cooperation with staff and stakeholders in fulfilling the Archive's charter

3 The character of *Archive Forum* is that of an issues-focussed "think tank" and advocacy group. It encourages debate which brings the perceptions of users, the industry, academia and other stakeholders to bear on relevant issues

Background

The National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) was established in 1984 by Cabinet decision, although its antecedents go back to 1935. It has grown into one of the world's larger and better-recognised audiovisual archives and is one of the "club" of seven major Commonwealth collecting institutions. Current annual budget is around \$24 million. It has about 200 staff and 1.5 million collection items.

Time in our hands, the original vision for the institution, was developed by a government-appointed committee chaired by Joan Long and tabled in Parliament in 1985. While many parts of that vision have been achieved, the absence of the recommended statutory authority legislation, and other unfinished tasks, have seriously hindered the full realisation of that vision. Recent developments, including a name change which removed the word "archive", have highlighted concerns about its status, governance and future. A new arrangement integrating it with the Australian Film

Commission while retaining its separate identity, effective 1 July 2003, offers the promise of engaging with these concerns

In the museum/ archive/ library fields, mature networks of like institutions, complemented by their national professional associations, provide an intellectual and strategic frame of reference, as well as lobbying power, to support individual institutions and professional standards. To date the field of audiovisual archiving in Australia has lacked comparable depth of support structures. It is hoped that *Archive Forum* can be a further step in developing this.

Mission

To inform and work cooperatively with the Archive's stakeholders in advocacy for a world's best practice national audiovisual archive for Australia.

Objectives

- 1 To develop and recommend an updated charter and mission statement for the Archive
- 2 To develop and propose inclusions for adoption in the forthcoming legislation to recognise the role of the Archive
- 3 To encourage and contribute to informed and constructive public debate on the activities, role and future of the Archive by the release of discussion papers, establishment of a website, and in other ways
- 4 To develop awareness of relevant issues within industry, academic, professional and other organisations
- 5 To support the work and professional development of Archive staff, including building connections with stakeholders and deepening their mutual knowledge
- 6 In pursuing the vision and mission of *Archive Forum*, to work cooperatively with the Archive in a way that is appreciative and supportive of the work of past and current staff