Report on Government Arts Support Bodies as Organisations associated with Event records within AusStage: Grant Bodies.

Since the Federation of the former Australian colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, the Commonwealth Government and the six state governments have all provided support for the arts in various ways, the two territories also joining in once they achieved self-government in the late 1980s. This occurred, initially, largely on a sporadic, ad hoc basis, but after about 1968, the Commonwealth government and the state governments all instituted formal arrangements for the funding of the arts by establishing departments and/or ministries for the arts – usually as a relatively minor section within wider portfolios but sometimes in stand-alone ministries or departments and sometimes also as a Division or an Office within a major ministry.

In nearly all cases, the body charged with delivering arts advice to governments in Australia, and funding to arts organisations, has done so via mechanisms ensuring more-or-less stringent degrees of independence from Government itself (the so-called 'arm's length' principle) and, at the same time, ensuring at least reasonable degrees of independence from the government bureaucracy as well (the so-called 'peer-review' process, whereby committees or boards or consultative councils of artists and persons involved with the arts, plus other members of the wider community, make the actual recommendations on funding – having reviewed the competitive grant applications). Almost invariably, the responsible minister then signs off on the recommended grants and the bureaucrats administer them in partnership with the grantee organisations. In an obvious sense, the money itself is actually provided by government, via the administering department's annual budget, and thence to the funding body itself for distribution according to the prevailing policy priorities of the day. However, AusStage has preferred – where possible – to identify the Grant Body Organisation itself as the arts funding body. This has eliminated a lot of unnecessary duplication and confusion in its records; there is already enough duplication and confusion anyway, owing to the many name-changes among funding bodies over the years since 1968, as detailed below!

AusStage thus now has a reasonably comprehensive listing of arts funding bodies within its Organisations database, together with generally reliable associations between them and the Event records linked to them.

However, for several reasons, AusStage also continues to identify state and territory governments themselves as grant body organisations in a number of Event entries. In some cases, those governments directly or indirectly supported Events that occurred prior to the establishment of their arts ministries etc; in some other cases, it was not clear at the point of data entry which specific grant body had actually made the grants under which particular name, but it is nonetheless important to document the government's support; and in some further cases, government money has supported arts events above and beyond the processes of the standard grant bodies. Examples of these exceptions (about six of them) are noted below.

* * *
This Report is intended to assist Data Entry staff – as the most accurate possible guide to entering data on Events with which such bodies are associated as Grant Body Organisations – as well as researchers wishing to access information on them. In the great majority of cases, Data Enterers and Researchers alike should search, in the first instance, via:

**Government** within the **Organisations** table

and then choose from what, at the time of writing (4 November, 2010), are some 13 Australian options and then examine the **Other Names** and **Notes** fields in their respective entries before entering new data or deciding whether or not any particular entry is the correct one for their particular search ... OR via:

**Arts State name** [usually acronym; e.g., Arts WA] within the **Organisations** table.

Between these two broad search options, virtually all of the state and territory arts funding organisations will be found, identifying them by most of their many names.

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**The Commonwealth Government's National Bodies**

The **Australian Council for the Arts** (AusStage Organisation ID 4059) began its comprehensive funding program in 1969 as the Commonwealth Government's first attempt at an all-arts model for an arts advisory/funding body for the arts in Australia.

This was overhauled and re-named after July 1973 as **The Australia Council for the Arts** (Org ID 555), more familiarly known as the Australia Council.iii **NOTE:** neither of these organisations will show up via a 'Government' or an 'Arts xx' search; they must be found via their exact names (or Organisation ID numbers).

Where known at the point of data entry, the various Boards and/or Funds of the Australia Council are identified as Grant Body Organisation – such as the **Community Arts Board** (Org ID 4221); the **Literature Board** (Org 30071); the **Music Board** (Org 11150); the **Performing Arts Board** (Org 30106); the **Special Projects Fund** (Org 10312); the **Theatre Board** (Org 4086); the **Visual Arts Board** (Org 32964).

**Other Commonwealth Government departments; and other bodies**

AusStage also holds a number of event records associated with the **Commonwealth Government Tertiary Education Commission** (Org 10750); the **Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts** (Org 11455); **Playing Australia** (Org 579) and **Festivals Australia** (Org 30680). These bodies have made grants outside and beyond the standard programs of the Australia Council.
State and Territory Arts Ministries/Departments

ACT

The only entity for the ACT that AusStage currently shows (as at November 2010) is the ACT Cultural Council (Org 776), with event records ranging from 1995 to 2002. However, the present name (since the mid-1990s) for the ACT’s arts funding body is Arts ACT. The Cultural Council is actually ‘the ACT Government’s principal advisory body on the arts. The Council provides advice in relation to the Government’s identified key priorities for the arts including recommendations for funding through the ACT Arts Fund’iv (in 2010, devolved to Arts ACT through the Chief Minister’s Department, and earlier through various other departments).

NSW

New South Wales is rather complicated. As seen below, the NSW government's arts agency has changed its name and structure several times since it began in 1971.

CHRONOLOGY:

Prior to 1971: New South Wales Cultural Grants Advisory Council (An advisory body which assessed applications and made recommendations to the Government on arts and cultural grants. It preceded the establishment of the NSW Cultural/Arts Ministries but was maintained throughout the latter's various lifespans. Renamed Arts Advisory Council, with similar functions, in 1988.’ A similar peer-review body exists to the present day.)

1971: Establishment of the New South Wales Ministry of Cultural Activities. (The government arts advisory/funding body in NSW for at least a decade.)

c 1984 Ministry housed within the Premier's department, as Division of Cultural Affairs.vi (NSW Premier, Neville Wran, was arts minister 1984–1986.)

August 1986: renamed and restructured as Office of the Minister for the Arts.vii (A very brief life-span surrounding a change of government.)

June 1988: renamed and restructured as fully autonomous Ministry for the Arts.viii (The principal arts advisory and funding body in NSW 1988–c2000.)

c 2000: renamed and restructured as Arts NSW (The current name at the time of writing (Nov 2010)

* The five Grant Body Organisations used in AusStage for NSW begin with New South Wales Government (Org ID 8150) as the global or generic body; it is associated with a vast number of continuous event records from 1963 to about 1988, plus three from 1999 to 2003. Then there is the New South Wales Ministry of Cultural Activities (Org 4117), with numerous Events ranging fairly continuously from 1972 to 1984,
followed by the **NSW Ministry for the Arts** (Org 8333), with a huge and continuous number of Events covering 1988 to 2000. In between those last-mentioned two entities is a gap of about three years, which would be covered by **Division of Cultural Affairs, NSW Government** (Org 32996), but which is presently empty; Events occurring in those years which are discovered in future should be associated with that entity as grant body. Finally, there is **Arts NSW** (Org 31535) with many Events from 2001 to the present.

**The Northern Territory**

AusStage shows only two entities for government arts funding in the Territory at the time of writing (Nov 2010), although a formal funding body there has had several names since 1989.

**CHRONOLOGY:** Office of the Arts and Cultural Affairs (from self-government in 1989); Department of Arts and Museums (briefly mid-to-late 1990s); Arts NT (from late 1990s).

The vast bulk of AusStage's event records are associated with **Northern Territory Government** (Org ID 10155) as the generic body, with a fair number of events from only 2002. There are also some recent events associated with **Arts NT** (Org 22911). Events occurring in periods not yet covered in AusStage which are discovered in future should be associated with the appropriate entity as funding body – newly created as need be – as seen in the Chronology above.

**Queensland**

The Queensland Government was allegedly the first of the States to establish a formal arts-funding body (in 1968), but AusStage's event records to date (Nov 2010) show only the generic **Queensland Government** (Org 5028) as Grant Body in that state, with a substantial listing since 1969.


Events occurring in periods not yet covered in AusStage which are discovered in future should be associated with the appropriate entity as funding body – newly created as need be – as seen in the Chronology above.

**South Australia**

This is another complicated state which has changed the name of its arts-funding body numerous times since its initial entity, the Arts Development Division of the Premier's Department, was begun in 1970. AusStage uses **The Government of South Australia** (Org 10533) as the generic body, with many events associated with it as
Grant Body since 1963. The earliest actual funding body recorded in AusStage is the South Australian Department for the Arts and Cultural Heritage (Org 9486), whose numerous associated event records run from 1980 to 2003 (although the body changed names several times during that period – including a longish period when the organisation was known simply as the Department for the Arts; it was only really Arts and Cultural Heritage from 1990 to 1993). Arts SA (Org 9990) is the most recent body, and AusStage lists many events associated with it since 1993.

Tasmania

AusStage shows three entities, fairly accurately reflecting some name-changes over the years: The Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board, established 1975 (Org ID 8443), Tasmanian Ministry for the Arts (Org 11075) and the present Arts Tasmania, dating from the late 1990s (Org 554). There is also the earlier National Theatre and Fine Arts Society of Tasmania (Org ID 10464), set up in the early 1950s to support arts activity in Tasmania, including managing the Theatre Royal and touring productions from the mainland as a presenting organisation. It ceased operations c 1974.

Victoria

Victoria's story is much simpler; it established its funding body The Victorian Ministry for the Arts (Org 4182) in 1972 and its successor Arts Victoria (Org 5108) took over in 1993. AusStage also shows the generic Victorian State Government (Org 8287) and, finally, a smaller listing of Events associated with the Victorian Government Community Support Fund (Org 10057) as a Grant Body; the money comes from gaming revenue.

Western Australia

WA's story is a little more complicated.

CHRONOLOGY

The Western Australian Arts Council: 1973–c 1983 (Grant Body and also Touring Organisation, like the other Arts Councils)

The Western Australian Department for the Arts: c 1983–c 1996

(Ministry of Culture and the Arts: briefly 1987 and Department of Culture and the Arts: briefly 2001)\

Arts WA: since 1996

* AusStage has The Western Australian Arts Council (Org 9684) with many associated Event records from 1975–83; The Western Australian Department for
the Arts (Org 33980) with Event records from 1983 to 1996; and the current Arts WA (Org 10162). There is also the generic State Government of Western Australia (Org 9651) with a number of Event records pre-dating the establishment of the Western Australian Arts Council in 1973.

Geoffrey Milne
8 November 2010

NOTES

1 This is particularly the case with most Queensland records.

ii AusStage also holds records associated with at least nine foreign governments and/or government agencies.

iii Strictly speaking, the first round of funding that came from the 'new' Australia Council was the financial year 1973/74 – presumably from July 1973. However, it is, practically speaking, too difficult to stick to this as a large number of AusStage's 1973 events are not sufficiently clearly dated. So, we stay with 1974 as the 'starting year' for the Australia Council in AusStage records.


vii Ibid.


x Ibid.

xi Reference is sometimes made to the State Government of South Australia, but all of the annual reports in my possession of the state's funding bodies refer to it as The Government of South Australia.

xii Various documents note these name-changes – usually a result of changes of government – but ALL of the Annual Reports in my possession over that period show either Department for the Arts or Arts WA.