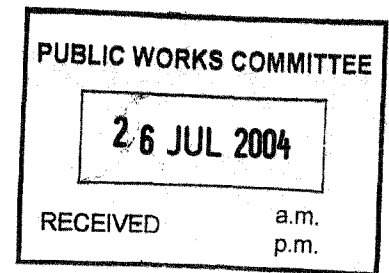


+61 2 62711122

**Australian Government****Department of Communications,  
Information Technology and the Arts**

SUBMISSION ..... 4 .....



our reference

Ms Vivienne Courto  
Inquiry Secretary  
Parliament Standing Committee on Public Works  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW  
COLLECTION STORAGE FACILITY FOR THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF  
AUSTRALIA**

Dear Ms Courto

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the inquiry into the development of a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia (NLA).

The Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) is responsible for providing policy advice to the Government on portfolio cultural institutions, including the NLA, and also assists with cooperation between the institutions.

A Review of Portfolio Cultural Agencies conducted in 2002 found that cooperation across the portfolio on storage issues has the potential to lead to significant efficiencies.

A working group comprising of representatives of various collecting agencies developed a Portfolio Collection Storage Plan that considers storage needs across the portfolio, current collaboration, collection management practice, areas of pressure across agencies and future processes in considering storage needs. The Plan noted that the combined value of the collections of cultural material within the portfolio is more than \$4 billion and annual storage costs are around \$21.6 million.

+61 2 62711122

In the context of the 2004-05 Budget, Cabinet approved the Portfolio Collection Storage Plan, which addresses the problem of storage in a modular (rather than agency) sense, focusing on paper-based storage, audiovisual storage and object storage. The Plan has three stages, to:

- (i) address the immediate short term paper storage need identified by the NLA;
- (ii) allow agencies to consider their needs in a whole-of-portfolio context, exploring opportunities for collaboration leading to efficiencies in collection storage; and
- (iii) provide a mechanism for formal consultation and collaboration in the future.

The building of this facility is the first stage of the Plan and will contribute to ongoing efficiencies in the long term in caring for national collections of cultural material. As indicated in the NLA submission, this facility will also be utilised by the National Archives of Australia with potential for other agencies to also benefit from the project.

DCITA notes that the NLA's proposal is based on a business case that will ensure the NLA's ability to meet its legislative obligations and provide a level of service that is in accordance with its Service Charter. It also has been developed in a way that will ensure that the cost of the project will be kept to a minimum and that environmental and occupational health and safety concerns are being properly addressed.

The Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts supports the NLA's proposal.

Yours sincerely



Paul McInnes  
A/g General Manager  
Collections and Governance Branch

28 July 2004