Report on Organisations within AusStage containing the words 'Arts' and 'Council'.

There have been a number of arts-support organisations in Australia – some still in existence – with the words 'Arts' and/or 'Council' in their titles. Most of these are Australian-based organisations; others are the 'Arts Councils' of various other countries whose support has been applied to companies and artists visiting and touring Australia. AusStage houses a wide number of records in which will be found 'arts councils' (of various kinds, and from several different countries) – usually as 'Grant Bodies' and/or 'Touring Bodies' – listed among Associated Organisations.

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

**Arts Council** within the **Organisations** table

and then choose from what, at the time of writing (2 November, 2010), are some 34 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. (A small range of other options for 'Councils' which have supported performing arts practice in Australia is commented upon below.)

---------------------

**Overseas 'Arts Council' entities**

**England/Great Britain**

**The Arts Council of Great Britain** (Organisation Number 8896) was the principal arts advisory and funding body in the UK for many decades until 1994. Like the Canada Council and the Australia Council, its chief function was the development, promotion and support of the arts within the UK. However, it also supported a large number of tours of British companies and artists overseas, including throughout Australia, from at least 1947 until 1994 – as well as (of course) a vast number of events within Great Britain itself. AusStage holds a large number of Event records in which The Arts Council of Great Britain was a grant body for Australian tours of British work or of British tours or productions of Australian work.

In 1994, following the so-called Devolution of British internal governments to the constituent members of the United Kingdom, the former Arts Council of Great Britain was divided into separate bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and (I guess) Northern Ireland. AusStage holds a small number of records for the devolved **Arts Council**
**England** (Org Number 11656); a mixture of English work toured to Australia and Australian work performed in England. AusStage presently has nothing on Arts Council Scotland, Arts Council Wales etc; if new events are found relating specifically to these post-1994 entities, they can be added.

These are distinct from yet another, separate entity, **The British Council** (Org 891). This organisation's prime function is/was to promote British culture abroad – in all of its diverse meanings; one of its leading activities for many years, for example, was the promotion of – and programs for the teaching of – the English language in foreign countries. It also promoted a number of overseas tours of British theatre productions, including many to Australia. AusStage holds a number of Event Records with The British Council as Grant Body, Sponsor etc. **NOTE**: The British Council will NOT show up via a search for Arts Councils; it can be found by searching directly by The British Council via Organisations.

**Other countries**

There is an organisation listed in AusStage called simply **National Arts Council** (Org 576). This is NOT the national Australian Arts Council body discussed below. It is probably a funding body in an Asian or South-East Asian country which supported a tour of its own nationals to Tasmania in 2001.

---------------------

**The Australian Arts Councils and their divisions/branches.**

**The National body**

The organisation known as **The Arts Council of Australia** was founded in New South Wales in 1947 with the aim of bringing the arts – especially the Performing Arts – to regional Australia, particularly via the means of touring performances from the capital cities. The idea proved to be infectious and within a very short time, the Arts Council 'movement' spread to other states and – eventually – to the two territories. However, not all the states established their own Arts Councils in the first flush of enthusiasm for regional arts touring, which meant that the national body – sometimes in partnership with the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust – continued its role as a national body. AusStage currently (as at November 2010) holds a modest collection of Event records from 1950 to 1979 with **The Arts Council of Australia** (Organisation Number 4079) as an associated organisation: sometimes as a Grant Body and sometimes as a Touring Body. **NOTE**: The Arts Council is NOT in any way to be confused with the Australia Council, which is discussed in a separate report under Government Arts Support Bodies.
During the 1990s, various other national and state-and-territory mechanisms for touring the arts throughout regional and rural Australia had come into being (such as Playing Australia) and the Arts Council movement as such waned, to be replaced by a new notion: Regional Arts or Country Arts. After 1998, the national Arts Council of Australia gave way to the newer 'umbrella' entity, Regional Arts Australia, much more clearly known via its state and territory arms, such as Regional Arts Victoria etc (as shown below).

**The States and Territories**

Most of the state and territory arts councils began life under the name of The Arts Council of Australia (xxx Division); the myriad local arts councils originally went by the name of The Arts Council of Australia (xxx Branch). A number of state divisions and local branches later changed their names to the simpler xxx Arts Council. From about the late 1990s, the names mostly officially changed over to Regional Arts, Country Arts and the like.

**The ACT**

AusStage has a small holding of Events supported by The Arts Council of Australia (ACT Division) (Org 33723).

**NSW**

AusStage has events from 1950 onwards listed under The Arts Council of Australia (New South Wales Division) (Org ID 4018). Its successor, Arts on Tour New South Wales (Org ID 10832) is also represented by a number of events.

**The Northern Territory**

This territory did not follow the same pattern, the name of the entity here being the Northern Territory Arts Council (Org ID 9233) from its inception. AusStage has only a thin listing of events supported by it. Its successor is Artback NT (Org 33616) and AusStage has a modest list of events since 2007.

**Queensland**

The Arts Council of Australia (Queensland Division) (Org 11077) began in 1961 but soon changed its name (probably early in the 1970s) to Queensland Arts Council (Org 3155). According to Arthur Frame, CEO of QAC, the latter name has been the correct one for well over 35 years and it still goes by the same name (as at November 2010). A good number of event records will be found associated with both entities in AusStage.
South Australia

Formed in the late 1940s was The Arts Council of Australia (South Australian Division) (Org 8695). It was replaced briefly in about 1988/89 by a Regional Cultural Council (Org 30692) and then in 1992 by the South Australian Country Arts Trust (Org 10306), later trading more simply as Country Arts South Australia (or CASA) (Org ID 7054).

Tasmania

AusStage does not appear to have a Tasmanian Arts Council (by any name) in its records. However, it does have two other organisations – Tasmanian Regional Arts (Org ID 588) and Tasmania Performs (Org 32821). Tasmanian Regional Arts is, in fact, the successor to the old Arts Council of Australia (Tasmanian Division) while Tasmania Performs is a new initiative supporting locally made work only.

Victoria

In this state, the arts council entity was the Victorian Arts Council (Org 283), established only in 1970; its local branches were also simply called, for example, Nunawading Arts Council. Its successor after 1999 is Regional Arts Victoria (Org 11443).

Western Australia

The situation in WA is more complicated, in that the entity known as The Western Australian Arts Council (Org ID 9684), which began life in 1973, served to some extent as a state-wide touring organisation like its Arts Council counterparts elsewhere, but it was also that state's government arts advisory and funding body for a number of years. AusStage holds only a few event records reflecting its touring function. The newer entity is Country Arts WA (or CAWA) (Org ID 7060); this took over some of the functions of the Western Australian Arts Council after 1986. After c 1998, it became the WA division of Regional Arts Australia.

--------------------------

Miscellaneous

Most of the capital cities' municipal councils – and many regional, suburban and town councils – also support the performing arts and AusStage holds a number of event records associated with them. **Note, however, that these will not show up via an 'Arts Council' search. It is probably best to search via the name of the City, Town, Suburb or Region and Organisations.**

Capital City Councils

AusStage certainly has records associated with the City of Melbourne (Org 30898) and the Melbourne City Council (Org 4072), both of which names have been used,
Adelaide City Council (Org 10780), Hobart City Council (Org 565), Brisbane City Council (Org 3043) and Darwin City Council (Org 30496). We have nothing for Perth. Sydney might be tricky: we have Sydney City Council (Org 4118) plus some events under something called City of Sydney Cultural Council (Org 30309); the latter could well be a body within the former.

Suburban Councils

Examples include the City of South Sydney (Org 10350); the City of Port Phillip (Org 8136); Bankstown Municipal Council (Org 8361); Glenorchy City Council (Org 10894) and the City of Port Adelaide (Org 9118), among others.

Regional Town & City Councils

Examples include Townsville City Council (Org 3019); Mackay City Council (Org 3055), the City of Bunbury (Org 11633), Mildura Rural City Council (Org 30828), the City of Wollongong (Org 32057) and the hugely prolific Newcastle City Council (Org 8227), among others.

Other regional and rural 'Arts Councils'

There are still further arts-support entities, with both 'arts' and 'council' in their titles, which are not associated with the old Arts Council of Australia movement and do not serve its functions. Examples include: the Kimberley Performing Arts Council (Org 11469); the Mildura Arts Centre Advisory Council (Org 10928) and the Southern Highlands Youth Arts Council (Org 2061). These will, of course, show up via an 'Arts Council' search.

Other

Finally, there are a number of other councils of various kinds associated with event records in AusStage. Among these are the AIDS Council of SA (Org 32526), the Australian National Council on AIDS (Org 1045), the Children’s Book Council (Org 10634) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (Org 8647; empty as at November 2010). The various Ethnic Communities Councils and the Good Neighbour Council of SA can also be found.

---------------------------------------------------------------------

Geoffrey Milne

October 2010

------------------------------

1 Telephone conversation 10 September 2010.