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Introduction

ANKAAA is pleased to provide a submission to the Senate Inquiry into Indigenous Visual Arts and Crafts. ANKAAA recognises that without Indigenous Artists there is no Indigenous Visual Arts and Craft sector.

ANKAAA extends an invitation for the Senate Committee to visit the ANKAAA Art Centres and listen to artists talk about their business.

ANKAAA is a service based organisation for the membership and this submission is based on the views and input of ANKAAA's Art Centre and Individual members. ANKAAA recognises and acknowledges there are many other stakeholders within the Indigenous Visual Arts and Craft sector.

ANKAAA supports the crucial role that Art Centres have within the ANKAAA region in providing an avenue for their Indigenous artist members to reach and be reached by the market place. The role as educator providing insight into the important aspects of Indigenous culture that is directly linked to the production of visual arts and craft from each of the communities.

ANKAAA has undertaken widespread consultation across the membership in preparation of this submission. This has included but not limited to;

- Discussion of content and issues for inclusion with the ANKAAA Executive Committee
- Undertaking a desktop review of 25 ANKAAA Art Centre members
- Discussion and input from 120 artists and Art Centre staff across the four ANKAAA regions at the ANKAAA regional meetings held at Milingimbi community (Arnhem Land region) NT, Nguu community (Tiwi Islands region) NT, Darwin (Darwin / Katherine region) NT and Balgo community (Kimberley region) WA.
- Endorsement of key recommendations at the ANKAAA Annual General Meeting (AGM) by the membership.

Background to the organisation:

The Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (ANKAAA) is a Government funded non-profit incorporated Aboriginal Association. ANKAAA is the peak advocacy and support agency for Indigenous Artists and 38 Indigenous owned Art Centres located in the Top End including four regions including the Tiwi Islands, Kimberley, Arnhem Land and Darwin/Katherine regions. The ANKAAA office is located in the Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts in Darwin NT.

The core mission of ANKAAA is

- To support the continuing development of a strong Indigenous Arts industry for Indigenous Artists by ensuring ANKAAA members have a strong and respected voice in the Arts industry.
- To improve the standard and quality of life for Indigenous Artists and assist its' membership in cultural and Arts maintenance.
- To work together to support the development of strong and sustainable Indigenous owned Art Centres.

This is achieved through working with member Art Centres' governing committees and staff in the following areas:

- Consultation (listening to members)
- Advocacy/Lobbying (talking up for members and Art Centres)
- Resourcing (helping and giving information)
- Training (teaching)
- Referral (putting members in touch with each other and other organisations and resources)
- Promotion (telling people about Art Centres and Artists)
- Protecting Artists' interests (getting a fair deal).

ANKAAA is governed by an Executive Committee comprising of 12 Indigenous Artists from across the four represented regions and a Public Officer as stated in the ANKAAA Constitution under the Commonwealth of Australia Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976. The Committee includes four office bearer positions Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

Members of ANKAAA are Indigenous owned incorporated Art Centres, Art Centres affiliated with Local Community Government Councils, and some individual Indigenous Artists who are not affiliated with an Art Centre (the majority of whom are Darwin based). ANKAAA does not get involved in Art Centre's commercial business.

The ANKAAA Executive Committee at November 2006 comprises of;

- Chairperson – Djambawa Marawili, Arnhem Land
- Vice-Chairperson – John Martin Tipungwuti, Tiwi Islands
- Secretary – Peggy Griffiths, Kimberley Region
- Treasurer – Nancy McDinny, Darwin / Katherine Region
- Gary Lee, Darwin / Katherine Region
- Jeannie Herbert, Darwin / Katherine Region
- Freddie Timms, Kimberley Region
- Tommy May, Kimberley Region
- Richard Birrinbirrin , Arnhem Land Region
- John Mawurndjul, Arnhem Land Region
- Regis Pangiraminni, Tiwi Islands Region
- Donna Burak, Tiwi Islands Region

The ANKAAA Public Officer is Karen Mills, a Darwin based Individual member of ANKAAA.

The ANKAAA staff positions include the following positions;

- Executive Officer, based in Darwin
- Katherine Industry Development Officer, based in Darwin
- Tiwi / Arnhem Land/ Darwin Industry Development Officer, based in Darwin
- Kimberley Industry Development Officer (to relocate to Broome in March 2007)
- IT Development Officer, based in Darwin
- Business Development Officer, based in Darwin
- Book Keeper / Office Manager, based in Darwin

Key Funding Agencies

ANKAAA is non profit government funded Aboriginal Association. ANKAAA's key funding agencies include:

- Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) through the National Arts & Crafts Industry Support Strategy (NACISS) program.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts (ATSIA) Division of the Australia Council for the Arts through the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy (VACS) and Triennial Key Organisation funding.
- Northern Territory Government Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts (NRETA) - Arts NT through the VACS.
- Department Of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) through the STEP and ISBF programs.
- Country Arts WA through the Strategic Regional Partnership program.

What is an Art Centre?

Indigenous Art Centres are generally organisations, whose membership comprise of Indigenous community members and are owned and governed by an elected committee of artists. They are non-profit organisations which facilitate protection of artists' intellectual and cultural property, provide employment, income earning and training opportunities for Aboriginal people. Art Centres may provide materials, promotion, documentation, dispatch systems and business management for the artists. Art Centres are located in regional and remote Indigenous communities.

Art Centres' core business involves the support and facilitation of the production of traditional and contemporary arts and crafts as well as the promotion, exhibition and sale of art work to local, national and international markets.

ANKAAA Art Centre members as at AGM 2006

Arnhem Land Region

Anindilyakwa Art Aboriginal Corporation – Alyangula, Groote Eylandt NT.
Buku-Larrnggay Mulka – Yirrkala NT
Bula'bula Arts Aboriginal Corporation – Ramingining NT
Elcho Island Arts and Craft – Galiwin'ku NT
Injalak Arts and Crafts – Gunbalanya NT
Maningrida Arts and Culture – Maningrida NT
Mardbalk Arts and Crafts – Warruwi, Goulburn Island NT
Marrawuddi Gallery – Jabiru NT
Milingimbi Arts and Culture – Milingimbi NT
YBE Art Centre – Nhulunbuy NT

Darwin / Katherine Region

Coomalie Culture Centre – Batchelor NT
Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation – Beswick NT - new member AGM 2006
Dunnilli Arts – Darwin NT
Gapuwiyak Arts and Crafts – Gapuwiyak NT new member AGM 2006
Kulumindini Arts – Elliott NT - new member AGM 2006
Larrakia Nation – Darwin NT
Manyallaluk Art and Craft Centre – Manyallaluk NT
Merrepen Arts Aboriginal Corporation – Nauiyu, Daly River NT
Mimi Arts and Crafts – Katherine NT
Ngaliwurru-Wuli Association – Timber Creek NT
Ngukurr Arts – Ngukurr NT
Peppimenarti Durrimu – Peppimenarti NT
Waralungku Arts – Borroloola NT
Wudikapildiyerr Women's Centre – Wudikapildiyerr outstation NT - new member AGM 2006

Kimberley Region

Jirrawun Arts – Kununurra WA
Kalumburu Artists – Kalumburu WA - new member AGM 2006
Laari Gallery – Yiyili WA
Mangkaja Arts – Fitzroy Crossing WA
Mowanjum Artists Spirit of the Wandjina – Mowanjum WA
Waringarri Aboriginal Arts – Kununurra WA
Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation – Balgo WA
Warmun Art Centre – Turkey Creek WA
Yarliyil Art Centre – Halls Creek WA
Yaruman Arts and Culture – Ringer Soak WA
Yirrebii Arts and Craft – Glenn Hill WA
Yulparija Artists of Bidyadanga – Bidyadanga WA
Yuriny Aboriginal Culture Centre – Derby WA

Tiwi Islands Region

Jilamara Arts and Craft – Milikapiti Melville Island NT
Munupi Arts and Crafts – Pirlangimpi Melville Island NT
Tiwi Design – Nguiu Bathurst Island NT
Tiwi Art Network – Darwin NT

Key Recommendations

1. A national study is undertaken to research, collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data to assess the value (cultural, social and economic) of the Indigenous Visual Arts and Craft sector.
2. Commonwealth, State and Territory Government Funding Agreements include relative cultural, social and economic Performance Indicators (PI's) in relation to funding decisions.
3. Commonwealth, State and Territory Government release dedicated funding for capital and infrastructure development for Art Centres such as the Aboriginal Benefit Account funds.
4. Support an ongoing funding program for Art Centre capital and infrastructure work to assist with the development and growth of the sector at "grass root" levels such as staff housing, keeping places and culture centres.
5. Dedicated funds for continued employment of Indigenous Art Workers (including artists) in their Art Centres. This would be an ongoing alternative, sustainable funding programs other than the current the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) currently employing up to 95% of the Indigenous Artworkers.
6. Develop an adequate standardised wage levels for Art Centre workers including Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff at all levels which will ensure qualified staff retention.
7. Support the development of Art Centre specific practice through Information Technology (IT) such as ongoing development of archive and cataloguing system upgrades, e-commerce opportunities and IT training skills. This will ensure the ability to maintain standards of nationwide best practice.
8. Commonwealth, State and Territory Government adopt and support the Indigenous Art Commercial Code of Conduct (IACCC) being developed by NAVA to become a National standard for best practice conduct.
9. Commonwealth, State and Territory Government to support mechanisms to stop unscrupulous and unethical practice such as retaining a permit system on Aboriginal land, working with the ACCC and other agencies to enforce best practice dealings with Indigenous artists.
10. Financial support for Art Centres to become separately incorporated entities when appropriate through access to legal support, ongoing governance training through culturally appropriate trainers to build on knowledge and capacity.
11. The Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) adopt a transparent funding criteria and assessment based on realistic operating requirements for Art Centres including seed funding for emerging Art Centres, standardised funding for established Art Centres.

12. The Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) implement “Triennial” operational funding for established Art Centres and Key Organisations such as ANKAAA and Desart.
13. Commonwealth Government funding to the National Art and Craft Industry Support (NACIS program) be increased to \$10 million over the next three years.
14. The Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) revise the *“Indigenous Art Centre Strategy and Action Plan” (2003)* to reflect the changed position and key priorities to ensure the development of Art Centre best practice.
15. Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments adopt a “whole of government” approach to the sectors capacity and future through bi-lateral agreements developed to meet the needs and objectives of Indigenous Arts Centres.
16. The Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy (VACS) funding be continued and increased for the 2008 – 2010 triennium and the future.
17. That Export strategies and initiatives are further developed which include education initiatives for targeted international markets about Indigenous art and culture. Including support for the ongoing Austrade, NT Government (ANKAAA and Desart) inbound missions which are developing and fostering International markets for Art Centres.
18. Supporting opportunities to encourage Export opportunities for Indigenous Artists to the International market through targeted programs including cultural tourism.

Terms of reference

a) the current size and scale of Australia's Indigenous visual arts and craft sector;

The size and scale of the Indigenous Visual arts and crafts sector as a whole has been subject to much debate but is often estimated to be worth between \$200 – 500 million per annum.

For the purpose of this submission ANKAAA has undertaken a desktop review of 25 Art Centre members to obtain data pertaining to size and scale of the ANKAAA membership from the 2005-2006 financial year.

Art Centres operate at a variety of levels and of the 38 ANKAAA Art Centre members therefore 25 fully operational Art Centres from the four regions were included in the desk top review. The regional breakdown is as follows;

- 7 Arnhem Land Art Centres,
- 6 Darwin / Katherine Art Centres,
- 8 Kimberley Art Centres,
- 4 Tiwi Art Centres.

In the 2005-2006 Financial year the combined Art Centre total of sales generated income was \$11,977,868.

In the 2005-2006 financial year the combined DCITA – NACIS funding was \$1,668,831 (8 of the 25 Art Centres are not NACIS funded but are supported through other means. The other 17 Art Centres average \$85,000 of NACIS funding)

On average 60% is the return to artists per sale. Therefore \$7,186, 721 was returned to Indigenous artists in the 2005 -2006 financial year.

Art Centres on average retain a commission of 40% per sale (This commission covers expenses such as but not limited to freight, packing, materials, wages, operational expenses such as telephone / internet, insurance, vehicle, ongoing cultural activities and training). Therefore \$ 4,791,147 was re-invested to Art Centre operations in the 2005-2006 financial year.

This desktop review also revealed that there are over 2,000 artists who are members of Art Centres with over 1,000 artists actively undertaking art practice daily. ANKAAA estimates that there are 3,000 – 5,000 Indigenous artists represented within the region.

The 25 Art Centres support artists in 30 remote communities and regional towns. There are also artists from 165 outstations, homelands, and smaller communities being serviced directly and indirectly by these Art Centres with over 80 Indigenous language groups represented.

The average earning of Indigenous artists are very low and not always received as regular payments. On average it has been mooted that Indigenous artists receive less than \$2,000 per annum with higher earners being the exception. It also must be stated that income is often distributed across family networks with in communities.

Of the 25 Art Centres reviewed there were 35 non-Indigenous employees (26 positions funded by the NACIS program, 9 funded through the Art Centre commission from sales generated income) and 68 Indigenous employees (95% of which are employed on CDEP and top up wages generated by sales from the Art Centres) all of whom are engaged in the management, administration and daily operation of the Art Centres.

(b) the economic, social and cultural benefits of the sector;

“The Art Centre is good for people who never went to school and university – it’s easy for them to go to work and learn” Djambawa Marawili 2006.

The role of Art Centres incorporates the economic, social and cultural, all of which provide significant benefits to Indigenous artists and the community. For many artists the making of artwork represents their culture, connection to country and their identity.

Economic Benefits

As the figures indicate above, on average 60% of the retail price of artwork is returned to the artist through the Art Centre. This % has become widely accepted nationwide for Art Centres – there is exception for prints, carvings (which is approximately 50% due to the equipment involved) and weavings (which is approximately 70-80% due to the use of natural resources).

It is widely known that Art Centres generate one of the only forms of income from outside the community other than government subsidy.

Art Centres also provide employment for community members through two methods – wages from income generated through sales or CDEP wages with “top up” wages from the Art Centre. This employment is meaningful and ongoing with opportunities for professional skills development through training programs and opportunities. On average there are 4-5 Indigenous arts workers employed at each Art Centre across the Top End.

Art Centres also consign or purchase all works produced by the member artists, some of this work is not always marketable through commercial galleries and other avenues which focus on the “fine art” market. Therefore the operational funding that Art Centres receive enables these works, often craft and lower end of the art market artwork to be viably produced. Without this funding artists wouldn’t be remunerated for this work which would lead to the work not being produced. Through purchasing or consigning all work Art Centres are directly contributing to the economic benefits of all artists within the Art Centre in particular emerging and new artists.

Social Benefits

It is well recognised by the Art Centre sector that the role of Art Centres is far more than the buying and selling of artwork. They often provide many social benefits to the community such as access to Internet banking, assisting with understanding and completing forms, identifying and assisting with health issues such as eye testing, school programs, access to communication, transport, financial management assistance, youth programs, education, providing a safe and supportive environment for artists and their families. There are also a variety of community development programs that operate in the Art Centres that are directed at alcohol and substance abuse and feed out of access to other Government Department programs.

Art centres provide access to and support of art centre workers to participate in formal training programs in areas such as governance training, arts administration, computer, internet and database training, occupational health and safety, use and maintenance of tools such as chainsaws used in the production of carvings, professional fine arts practice in a range of

traditional and contemporary mediums, public speaking and presentations, tour guides, sales and promotion, curatorial skills and other identified areas.

Cultural Benefits

The cultural benefits are immeasurable in providing cultural activities, dialogue and maintenance within the community. Art Centres undertake a vital role in cataloguing and archiving artworks, collating artists CV's, culturally significant stories, documenting art techniques such as weaving and mixing ochre, promotion of culture through the sales of artwork.

A key issue of critical importance for Indigenous artists across the ANKAAA region is the reality that as older artists and community members pass away, culture is lost including stories of cultural significance, dance, language, events. Many artists have identified this concern through workshops undertaken by ANKAAA and through the strategic planning exercises undertaken by Art Centres. Art Centres provide avenues for young people including arts workers, artists and school children to become more involved in cultural activities through a variety of methods and records are archived and held safely at the Art Centres. Many Art Centres are currently undertaking plans or in phase 1 of developing Cultural Centres / Keeping Places or Knowledge (multi media) Centres specifically to display / house culturally significant collections of artworks, images or digital footage. Many Art Centres self fund the development and storage of archive collections. Cultural tourism is also being adopted as part of Art Centre activities such as rock art tours facilitated by Injalak Arts and Crafts at Gunbalanya. These tours are led by trained tour guides who work at the Art Centre as arts workers and artists.

There are a number of Art Centres who directly contribute to cultural activities within the community through supply of fabric and ochres, Funeral funds, Ceremonial Funds, Hardship / Sickness funds.

(c) the overall financial, cultural and artistic sustainability of the sector;

"Arts is not a joke – it is land, sea, waterhole, patterns and designs and are about land rights and native title" Djambawa Marawili 2006.

The strength of the Indigenous Visual Arts and Crafts sector has gathered considerable momentum over the past years. Art Centres within the ANKAAA region have grown in capacity as well as the number of emerging Art Centres within the region. In 2001 ANKAAA had 15 Art Centre members; in early 2006 ANKAAA had 38 with 5 new members accepted at the ANKAAA AGM totalling 43. Since 2001 there has been one increase to the DCITA NACIS funding program which occurred at the start of the 2006-2007 financial year of an additional \$1 million dollars.

The success and growth of community based Art Centres can be attributed to a variety of influences including good governance, empowerment and self determination through their Art Centres, promote professional arts practice, staffing levels, access to outside support (such as ANKAAA), increased return economic benefits to the community as a whole, ongoing development and implementation of best practice and systems, better understanding of artists rights to name a few. Art Centres have the capacity to promote and sell authentic artwork that has been produced within the community with all the financial returns going to the community and the members.

This is testimony to the sustainability of Art Centres within remote and regional communities of the Top End. The birth of Art Centres is continually occurring as communities appreciate the

social, cultural and economic opportunities that already exist within the community and are becoming formalised.

The majority of Art Centres in the ANKAAA region employ local staff within the Art Centres which has enabled many Art Centres to take on additional projects and increase in sales. Increased staffing levels are essential for the ongoing success of Art Centres including providing employment for local community members. Many of these positions within the Art Centres are supported through the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) which has recently undergone reform which will have adverse affects on many Art Centres in regional communities.

Over the past three years ANKAAA has worked closely with the Arts Law Centre for Australia in developing and delivering culturally appropriate workshops addressing Indigenous Intellectual Property issues such as copyright, moral rights, licensing, contracts, protocols, artists' rights, legal assistance, referral to other support agencies, and information pertaining to artists wills. Through the training undertaken by artists and Art Centres there is a much better knowledge of artists rights, best practice which is disseminated throughout the communities by the arts workers and artists.

(d) the current and likely future priority infrastructure needs of the sector;

In 2005 ANKAAA undertook a desktop review regarding the infrastructure needs of ANKAAA Art Centres. In many cases those infrastructure requirements are still essential for those Art Centres. *(Please see attachment A)* This report was produced on request by the NT Government in relation to the possibility of accessing the Aboriginal Benefit Account funds as part of the Commonwealth and NT Government Bilateral agreement.

The majority of the identified needs related to Art Centre buildings and facilities such as roofing, storage, housing for staff, toilet facilities, workspaces – all of which impact on the future growth of the Art Centres.

In 2004, ANKAAA, Desart and Ku Arts produced the *“Reinvigorating the Aboriginal Visual Art Industry – Industry Issue Analysis and Recommendations on future support for Aboriginal Art centres” (15th December 2004)*. This highlighted many crucial industry issues but in particular the physical infrastructure needs of Art Centre buildings and the priority for staff housing in order to attract and retain highly qualified and motivated staff in remote communities where Art Centres are based.

In some communities there is no housing allocated for Art Staff Managers which limits opportunities to employee and / or retain suitable staff.

Many Art Centres are housed within buildings that were designed and built for purposes other than an Art Centre. Many of the older buildings which currently house Art Centres pose work place safety issues for staff, artists and visitors. As a result many are in need of repair and constant maintenance. Several Art Centres have contributed to the building of new facilities such as carving sheds, printing rooms and multi media centres. In some instances brand new facilities have been built to house the Art Centre which in a few cases have incorporated culture centres.

Infrastructure also desperately needed within remote communities is transport i.e. troop carrier vehicles. Throughout the Top End many artists paint on bark, paint with ochres, collect shells and seeds, all necessary materials for the production of artwork. In many cases vast distances need to be travelled and there are particular instances where communities are isolated on

islands it involves travel by boat. In several communities there is no scheduled Regular Passenger Transport (RPT) and the only access is via charter flights which increases the remoteness for communities to essential services such as mail. Vehicles are also essential for getting sold artwork to airports and barges to ship interstate and internationally.

Other factors contributing to high costs in building new Art Centre facilities (including housing) is access to qualified builders, materials and skilled tradesmen. The cost to freight materials to remote communities can be exorbitant. Often construction, repairs and maintenance can only be undertaken in the dry season due to condition of unsealed roads.

ANKAAA also considers employees at Art Centres as vital infrastructure necessary for Art Centre operations. Currently the NACIS funding through DCITA funds one wage for an Art Centre Manager / Co-ordinator. But as previously outlined Art Centres have more than one employee. This includes Indigenous arts workers of whom the majority are employed on CDEP and “top up” from the Art Centres. With the current reforms being rolled out across communities there are considerable concerns about the future capacity to continue the employment and training for people within their Art Centres and alternatives are actively being investigated.

The ANKAAA membership was recently advised that CDEP was a “welfare benefit” however to the arts workers employed on CDEP it is part of the wage for the job they are employed to do. Considerable resources have been utilised to support, train and engage Indigenous arts workers within the community based Art Centres and have had considerable impact on the skills and professional development of individuals within the jobs they are employed to undertake. There is major support for job security for Art Centre staff in particular the ongoing employment and resourcing of arts workers to continue their specialised practice.

Art Centre employees are remunerated at varying levels, in most cases based on the funding allocated to the position. For several years there has been lobbying for a standard wage scale for Art Centre staff (at all levels) which will assist in funding decisions, ensure staff are retained (not over worked and under paid), opportunities for CPI wage increases and increased access pertaining to Industrial relation issues..

(e) opportunities for strategies and mechanisms that the sector could adopt to improve its practices, capacity and sustainability, including to deal with unscrupulous or unethical conduct;

Through ongoing consultation with the ANKAAA membership and identified within the ANKAAA Business and Strategic plan 2004-2007, several projects have been developed and implemented to ensure that current practice builds on capacity and sustainability within the sector are as follows:

- Direct involvement on the reference group for the NAVA Indigenous Art Commercial Code of Conduct to be completed early 2007
- The joint initiative between ANKAAA and Desart of the Art Centre Operations Manual (pending funding)
- The development of a cataloguing database system for Art Centres (ARTSIS) which needs further development.
- The Business Development Project for two years through the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) which already has provided business and strategic plans for Art centres and will continue to do so until 2008

- The development of the *“Purchasing Australian Aboriginal Art – A Consumer Guide”* brochure now translated into 4 languages to enable purchasers of Indigenous art to make informed choices.
- Working with government in the development of strategic policy for the future of the sector.
- A “Memorandum of Understanding” between ANKAAA and Desert Executive Committees to work together on issues affecting the sector as a whole.

All the above projects have distinct outcomes and benefits to Art Centres and other stakeholders within the sector.

In dealing with unscrupulous and unethical practice within the sector ANKAAA has been actively following the discussion within the media in particular to the issues raised in the central desert region. The Top End also has unethical dealings occurring within the region but in different ways. Many artists choose to stay within their communities however there are individuals who work or have previous relations to people within communities that sometimes use their positions to exploit artists.

Through the NT Aboriginal Land Right Act and the need for the permits can to an extent inhibit access onto Aboriginal Land to undertake such dealings. At the recent ANKAAA regional meetings there was much discussion about the *“Access to Aboriginal Land under the Northern Territory Aboriginal Land Right Act –Time for Change?”* Discussion Paper October 2006 developed by the Department of Families, Community services and Indigenous Affairs (FACSlA). All regions within ANKAAA feel that permits are required to protect access to places of significance, access to artists within their communities and community specific social issues. It is commonly felt that if people are visiting communities for the right reasons then they will be granted access through the permit system. Art Centres currently arrange permits for visitors who wish to visit the community and purchase artworks through the Art Centres.

Not all Art Centres are located in permit required areas and therefore need other support mechanisms and legislation that can be called on to stop unethical practice in cases of unconscionable conduct, misappropriation of artwork and artists, artists being exploited and not being paid correct remuneration for their work. This could include strategies to be developed in collaboration with appropriate agencies such as the ACCC to enable enforcement of such practices.

Mangkaja Arts has provided permission for this extract to ANKAAA to be included in this submission:

“The art market would still obtain its supply of Aboriginal art work without art centres. There are many commercial galleries that already source their stock directly from artists. They may or may not be scrupulous in their dealings with individual artists and this is a real concern here in the Fitzroy Valley.

The Fitzroy Valley is a huge area and includes at least 34 communities. Only the communities close to town are able to access the centre. The remainder relies on Mangkaja being able to visit them. This is clearly difficult to do with a small staff and limited operational funding.

At the community of Wangkatjuntka (also known as Christmas Creek) there are some wonderful elderly women who produce outstanding works of art. The women are strong in cultural knowledge and still remember their country. They know how to survive in the desert and are wise in traditional knowledge. But they are naïve in the ways of Kariya (non-aboriginal) business. Mangkaja Arts provides support to the artists at Wangkatjuntka when we are able. But the community is about 100 kms from town and this is difficult when funding

is tight and sales are slow. In the mean time there is a dealer from Fremantle who goes directly to the community to source stock. He stays for two weeks, providing artists with canvas and paint and encourages artists to work quickly. Artists are paid cash on completion of works and the dealer returns to Fremantle and sells the paintings for an unknown profit. Sometimes artists phone from Mangkaja to talk to him to ask about money. When asked, the artists didn't know how many works he had taken or how much they received for each work. There is no paper work available to the artists documenting sales. There is no way for them to check on how much their painting sold for and who bought it. Their children and grandchildren have spoken about their concerns in meetings at Mangkaja and it is documented in our minutes".

(f) opportunities for existing government support programs for Indigenous visual arts and crafts to be more effectively targeted to improve the sector's capacity and future sustainability; and

ANKAAA has been funded through the Commonwealth and NT Government's Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy (VACS) funding tripartite agreement since 2004. The VACS funding has been instrumental in the increase in service delivery to Art Centres and artists. In the 2005-2006 financial year VACS funding supported 38 Art Centre specific activities including art practice training, administration training and professional development. It also funded IT support, promotional material, representation at National conferences and festivals, the 4 ANKAAA regional meetings and the AGM. ANKAAA and the membership support the ongoing support of VACS funding after the initial triennium (2004-2007) is complete.

The financial support from Commonwealth, State and Territory Government agencies specifically designated for Art Centres should be commended and duly recognised as contributing to the growth and development of Art Centres and peak bodies such as ANKAAA. However as previously discussed the number of organisations has grown rapidly and the grants are far more competitive as the funds have not grown inline with the industry.

Many Art Centres have a proven history of appropriate management of funds therefore to support the future of the Art Centres it would ease the workload for some Art Centres to be considered for triennial funding. This is also relevant to peak bodies such as ANKAAA. The NACIS funding from DCITA is currently annual funding available through a grant process. This funding supports wages and operational expenses which are supplemented by the commission retained by Art Centres from sales. These combined are fundamental to the Art Centres daily operations. Art Centres are required to provide 3 year business and strategic plans to support most government funding applications. The future of Art Centres activities are outlined in the strategic plans which also allows the executive Committees to plan for the future.

A whole of government (Commonwealth, State and Territory) approach is requirement to address policy direction, capacity building and future sustainability. In 2003 with the development of the Australian Government's "*Indigenous Art Centres Strategy and Action Plan*" there was a whole of government approach in the development of this document and it is recommended that a similar approach be taken for all future policy development and implementation

There is widespread support for cross border initiatives across the ANKAAA membership and with the pending signing of the "MOU" between ANKAAA and Desart, a genuine commitment exists between the two organisations to develop future opportunities. This includes WA, NT, and

South Australia (SA) with interest generating also from Queensland (QLD). Such initiatives need the support of State and Territory Governments.

A whole of government approach would assist in the identification of additional and ongoing alternatives for Art Centres to access in particular for capital / infrastructure and additional wages for Indigenous Arts Workers,

(g) future opportunities for further growth of Australia's Indigenous visual arts and craft sector, including through further developing international markets.

The ongoing support through government funding programs and strategic policy development to build further capacity for Art Centres as outlined above will be of benefit to the future opportunities and in particular growth of Art Centres and their role within the sector.

Other opportunities include the ongoing development of international markets through export initiatives and strategies already underway. This includes the NT Government and Austrade inbound missions in collaboration with ANKAAA and Desart which commenced in 2005 and have included three visits with 2 scheduled for 2007. These missions have enhanced international networks by providing Art Centres with the opportunity to broker face-to-face commercial relationships and international buyers gaining first hand knowledge and experiences of Art Centre operations within the communities. During the three missions there were 20 Art Centres in the ANKAAA region visited, with immediate sales and ongoing exhibition schedules developed throughout Europe.

Together ANKAAA and Desart conducted research for Austrade in identifying export models for Indigenous Art. This includes identifying new export opportunities for other art forms not just "fine art" and investigates other market areas such as interior design.

There is great interest in Australian Indigenous Art with "hits" on the www.aboriginalart.org web portal indicating more international visits than national to the website. Therefore resources for upgrading websites, monitoring traffic and attracting clients via the internet are a priority for export market development.

In the newly burgeoning international market there needs to be a focussed education campaign to compliment export opportunities in regards to the cultural significance of the works but also the diversity of culture, country and art forms across Australia. There also needs to be an educational push for the sector regarding the different market focuses of identified International opportunities. Cultural tourism within specific Art Centres is providing a unique experience for international visitors and providing interaction with a variety of community members.

In summary, future opportunities for the further growth of Australia's Indigenous Visual Arts and Crafts will need continued support across the sector with current issues as outlined above being addressed. With new issues raised and dealt with as not to impact significantly on the capacity and sustainability of community based Art Centres and artists. Most importantly the artists, their culture and their Art Centres need to be supported to ensure the continued production of high quality, authentic visual arts and craft to sustain the important role Indigenous art has in cultural education with Australian and International markets