



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

NATIONAL
FILM
& SOUND
ARCHIVE

A U S T R A L I A

AUSTRALIA'S LIVING ARCHIVE

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1. OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) *Collection Development Strategy* (CDS) reflects the principles identified in the *NFSA Collection Policy – Acquisitions Policy*.

The CDS articulates the strategies and priorities in place to build and shape the national audiovisual collection in the absence of a legal deposit scheme that extends to audiovisual works.

It provides insight into the nature and scope of the national audiovisual collection; the approach to analysis and assessment of acquisitions and the curatorially driven preservation activities needed to ensure long term accessibility to the collection.

1.2 Building the National Audiovisual Collection

The NFSA is entrusted with the care of Australia's national audiovisual, documentation and artefact collection. It is a historically significant, culturally rich, highly diverse and complex collection of approximately 1.6 million items captured in over 50 format families and stored across a number of sites.

The NFSA mission is:

To excite people's curiosity and inspire their creativity through development, preservation and an informed understanding of Australian film, sound and emerging new media heritage, its cultural diversity and significance.

The CDS ensures that activities relating to the development of the collection are in line with the *NFSA Collection Policy – Acquisition Policy* and serve the aspirations of the NFSA's mission statement.

Like other cultural collecting organisations, the development of the collection is one of the core business activities at the NFSA. *Collection Development* is a term reflecting the process of planning and building a useful and balanced collection that serves study, research, teaching, production and entertainment needs.

The national audiovisual collection is a historic and contemporary record of cultural significance. As such, NFSA aims to acquire material that represents the diversity of audiovisual creativity and technical achievement. Curatorial staff aim to acquire works, in their complete form, in their original master format. Whilst this approach is the preferred practice, it is acknowledged that original masters are often unavailable for acquisition for a variety of reasons, namely: loss, commercial value or complexity of ownership and copyright.

Accordingly, and in the absence of a legal deposit system that extends to audiovisual works, the NFSA has strategically developed agreements with government funding agencies and production companies which guarantee copies of contemporary works are placed in the national audiovisual collection. Whilst the NFSA seeks to build the collection through donation or individual deposit arrangements, it also purchases material in some cases.

The NFSA acknowledges that the quantities of audiovisual and supporting materials that are potentially on offer and within the scope of the *NFSA Collection Policy – Acquisition Policy* greatly exceed resources. As such, effective collection development requires curatorial judgment and experience to balance competing priorities, opportunities, needs and demands.

Curatorial staff have a responsibility to prioritise acquisition activity to ensure continuity in key collecting areas, and which best support the NFSA's mandate to develop a comprehensive and representative audiovisual collection of enduring cultural significance.

1.3 Legislative and Related Documents

Key contemporary resources that inform the CDS:

- National Film and Sound Act 2008
- Copyright Act 1968
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- NFSA Collection Policy 2011
- NFSA Preservation Strategy 2010-2012
- NFSA Cultural Diversity Strategy 2009

- NFSA Indigenous Collections Management Protocols and Guidelines 2009
- NFSA Principles and Protocols to Guide Research into Indigenous Cultural Materials held in the NFSA Indigenous Collections 2009
- NFSA Step By Step Guide to Accessing Materials in the NFSA Indigenous Collections 2009

1.4 Review Schedule

This strategy is current from the time of its endorsement by the NFSA Board and will be reviewed on a triennial basis, in alignment with the *NFSA Corporate Plan*, and undertaken by the General Manager, Collection Development and Outreach.

UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE



2.1 The National Audiovisual Collection: A Brief History

The origin of the collection dates back to 1935 in the *National Historical Film and Speaking Record Library* and reflects an instinctive awareness of the growing importance of moving image and recorded sound works. It was not until the 1970s that the film and sound archive sections of the National Library of Australia emerged with an active mission to collect. At that time, the concept of selection was constrained by the need to find out what had been produced, had survived, and could be acquired, as well as what was currently being produced and could be negotiated into the collection.

The 1980s saw the emergence of the need to manage substantially unsorted or largely manually controlled collections of film and records. In 1984, the NFSA was established and the manner in which the collection was managed changed significantly. Early collection management systems such as FLICS and AUREC (later known as SONICS) signalled the beginning of the use of technology to support audiovisual archiving and its processes. Disparate systems were merged to form the Archive Information Management System (AIMS).

In 1991, the purpose built, Merged Audio Visual Information System (MAVIS) was introduced and served the NFSA for the next 20 years. International archives also adopted MAVIS and continue to use it today. In 2011 the NFSA will implement a new collection management system, Mediaflex, which will ensure audiovisual archiving needs in the digital environment are fully served.

Throughout the 1990s, selection was guided by the *NFSA Policy Documents 1993* which have since been progressively reviewed and extended to inform the activities undertaken by the current curatorial teams.

In 2008, the NFSA became an independent statutory authority and the *National Film and Sound Archive Act 2008* (NFSA Act) provides a clear statement of the NFSA's primary functions towards the national audiovisual collection and the Australian public. Accordingly, the CDS serves to fulfil these responsibilities to the highest curatorial standards.

2.2 The Creative Audiovisual Environment

Audiovisual production encompasses a range of material from highly commercial blockbuster films and platinum records to amateur home movies and recordings. The broadcast sector continuously disseminates program streams ranging from pre-packaged productions to live transmissions.

In curating the collection, a solid understanding of Australian audiovisual history, its impacts and influence is essential to developing and interpreting its potential. In dealing with over 100 years of creative output, the audiovisual production environment needs to be understood in both retrospective and contemporary terms.

For the purposes of this strategy, the retrospective period relates to works created pre-2000. The first century of Australia's audiovisual expression witnessed the development of film, radio, television and the recorded music industry. Major technical achievements and public engagement with the Internet spurred creativity across all sectors of Australian society.

The current environment provides a range of new challenges given the explosion of content creation. Readily available and publically accessible technology has seen an explosion in creative endeavour and has provided the means to global promotion through rapid dissemination across social networking and sharing websites via the Internet.

New media includes websites and web content designed for access through a web-browser. These pages often contain links to related content from the same domain, thereby forming a collection or set of content. Curators may harvest a complete website where all of the content is relevant or where each part is necessary to make sense of the whole or select a subset of a site, where only some of the content is relevant. Much of this content is not available or deliverable in any other form, discounting parallel versions or mirror-sites. New Media also takes into account audiovisual content embedded in or delivered via websites which are either downloadable digital files or digital streams.

Digital audiovisual content may be held in multiple formats including higher resolutions than those delivered on the web. To this end, it is key to acquire the highest available resolution of the original production which may have been captured in a variety of resolutions and formats.

At present, much of what is released and/or published online is also published in hard copy formats and acquirable via the traditional physical process. The challenge comes as the NFSA absorbs the significance of exclusively online media production and the need to acquire new types of content directly from that source. The required tools and workflows to manage New Media works is still evolving, whereas the managing traditional physical formats have largely matured. Most collecting organisations fall short, in terms of capacity and capability, with what's needed to keep up in collecting New Media works. As such, NFSA realistically and strategically supports a small range of the more widely deployed formats.

Collecting in the audiovisual environment is resource intensive and technologically demanding as all forms of audiovisual expression across digital and analogue platforms have been embraced.

While the NFSA continues to pursue a legal deposit scheme extending to audiovisual works, formal agreements relating to government-funded film production are in place. This is especially true for high value materials such as film prints and their associated documentation as well as broadcast material.

Collecting works by experimental and alternative artists often warrants a different approach, including collecting through special interest groups, festivals and awards programs within specialised and often tightly knit communities. The NFSA also deals with collectors, families and third parties all of whom can pose their own range of unique challenges.

Through its networks, agreements, one-on-one negotiations, special arrangements along with substantial research work and steady application of curatorial judgement, the NFSA leverages its prominent industry and public profile to ensure continuity in key collecting areas.

2.3 New Trends

Curators engage in a range of practices and use an extensive array of research tools to ensure core collecting areas remain continuously strong and new collection streams are identified. Through ongoing research, the fostering of professional and industry relationships and professional involvement in screen, sound and archival culture, the NFSA is well placed to recognise significant changes and represent them in collecting programs.

For high-priority collection categories, the number and nature of works produced per year is clearly documented through publications reporting on production outputs and release lists. In the more dynamic production areas of contemporary radio, television, short film production and the online environment, curators make informed decisions to acquire major representative examples based on a range of criteria including whether it is award-winning, has enjoyed high audience response, notoriety, longevity and/or uniqueness.

The digital revolution has led to changes in patterns of media consumption, methods of distribution, and access to means of production which are in turn challenging traditional business models. There has been an explosion of independent productions and self-publications taking advantage of low cost processes and innovative distribution channels.

There has been a rise in multi-platform works, using multiple delivery technologies to provide alternative means to access the works, and delivering complementary content that adds to the consumer's overall experience. These new types of media challenge our traditional notions of audiovisual content as a linear, discrete experience.

New trends in technical production have not fundamentally altered the NFSA's core collecting principles. Seeking effective collection coverage of moving image and recorded sound productions (and associated documentation) in their original form has simply branched out to include new generations of formats. The digital environment has consequently extended the range of partnerships and approaches for preservation.

New audiovisual technologies often introduce pathways to better archiving practices. A seamless transfer of content, metadata and format is a probable future scenario. Opportunities for collaborative creative partnerships with content producers will see the NFSA become active participants in the production of new works from the earliest of planning stages. Collaborative collection management with other archives will naturally follow and is likely to increase.

In the 21st century the concept of audiovisual content as an asset with almost infinite uses for repurposing is universally accepted. Accordingly, individuals and organisations recognise the value of self-archiving. The NFSA has a role to play in the active preservation of these works by assisting them in their own archiving practices. This will also serve in the long term when one day they transfer their archive-ready materials to the NFSA.

2.4 Priorities and Opportunities

The NFSA's key priority is to collect, preserve, interpret and present a record of the Australian cultural experience through audiovisual media and its associated documents and artefacts.

A major opportunity in developing the collection is to ensure that both existing and new acquisitions build the collection in ways which support the government and public expectation for increased access to this material. The strategy to achieve this is through the aligning of research, exhibitions and public programs with acquisition priorities and wider curatorial exposure to scholarly and public areas of interest.

The NFSA's online programs increasingly provide opportunities not only to exhibit and interpret the collection, but also to engage with communities who may be in a position to offer material or to provide additional and/or contextual information for an enriched description of existing or newly acquired collection works.

The next decade or two offers perhaps the final significant opportunity to acquire analogue productions produced since the beginning of film and sound in the later 19th century. This highlights a genuine need for the NFSA to be active in this field, encouraging collaboration to fill collection gaps.

As back-catalogues of music, film and television are increasingly repurposed and repackaged into new digital products, the public's opportunity and choice to experience these works in their original form diminishes. The NFSA has the responsibility to acquire, preserve and provide access to works in their original format for as long as those formats can be supported. This not only ensures that the public may continue to experience works in their original form but also allows the NFSA the unique opportunity to present heritage audiovisual material in formats that are becoming increasingly inaccessible to the public. Maintaining focus on obtaining the highest quality materials in their original format is an important strategy to support this opportunity.

Regardless of short-term access outcomes, preventing avoidable loss of preservation works in the collection remains a steadfast priority. Curatorial and stewardship practices partnered with clear directions in preservation work collectively to ensure future access to the collection.

2.5 Cultural Diversity

In 2009, through the *Stakeholder and Research Committee*, the NFSA Board approved the following definition of cultural diversity¹ :

- diverse communities and groups who make up Australia and who define themselves through distinct cultural identities
- material which embodies differing cultural heritage and perspectives
- ethnicity, gender, age, class, sexual orientation, religion and people with sensory, physical and intellectual disabilities.

Since 1945, more than seven million people have permanently migrated to Australia². Changing patterns of immigration have had a profound influence on the national identity. The Australian Bureau of Statistics³ reports that the cultural diversity within the population has resulted in over 400 languages being spoken in the community including some 145 languages spoken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

In accordance with the *NFSA Cultural Diversity Strategy 2009*, curators ensure that acquisition programs place emphasis on breadth and inclusiveness, as well as acquiring works in their original language where possible.

Australia's multicultural and diverse society is one of deep traditions, lifestyle, innovation and creativity. Communities express and celebrate their cultural identities through a range of festivals, music and performance. Works directly acquired from these communities reflect their expression and experience. Works representing different perceptions and perspectives of other cultures are also part of the collection.

Initial research reveals the many facets of cultural diversity are well represented throughout the NFSA's holdings of Australian and international films, newsreels, documentaries, home movies, actuality footage, music, television, and radio programs.

The NFSA's commitment to cultural diversity is seen in the relationships it continues to nurture between curators and community groups for the preservation of their works. Working in partnership ensures that works are not simply subsumed but are addressed and given profile within the collection.

2.6 Distributed National Collection

The principle of a Distributed National Collection (DNC) envisages a cooperative national network approach to identifying and managing cultural collections across Australia.

The DNC recognises that the holdings of various national, state, local and private collections are complementary and that duplication of collections is an inefficient use of limited resources. It also accepts that collection specialisation will result in the dispersion of audiovisual heritage.

Resolution AA1 of the *Australian Libraries Summit 1988* endorsed the concept of the DNC and the NFSA embraces the coordination role for audiovisual collections.

2.6.1 Current Practice

The NFSA plays a pivotal role in providing a focus for national awareness and reference in audiovisual collections and archiving. It is crucial for the NFSA to be aware of other key archival holdings throughout the country. Since the 1990s, the NFSA has worked progressively with other moving image and sound collections, providing support for local archival programs and advice on preservation.

The NFSA maintains a *National Registry of Audiovisual Collections*⁴ that identifies the holdings of audiovisual heritage across public and private collecting sectors. Curatorial staff engage with peers in other institutions and maintain an awareness of their collections, their strengths and complementary aspirations.

The NFSA facilitates open information and knowledge-sharing on collection focus, new developments in curatorship, preservation and storage, opportunities to strengthen existing partnerships and to develop new initiatives. To this end, the NFSA coordinates *Collection Summits*, on an annual basis, as a way to discuss managing the broader cultural approach to audiovisual collections. National and state based collecting institutions, as well as industry groups, who have an interest in audiovisual collections and preservation are invited to attend.

¹ NFSA Stakeholder and Research Committee, Meeting 3/10

² Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship. www.immi.gov.au

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1301.0 Year Book Australia, 2009-10. www.abs.gov.au/ausstats

⁴ <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/national-collection/national-registry-audiovisual-collections/>

2.7 Repatriation

Repatriation refers to the return of objects of cultural heritage to traditional owners or country of origin. In the audiovisual context, repatriation has both a domestic and international relevance to the NFSA in terms of cultural preservation and acquisitions.

In accordance with the *NFSA Collection Policy – Indigenous Collection Policy*, the NFSA respects the traditional rights of ownership of Indigenous communities. As such, it undertakes an ongoing program to provide newly created copies, of cultural material preserved in the national audiovisual collection, to Indigenous communities for their own collections.

Copies of collection works are provided in digital formats for ease of access, mindful that most Indigenous communities do not have the resources to preserve original works. This program also helps raise awareness in Indigenous communities of collection materials relating to their heritage and supports the maintenance of their traditional rights, cultural knowledge, well being and languages.

The NFSA holds a significant international representation in both its film and sound recording collections. These works have been experienced by and had influence on the Australian audiences including creators. In terms of early (pre-1950) nitrate film prints and negatives, as well as sound recordings from this era, these works often prove to be unique in the world. Institutions worldwide are constantly on the lookout for films and sound recording which will fill gaps in their own collections.

The NFSA has developed a model for the repatriation of international works through its collaboration with the National Film Preservation Foundation (USA)⁵. This partnership model results in the original works remaining with the cultural institution (ie. NFSA) and new copies generated are exchanged thereby ensuring the preservation of collection works.

In terms of collection acquisitions, the NFSA abides by a range of international conventions to ensure collection works are ethically acquired. These are the:

- Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (UNESCO, 1954)⁶
- Convention of Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, Transfer or Ownership of Cultural Property (UNESCO, 1970)⁷
- Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (International Institute for the Unification of Private Law - UNIDRIOT, 1995)⁸
- International Council of Museums, Code of Ethics for Museums 2004⁹.

In doing so, the NFSA retains an acquisition record for each collection work capturing information that includes acquisition method, provenance and were possible history of ownership.

In the event of a claim of ownership by an overseas government, institutions or individuals, the NFSA will undertake a case by case analysis to establish ownership, the method of acquisition, the nature of the collection work and the significance of it to the claimants and work in a collaborative manner to resolve claims in a timely manner.

⁵ <http://www.filmpreservation.org/>

⁶ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.phpURL_ID=13637&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

⁷ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.phpURL_ID=13039&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

⁸ <http://www.unidroit.org/english/conventions/1995culture/property/main.htm>

⁹ <http://icom.museum/who-we-are/the-vision/code-of-ethics.html>

3. CURATORSHIP

3.1 Harnessing Expertise

The NFSA Act mandates that the NFSA perform its functions to the highest curatorial standards¹⁰. The NFSA approach to collection activities places significant responsibility with the Curatorial branches in terms of collection content analysis, interpretation and growth.

The curatorial team currently comprises of three branches:

- Film, Documents, Artefacts and Curatorial Connections
- Sound, Broadcast and New Media
- Indigenous Collections.
- For NFSA staff to work successfully in a curatorial manner, they need to:
 - have an appreciation of the makeup and content of the national audiovisual collection
 - be able to interpret and understand collection strengths and weaknesses
 - apply well informed and considered judgment to selection decisions
 - manage a range of formats.

Curators are also actively engaged with all other aspects of the NFSA's operations to ensure that preservation is focused on priority collection material, and that access outcomes reach their full potential.

Many staff come to the NFSA with years of experience in the audiovisual industries, and/or with qualifications in archiving, librarianship or other knowledge management professions. All are encouraged to develop their knowledge through research, on-the-job training, participation in professional organisations, attendance at conferences and personal network building.

In terms of the national audiovisual collection, there are clear benefits to be gained from active engagement by all staff with the collection itself.

The NFSA's Scholars and Artists in Residence suite of research programs also extends understanding of the collection through projects that interpret and present the collection in innovative ways. Further insight is available through the NFSA Library which provides a specialised audiovisual research collection¹¹ of books, journals, press clippings and electronic resources relating to film, television, radio and sound production, technology, history and the industry.

The result of this expertise is the ability of staff to represent and interpret the collection to peers and reach the widest audience possible. Their ability to tell the story of the NFSA's collection and promote its historic value as well as its 21st century relevance underscores their fundamental assignment to ensure the collection remains culturally relevant and is a comprehensive history reflecting the diversity of the Australian experience.

¹⁰ s6(3)(c) NFSA Act, 2008.
¹¹ NFSA Library Collection Policy is available at: (http://intranet/access_research_and_development/library/)

3.2 Approach to Assessment and Selection

In assessing offers of collection material, staff consider not only the intrinsic quality of the work or item but also its relationship to the collection in terms of gap-filling, enhancing diversity, and access potential.

Curatorial staff draw on a range of resources, tools and skills in making assessments. These may include:

- knowledge of the collection
- a Statement of Significance (see Appendix A: Statement of Significance)
- exhibition potential for future public interest, appreciation and programs
- awareness of current industry and production activity (see Appendix B: Industry and Production Activity)
- ability to identify and respond to high value opportunistic offers
- consultation with known experts in the field
- ongoing assessment of the NFSA's capacity to responsibly manage new works
- understanding of national and international production sector and scholarly expertise.

Substantial identification work is often required as a precursor to any assessment of significance. Contemporary works are often well described and clearly documented, but in some instances, collection items have arrived with minimal information.

Examination can take place at either the donor's or on NFSA premises. Once the material has been properly identified research can be undertaken to determine its significance and relationship with the existing collection, thereby informing a final selection or non-selection decision.

3.3 Connections and Relationships

The diversity of the NFSA's collecting interests requires curatorial staff to maintain active relationships with a wide range of individuals and organisations, both as stakeholders and sources of expertise. They include:

- Australian collecting institutions: it is crucial for the NFSA to maintain current relationships with national, state and regional institutions, in order to ensure a joint understanding of collecting roles and a willingness to collaborate
- related international archival and collecting bodies: active engagement including practical partnerships to preserve and share discoveries in one another's collections
- national and state funding, broadcast and production bodies: pivotal in the non-legal deposit environment to support substantial film and moving image related automatic acquisitions
- individual collectors, communities and special interest groups: crucial in assisting the NFSA in finding retrospective, unique, or significant gap-filling works. Their networks and knowledge of what is still to be found is invaluable
- academics, researchers, filmographers, discographers and historians: vital as informed resources of screen and sound cultural perspective.

The NFSA also continues to deal with stakeholder relationships dating back to the 1970s, where on occasion donations cannot be traced. Curators generally play key roles in these situations as they seek to track through numerous collection systems, finding solutions and compromises to support both the NFSA and stakeholder interests.

4. COLLECTING PRIORITIES

4.1 Overview

The national audiovisual collection contains approximately 1.6 million items, relating to film, television, radio and music production including associated documents and artefacts from the late 19th century to the present day.

Audiovisual media has developed in distinct eras, parallel with historic events and social changes. The collection reflects these developments and includes all genres of works, representing an array of cultural influences across generations of formats.

The collection reflects Australia's culturally diverse society, and is comprised of works made:

- by Australian artists and technicians
- by Australian producers
- in Australia or about Australia
- by Australians overseas
- with a strong Australian connection or impact.

The key collecting areas of moving image, audio recordings, documents and artefacts are diverse and complex in nature. As a guide, their comparative representation in the collection is as follows:

- Moving Image (includes Television) 27%
- Audio Recordings (includes Radio and Oral Histories) 20%
- Documents and Artefacts 53%

Moving image is comprehensively represented in the collection. It includes Australian-produced feature films, documentaries, shorts, experimental, animation, advertising and home movies. International cinema and sound recordings are also incorporated into the collection.

Australian sound recordings are a represented in the collection by published and unpublished works. These represent Australia's musical heritage as well as the spoken word, environmental recordings and historic actuality.

Australian broadcast is also represented in the collection. Television has an increasing presence with programs dating from the 1980s onward, at its core. Pre-1960s radio features strongly alongside community radio productions post-1980s.

The documents collection covers a myriad of photographic and paper-based works representing audiovisual production and experience from the late 19th century onwards. International and Australian works are represented through still images, scripts, photographs, posters and personal papers alongside production props, costumes and memorabilia. Vintage equipment is also collected and reflects technical developments in the audiovisual and broadcast industry.

4.2 National Audiovisual Collection Profile

In developing the national audiovisual collection, it is essential to understand the content and nature of its holdings. In doing so, the Curatorial teams are able to develop acquisition programs using a range of ongoing and targeted gap-filling strategies to ensure the desired level of coverage is achieved.

4.2.1 Film

4.2.1.1 Australian

Overall, the collection may be seen to be strong, and in some cases comprehensive, up to the 1960s. Post 1970, selection is less comprehensive due in part to the increase of production output. There is strong coverage of **feature film**, especially for the historic period 1896 - 1960, of works known to survive.

In terms of **documentaries**, there is a significant representation of post-2000 government funded works in the collection. Independent productions, from the 1960s onwards, is an area that requires attention.

There is also strong coverage of **newsreels** from the silent era up to their demise in 1975, **cinema advertisements** up to the 1960s and **student productions** from the 1970s to the 1990s.

The **home movie** collection of personal life and activities covers early 20th century through to the 1960s, with the greatest strength represented in footage dating from the 1930s to the 1960s. From the 1970s onwards, the emergence of new formats partnered with a production explosion that has intensified with the proliferation of domestic digital devices poses a significant resource challenge for the NFA in curating this collection.

4.2.1.2 International

The collection consists of approximately 4,000 titles, including significant works in nitrate holdings, such as *The Corrick Collection*; *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, Germany, 1926) and *The Blonde Captive* (Clinton Richards, Ralph King, Linus Wilson, Paul Withington, America, 1931). The international 35mm feature collection, includes works from the NFA's target list of *1000 most significant titles*, and is steadily growing in size and programming value and is developing as an exhibition resource.

4.2.2 Recorded Sound

4.2.2.1 Music

Published Works

Australian and International published music recordings, across all genres, are strongly represented in the collection albeit the inconsistent coverage of classical music from the 20th century. Major and independent companies as well as self-published recordings are all strengths. Collections from specific historic and contemporary Australian recording labels provide insight to industry activity, audiences and cultural influence.

A specific focus is needed to strengthen the pre-Australian manufacture period. These are recordings made before 1928 when all recordings were pressed overseas yet featured many of the most influential of early Australian performers. Building this aspect of the collection requires concentrated effort and negotiation with specialist private collectors.

Indigenous recordings are of specific interest and the collection mainly consists of self published and commercially release works from independent recording companies. Community and grant funded Indigenous recordings are an area of collection growth as are recordings produced by ethnic communities specific to their culture. Both require extensive liaison through cultural networks to establish an avenue for acquisitions.

Unpublished Works

Unpublished works are those recordings not intended to be released to the public and are generally unedited, nor processed. While this aspect of the collection is not intended to be comprehensive, there is a strong representation of unpublished works in the collection dating from the 1950s onwards. There is an extensive collection of Australian jazz including festivals and conventions, a diverse range of popular rock demo tapes and a number of specific, targeted collections relating to selected high profile identities. Environmental and wildlife recordings are a highlight as are early ethnographic recordings on wax cylinders. Spoken word, sound effects and early recordings of artists who later went on to greater fame are all part of this collection.

4.2.3 Broadcast

4.2.3.1 Radio

There is a very strong collection of original transcription discs for radio serials and productions from 1935 – 1960, representing major production companies from this era. While the collection requires strengthening in post-1960 productions there are substantial clusters of radio represented in the collection.

In terms of news, current affairs and daily commentary, there is a consistent representation which provides an insight into the Australian-wide experience of radio over the decades.

With the assistance from the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia and Commercial Radio Australia, a future target area for collection growth lies in a more comprehensive approach for digital radio broadcast and the regular ongoing capture of the full range of programming.

Indigenous radio broadcast is of special interest to the NFSA. The collection grows steadily with complete series, such as *Deadly Sounds* which features Indigenous popular music, and examples from regional stations such as TAIMA (Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association).

4.2.3.2 Television

Overall, the collection includes coverage of most aspects of television programming in metropolitan and regional Australia. Programs from the analogue, digital, subscription and pay per view generations of television are represented in the collection.

From 1988 onwards, comprehensive news coverage is achieved via the NFSA *Newscaf* Project which adds coverage of all major Australian and international events screened on Australian evening news bulletins. Indigenous current affairs programs from NITV (National Indigenous Television) and IMPARJA are also included. For complete news and current affairs coverage, attention to the pre-1975 era, where news was captured on film, is required.

The collection also consists of a limited range of programming from 1956 to 1976. However, more recent drama series such as *Neighbours*, *Home and Away* and *Mcleod's Daughters* are fully represented given the consistent collection building undertaken by the NFSA from 1990 onwards. Television advertisements post-1980 is also an area requiring attention.

4.2.4 New Media

Established in 2000, this program is designed to target and capture relevant born-digital, online works. New Media generally refers to works which have been created within the digital environment and intended exclusively for online delivery.

The collection consists of a growing collection of YouTube clips of Australian produced content representing innovative production and the social networking nature of the service. A key curatorial challenge, with regards to collecting in this new media arena, simply lies with the explosion of Internet-based and multi-platform content available.

The NFSA actively contributes film and sound related websites to Preserving and Accessing Networked Documentary Resources of Australia (PANDORA). The partnership also informs other aspects of the NFSA New Media program by the research undertaken for PANDORA which leads to other content that may be acquired.

4.2.5 Oral Histories

Oral Histories and interviews focus on Australian personalities and professionals across the audiovisual and exhibition industry. A number of successful projects have yielded high results in film, television and radio. Australian film industry professional from the 1930s to the 1970s, television and radio personalities and practitioners up to the 1960s, and an extensive range of interviews with Australia jazz musicians are highlights of the collection. Oral Histories with high profile contemporary performers continue to remain a focus for the NFSA.

New initiatives to ensure a diverse range of perspectives are captured are evident in such projects as the Remote Indigenous Media Associations and the Health Ledger Young Artists Oral History Project.

These two projects, in particular place a focus on areas within the collection that require strengthening. Conducting oral histories in Language is of particular interest to the NFSA specifically in relation to Indigenous interviews.

The NFSA builds the collection through commissioning or acquisition. While the majority of Oral Histories are audio recordings, the NFSA is increasingly filming interviews of particular significance. Many recordings also include a transcription which increases the accessibility of the collection. The NFSA continues to work in collaboration with the Film and Broadcast Industry Oral History Group - a Sydney-based organisation of industry professionals who meet on a quarterly basis and generously volunteer their time to undertake specific interviews and provide independent advice to NFSA.

4.2.6 Documents

4.2.6.1 Australian

The documentation collection is a major research resource for Australian film and television works. Historically, the collection has had a major active focus on moving image related materials, with the recorded sound items being tracked less consistently over the years. Hence, there is almost comprehensive representation of film production from the earliest days to the present, but only sporadic coverage of most recorded sound productions.

The photographic collection includes stills for lost feature films, most features, documentaries and experimental films. Coverage of film personalities and organisations is also collection strength however images relating to recorded sound requires further development. Overall, the collection covering the 1920s to the 1960s is especially comprehensive and in some cases unique.

The poster collection consists of a broad coverage of popular and some independent film productions throughout the 20th century. Further development in acquiring posters relating to recorded sound and music festivals, is required to ensure a broader representation in this collection.

There are major holdings of scripts for feature and documentary films, news and television serials. Active collection of post production scripts for early film productions will enhance the existing representation. A strong representation of 1940s to 1960s radio serial scripts is also available, and targeted pursuit of scripts from contemporary radio will ensure good coverage of this industry.

Memorabilia, manuscripts, production and personal papers are significantly represented in the documentation collection. Collections relating to notable individuals and organisations across the moving image and recorded sound industry are a specific strength.

4.2.6.2 International

The collection contains a major representation of stills and posters of international feature films covering the late 19th century up to the 1970s. There is also a notable selection of posters from overseas which illustrate how Australian films are promoted abroad. Whilst not an active collecting area, works supporting those international films represented in the collection may require attention.

4.2.7 Artefacts

The artefacts collection provides a representative example of major technical developments and influences, from the earliest times to the present, predominantly across film, television and radio. There is substantial representation of late 19th century through to 1960s, play-back equipment, domestic sound recording players and an effective representation of cinema projectors and cameras, both amateur and professional, with coverage strengths from 1920 to 1970. Major gap-filling opportunities lie with contemporary equipment and classic early items.

The collection also contains key artefacts from film and television productions including props, costumes and sets as well as marketing and promotional objects from film, television and radio.

4.3 The Non-Theatrical Lending Collection

As part of its access collection, the NFSA operates a distinct Non-Theatrical Lending Collection (NTLC)¹² film and video lending library. It is a cultural outreach program that meets the needs of non-commercial screen cultural and educational interests. The NTLC enables access to a mix of Australian and international features, shorts and documentary films, ranging from the early days of cinema to recent releases.

Originally established by the National Library of Australia in 1946 as a free educational film lending service, formal ownership was transferred to NFSA from the NLA in July 2008 and has since been integrated into the NFSA's Screening Loans program.

¹² The NTLC was previously known and operated as National Film and Video Lending Service (NFVLS)

The development of the NTLC collection is subject to the NFSA Collection Policy. This ensures NTLC collection items are managed along curatorial lines which will be beneficial to their long term protection and future accessibility.

4.3.1 Composition

The collection consists of over 18,000 works and provides titles on DVD, VHS video and 16mm film, mostly licensed for non-commercial screenings and education purposes. There are three key areas in the NTLC collection, namely:

- approximately 7000 titles educational documentaries and training films on ethnography, art, management, history and medical topics
- the Screen Studies component of the collection includes international features, shorts, documentaries, animations, TV shows and experimental films. It now comprises just over 10,000 titles with almost all NTLC loans being from this part of the collection
- the Goethe Institut collection of German language films. Comprising mostly of, 16mm films, VHS video and DVD formats, it includes many retrospective releases of classic German cinema, some of which are not available commercially. The current Goethe Institut collection is in the order of 1000 titles.

4.3.2 Collection Growth

The acquisition program for the NTLC currently provides for approximately 100-150 new titles for the collection and licensed for non-commercial screening each year. The Goethe Institut provides a further 50-100 non-theatrically licensed DVD titles each year.

4.4 Iconic Works

A key stewardship responsibility is to identify collection works of enduring cultural significance. The Senior Curators undertake this role to identify a collection core of Australia's audiovisual heritage deemed and valued as iconic. Collection works are identified for the purposes of collection auditing, disaster recovery, heritage asset valuation, preservation prioritisation, access initiatives and nomination for the Memory of the World register.

In 1992, UNESCO established the International Memory of the World¹³ program which aims to preserve the world's unique documentary heritage found in archival and library collections. Regional committees implement the program and the National Committee of Australia - Memory of the World¹⁴ was founded in 2000.

To date, the NFSA has two citations in the Australian Memory of the World Register. These are, the Cinesound Movietone Australian Newsreel Collection of 4,000 newsreel films and documentaries representing news stories covering all major events in Australian history, sport and entertainment from 1929 to 1975 and the world's first feature film, *The Story of Kelly Gang* (Charles Tait, Australia 1906) which has also been inscribed on the International Memory of the World Register in 2007.

Senior Curators employ a range of criteria to determine the iconic status of a collection work, such as:

- originality and completeness
- rarity
- impact and influence
- audience popularity and ratings.

Partnered with the criteria identified in the Statement of Significance (see Appendix A: Statement of Significance), Senior Curators research, analyse, compare and are able to provide a reasoned justification for establishing the iconic status of a collection work.

An up-to-date listing of iconic works is managed in a database by the Collection Stewardship Branch and reviewed on an annual basis.

¹³ For further information, see: <http://www.unesco.org>

¹⁴ For further information, see: <http://www.amw.org.au>

5. INDIGENOUS COLLECTION

5.1 Overview

The NFSA places utmost importance on collection works that represent Indigenous people, their culture and community. This material has been collected over time as a natural part of the national audiovisual collection and receives a more targeted focus by the Curatorial teams.

In managing and developing Indigenous representation in the collection, the NFSA has demonstrated leadership and commitment to engaging Indigenous advice.

From 1999 to 2003, the NFSA *Indigenous Reference Group* provided valuable guidance on a range of diverse matters, including the sensitive works in the collection, employment of Indigenous people and input into the NFSA *Indigenous Materials Policy 2003*.

In 2008, the NFSA Board established the *Indigenous Working Group* who consider opportunities to expand the NFSA's Indigenous connections and re-establish the Indigenous Reference Group.

Currently, a Memorandum of Understanding between the NFSA and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies is in place to ensure that cross-organisational collaboration between these two peer bodies serves the best interests, preservation and promotion of Indigenous collections and engagement.

In 2006, the NFSA formed the Indigenous Collections Branch (ICB) to work in close collaboration with a range of NFSA programs to collectively achieve the culturally appropriate curatorship, access, exhibition and management of the Indigenous works, and the promotion of Indigenous collection material worldwide.

The NFSA also provides an annual Indigenous Research Scholarship through the Scholars and Artists in Residence Program acknowledging the need for Indigenous research, interpretation and re-contextualising of the collection to occur.

A suite of protocols have been developed by ICB to assist and support staff in working with the Indigenous collection and to guide the provision of access to the collection. The NFSA also provides cultural awareness training for staff to raise their understanding of Indigenous traditions and protocols, and responsibilities of custodianship on behalf of traditional owners.

5.2 Collection Profile

In 2011, there were 23,000 titles¹⁵ classified by the NFSA as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander which cover a range of audiovisual works. The Senior Curator of ICB has identified a list of culturally significant works across all genres and formats. These are included in the Iconic Works database for priority attention. While a numerical count of items provides some insight, understanding the Indigenous collection in terms of quality, its coverage over time, geography and cultures represented, is of higher curatorial importance.

¹⁵ It should be noted that historically, the technique of recognising Indigenous content in the collection was not part of the NFSA's systems until the 1990s.

The Indigenous collection contains historic and contemporary feature films and documentaries including independent film productions from the late 1990s onwards. The collection contains some of the earliest ethnographic film and documentary footage up to the 1970s including home movies taken by travellers.

The collection will strengthen with gap filling of independent and community films, including animation. It will gain completeness with the acquisition of archival footage from international sources.

Production and broadcast from Indigenous media networks is an area of continuous development. While some Indigenous radio programs are present in the collection, television drama, documentaries, news and current affairs are strengths.

In recorded sound formats, ethnographic recordings and spoken word performances can be found. Oral Histories are a key area of focus and recording them in Language is a priority for the NFSA. The document and artefact collection contains still images and promotional material relating to a range of film productions and musicians.

While a significant portion of the Indigenous collection was commercially produced, the NFSA respects the secret and sacred nature of those early works created by explorers, anthropologists, travellers and tourists, without the informed consent of Indigenous communities. Accordingly, protocols and procedures are in place relating to access, storage and preservation activity of culturally restricted or sensitive works.

Overall, ongoing and deeper analysis of Indigenous holdings is required to identify and address any significant gaps to inform future collection development.

5.3 Collection Management

All collection matters relating to Indigenous works are undertaken in accordance with the *NFSA Collection Policy – Indigenous Policy and the NFSA Indigenous Collections Management Protocols* and Guidelines - an essential guide to ensuring all appropriate practices are met.

5.3.1 Acquisition

The Senior Curators are responsible for ensuring Indigenous works are a given priority in their respective collecting areas. They work in collaboration with the ICB team who play a pivotal role in leveraging their networks and connecting the NFSA with potential sources and donors of collection material.

Cross-curatorial collaboration and liaison with ICB regarding all negotiations or new acquisitions relating to Indigenous material ensures the best outcomes are achieved. The identification of audiovisual material at risk due to remoteness and resources is also a high priority and the ICB can provide connections into these communities.

In recognition of the importance of Indigenous communities maintaining a high level of control and traditional ownership over their creative works, approaches to donation require a degree of flexibility that serves to build trust and mutual respect.

Acquiring or commissioning Indigenous oral histories is a key focus for the NFSA Oral History Program. In collaboration with ICB, priority and opportunistic interviews, as well as projects such as the Remote Indigenous Media Associations focused on capturing the history and development of Indigenous broadcast, are undertaken. Conducting interviews in Language and possibilities to provide interview training for Indigenous people are areas that require attention.

5.3.2 Preservation

In collaboration with Senior Curators, ICB are responsible for the prioritisation of Indigenous titles to be digitised, and for establishing high-profile restoration projects.

When preservation work requires replaying of restricted content, ICB work in close collaboration with Preservation and Technical Services branch to ensure all handling protocols and cultural requirements are observed.

5.3.3 Storage

The ICB are best placed to confirm which Indigenous works in the collection are culturally sensitive. Accordingly, the Collection Stewardship Branch is responsible for ensuring catalogue records identify them as such, that archival packaging containers are clearly marked as 'restricted' and that these works are stored in separate secured areas within the existing storage facilities of the NFSA.

5.4 Research and Access

Two key documents have been developed to provide guidance and assistance to both the public and NFSA staff in accessing Indigenous works in the collection. These are:

- *Principles and Protocols to Guide Research into Indigenous Cultural Materials held in the NFSA Indigenous Collections*
- *The Step By Step Guide to Accessing Materials in the NFSA Indigenous Collections.*

Requests for access to or exhibition of Indigenous cultural works are managed by the Collection Access Branch and considered on a case-by-case basis by ICB. This approach ensures that all requests for access are undertaken according to protocol.

5.5. Building Community Confidence

The ICB have a pivotal role in raising awareness within the Indigenous community of the work undertaken by the NFSA to preserve their cultural heritage. Establishing and nurturing community partnerships increases overall knowledge of the type of Indigenous material held by the NFSA, while instilling confidence and assurance that the operations of the NFSA are respectful of Indigenous customs and beliefs. Building trust is key to ensuring Indigenous communities are confident when archiving their audiovisual material with the NFSA.



6. ACQUISITIONS PROGRAM

6.1 Overview

The NFSA acquisition program reflects a sustainable approach to building the national audiovisual collection of film, sound, radio and television.

Continuity in key collecting areas is a priority and new programs are thoroughly evaluated given the high demand on limited resources.

Complete representation of a work is a key objective. As such, a holistic approach is undertaken by Curators when acquiring works for the national audiovisual collection. This approach ensures that the work can be experienced and understood in its fullest context.

Senior Curators undertake careful annual planning to provide a realistic outline of intended acquisition targets, with allowance for unanticipated acquisitions opportunities during that period. The strategies applied, include:

- significance assessments, as required, of potential acquisitions to ensure best practice collection prioritisation
- known deliverables from established agreements
- identify priority retrospective gap filling works to pursue
- representative of the breadth of Australia's culturally diverse society
- incorporate known collecting contacts to plan target approaches
- take into account overall collection management issues

- retain sufficient flexibility to adjust to unexpected, substantial and highest priority offers occurring
- manage all acquisition in accordance with established standards ensuring each acquisition is fully documented (see Appendix C: Basic Acquisitions Workflow).

The NFSA's ongoing acquisition program contributes over 35,000 new items into the collection each year (see Appendix E: Performance Measures for Acquisitions). These items are intended to extend the targeted comprehensive areas, increase the diversity of the collection and support the cultural mission of the NFSA in line with collecting principles. In most cases, acquisitions require substantial identification work, research, investigation and negotiation, in order for the NFSA to selectively acquire relevant material without taking in an excessive quantity of less significant items.

6.1.1 Comprehensive Collections

The NFSA aims to build a comprehensive collection of commercially published sound recordings, feature films, television programs and documentaries in particular. It is desirable to obtain these productions as close as possible to their release date to reduce later gap-filling in the collection.

Offers of older material in this category are assessed against existing holdings. Works are acquired if they:

- represent works not previously held
- are of higher technical quality or better condition than existing holdings
- fulfill the recommended number of copies to be archived.

6.1.2 Representative Collections

In order to provide the broadest presentation of Australia's vast audiovisual output, the NFSA approaches many collecting areas with the aim of building a representative collection of that media.

This approach applies to both television and radio broadcasts, and to a variety of other commercial and non-commercial uses of audiovisual media ranging from:

- private home recordings
- home movies
- corporate and instructional audiovisual productions
- the use of audiovisual media as a tool for documenting performances and events.

In this category a selective approach is applied to acquisition of works based on an assessment of their significance both as works in their own right and in terms of their potential contribution to the collection as a whole.

6.1.3 Formed Collections

The NFSA is often offered donations of formed collections. These may include the lifetime collections of participants in the audiovisual industries, whether individuals or companies, including broadcasters and production houses or other organisations that have produced audiovisual material in the course of their activities.

Formed collections may alternatively be the result of dedicated life-long activity by private collectors. They are often a source for material that can broaden the representation of formats and genres present in the national audiovisual collection. Beyond the significance of the individual works within the collection, as a whole, the formed collection must exhibit a high level of integrity and focus.

Some formed collections consist of an assortment of audiovisual works. Examples of these include the typical home record collection and working libraries from broadcasters or production houses. Such collections may contain material of interest to the NFSA for potential acquisition as discrete items, but do not have any special significance in terms of their order, provenance and focus that warrant their preservation as complete formed collections.

Ideally, formed collections are best kept together to ensure their integrity, significance and provenance, as such acquisition of complete formed collections needs careful curatorial consideration due to the large resource demands they entail. The NFSA may select to acquire the entire collection or determine if components of the collection are better placed with other collecting institutions. This may be the case where the content sits within another organisation's collecting remit. In this instance, cross-referencing in acquisition and catalogue records, to joint holding arrangements, ensures that the collection retains its integrity through citation to its original constitution and provenance.

6.1.4 International Works

The Australian experience of audiovisual media includes material which is not considered Australian in origin or content. In this category a limited number of works are selected which represent high standards of aesthetic or technical achievement, or which have had a significant cultural and/or creative impact in Australian society.

6.2 Key Agreements

Given the absence of a legal deposit scheme for audiovisual works in Australia, agreements are necessary to ensure continuity in key collecting areas.

The NFSA has made agreements with a range of funding bodies, including: Film Victoria and Screen Australia to ensure that copies of film, television and new media productions, and their associated documentation, are provided to the NFSA. Similar arrangements with other state and territory agencies are currently under negotiation.

The NFSA has put in place source licenses with Community Broadcasting Association of Australia permitting the NFSA to record a small selection of daily programs from their satellite distribution service.

The existing arrangements in place with all major record companies and a substantial proportion of independents are consistent with current industry standard practice and result in regular contributions of newly released commercially published recordings. Agreements with vinyl record pressing plants operating in Australia result in regular contributions of limited edition vinyl pressings produced by Australian artists.

A roster of over 28 television stations, regularly contribute news and current affairs programming to the NFSA. Formal donation contracts have also been executed with television broadcasters and production companies including Foxtel, National Indigenous Television and Premier Media (Fox Sports).

The Health Ledger Young Artist Oral History Project aims to capture the careers of the next generation of audiovisual artists and professionals. Agreements are in place with ten foundation partner organisations to ensure their ongoing commitment to regularly interview a select group of graduating students over a twenty year period.

Agreements with a range of culturally diverse communities are also supported through NFSA sponsorship. For instance, the NFSA Orlando Short Film Award presented at the Sydney Mardi Gras Film Festival provides mutual benefits: it fosters relationships with the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual community to ensure their representation in the national audiovisual collection whilst actively supporting their contribution to screen culture

Arrangements to collect and preserve Indigenous works are based on building community trust and as such require a concerted effort to formally establish. An agreement with Kalkuku Ninti-Puntuku Ngurra Limited is currently under negotiation to ensure that the film and sound recordings of the Martu people of the Western Desert (WA) are deposited with the NFSA.

The NFSA is a key partner in Preserving and Accessing Networked Documentary Resources of Australia (PANDORA) with the National Library of Australia and nine other key collecting institutions. PANDORA, established in 1996, archives a growing collection of Australian online publications. The NFSA contributes websites that represent Australian film, television, radio, and music.

6.3 Collecting Areas

6.3.1 Film

The NFSA aims to collect all feature films and documentaries produced in, by or with Australian association.

6.3.1.1 1 Federal and State Funded Feature Films and Documentaries

- 100% of films that receive significant federal production or support funding
- films that receive a significant share of production or supporting funding from the various state and territory agencies.

6.3.1.2 Significant Non-Government Funded Feature Films and Documentaries

The NFSA will acquire a selection of films not provided with government production funding that:

- have been released theatrically, or commercially released in other forms in Australia
- have been screened to high acclaim at major film festivals either in Australia or abroad
- have received an award deemed significant at the time
- demonstrate creative and technical excellence in, for example, visual effects, storytelling, editing, cinematography and direction
- capture uniquely Australian experiences including representations of Indigenous Australian and culturally diverse communities, political affairs and significant social and cultural events not otherwise acquired
- representative sample of low budget experimental feature films
- achieve retrospective significance (e.g. tracking the development of a later prominent actor, director, writer, etc.) if not at first acquired.

The NFSA will continue to track significant non-government funded feature films and make financial resources available to acquire significant feature films that cannot otherwise be donated and/or deposited.

6.3.1.3 Retrospective Australian Feature Films

The NFSA will further develop the retrospective collection of Australian feature films by actively implementing the following acquisition methodologies:

- checking holdings of targeted feature films at other film repositories and institutions
- actively seeking or creating missing components to gap fill feature film holdings supporting projects such as the *Deluxe/Kodak Partnership* which restores colour films at risk
- undertake an audit of all Australian feature films produced since 1970.

6.3.1.4 International films

The NFSA is committed to ensuring that its collection adequately represents the Australian audiovisual heritage within the context of the global audiovisual culture that has influenced Australian audiences and creativity.

In terms of feature films, the NFSA works from an identified *1000 most significant* titles to target. The NFSA will also aim to include a selection of international short films in the collection to document international trends in short filmmaking.

6.3.1.5 Shorts, Experimental and Advertisement productions

The NFSA aims to comprehensively collect the following:

- 100% of shorts that receive Screen Australia production and support funding
- 100% of short films that receive state and territory agency production and support funding
- award winners and nominees from culturally diverse film festivals.

6.3.1.6 Home movies and other amateur productions

The NFSA aims to develop a select collection of these works which provide historic, social, culturally diverse insights and perspectives not fully represented in commercial production.

6.3.2 Recorded Sound

The NFSA aims to develop a comprehensive collection of published Australian sound recordings, complemented by selected recordings of sound art, music and other performances, events and actualities of high significance

such as historic speeches. Formed collections from prominent identities in the field of sound, music and radio are also acquired and represent an important research resource.

Acquisition priorities include the ongoing collection of newly published Australian recordings, whether from major record companies, independents, or the burgeoning self publishing scene. Recordings published by individuals or very small record companies are generally sourced through agreements with third parties, who act as aggregators. These include radio stations and festivals organisers. A considered selection is undertaken, in terms of multi track recordings, which are acquired to illustrate significant production achievements or where they form an integral component to the representation of a key creative work.

Filling gaps in the published music collection has largely been reactive to date, with offers of private collections assessed against current holdings and items selected which fill gaps. Drawing on the research work undertaken in the NFSA's *Australian Discography* Project, which aims to document Australia's music recording history, increasingly facilitates a more proactive approach to acquisition, whereby specific wish lists are developed from an analysis of existing holdings. Future plans include using social networking functionality on the NFSA website to encourage donation of specific recordings sought by the NFSA.

6.3.3 Broadcast

The NFSA aims to develop a representative collection of radio and television broadcast and programs, chiefly seeking material of Australian origin or with a substantial Australian creative contribution.

6.3.3.1 Radio

Whilst broadcasters record the programs they transmit, the recordings are not systematically retained beyond the statutory period of 6 weeks¹⁶. The relative volatility of this approach makes it imperative that the NFSA increases its efforts in off-air recording of contemporary broadcasts from both commercial and community radio. Whilst broadcasters record material it is not retained for long periods of time. Priority for historic material especially from 1960 to 1980 leads curators to seek opportunities to acquire formed collections from industry sources and/or from private collectors.

¹⁶ Schedule 2, Clause 5,
Broadcast Services Act 1992

Offers of collections from the Golden Age (1940s – 50s) of radio that complement rather than duplicate our existing holdings will also generally be accepted into the collection. Future plans for developing the radio collection include increasing off-air collection of commercial radio in Sydney and Melbourne.

6.3.3.2 Television

The NFSA did not begin its proactive acquisition program of productions created for television until the 1970s. Over time, cooperation by the television industry for the NFSA's mission to preserve television has steadily grown. Networks, distributors and producers are often willing to offer NFSA their productions during times of format change or when they move location.

Collection development opportunities lie with curatorial staff maintaining relationships with television archivists from all networks, major distribution companies and collectors. Agreements made with Screen Australia ensures the steady acquisition of government funded television drama productions.

6.3.4 New Media

The primary focus in the current new media program has been supporting the NFSA's contribution to the PANDORA project, run by the NLA in collaboration with state libraries and a variety of special interest institutions. Websites documenting Australian audiovisual culture and commerce are identified and submitted to the PANDORA archive.

A select number of new works from YouTube, the social media video sharing site, are also preserved as part of the NFSA's digital collection. Works are selected which are not available elsewhere, including dramatised, experimental and animated short films and videos, music videos, home movies, actuality and reality footage including documentary, and otherwise unique works.

6.3.5 Oral History

The Oral History program has expanded in recent years with the establishment of a dedicated Oral History unit and provision of a budget for outsourcing Oral History interviews and transcriptions. The focus of collecting activity is career interviews with individuals who have made a substantial lifetime contribution to film, television, radio or recorded sound. Capturing the recollections of older individuals is an obvious priority. Notwithstanding, the

NFSA has introduced a new program, the Heath Ledger Young Artist Oral History Project, to capture oral histories from young artists in the audiovisual field on a recurring basis. The Remote Indigenous Media Associations oral history initiative is also a priority project.

6.3.6 Documents

The NFSA undertakes a broad collection approach to associated materials for both Australian and international works, and in relation to personalities, production and organisations. An important distinction between representation in the documentation collection and the original format collection is that frequently documentation is acquired for works which may no longer exist, or have not been acquired. This reflects the implicit research aspect of the documentation holdings which provide reference to the very wide world of cinema and sound production from the earliest years onwards.

6.3.7 Artefacts

The NFSA collects objects and vintage equipment which extend the national audiovisual collection's representation of the mechanical and creative process of image and sound production as well as replay.

6.4 Acquisitions Management

Curatorial staff manage all consignments in accordance with established procedures and in collaboration with the Collection Stewardship branch.

Quarterly meetings between the two branches ensure a timely flow of information with regards to upcoming acquisitions and the best approach to manage them effectively.

Once acquisitions have been curated and registered, they are prioritised by the Senior Curators for accessioning by the Collection Information team. Monthly meetings between the Senior Curators and the Manager of Collection Information determine highest priorities and accessioning strategies.

The Collection Information Branch manages accessioning queues in accordance with the *Accessioning Management Plan* which serves to ensure the most effective and efficient approach to managing all collection works waiting to be catalogued into Mediaflex, the NFSA Collection Management System.

7. DE-SELECTION

7.1 Overview

In accordance with the *NFSA Collection Policy – De-selection Policy*, the NFSA undertakes the de-selection of collection items as part of its collection development practices.

De-selection is a practice that serves collection quality, both in terms of content coverage and format. It is important to undertake any collection refinement activity mindful of the historical and cultural significance to the collection when acquired.

The NFSA acknowledges that collections evolve over time. Some works may be replaced as it acquires material that is a richer expression, or if donor/depositor conditions necessitate removal of an item from the collection.

While limited de-selection has been undertaken by the NFSA in the last decade, the practice is an integral part of collection management.

7.2 Current Practice

The NFSA follows an established process to undertake the de-selection, followed by the de-accessioning and disposal of collection items (see Appendix D: Typical De-selection Workflow).

Recommendations for the de-selection of collection items are initiated on an on-going basis by NFSA staff who predominantly work directly with the collection; in particular: the Curatorial, Collection Stewardship Branch and the Preservation and Technical Services, branches.

Follow the guidelines articulated in the *NFSA Collection Policy*, Senior Curators are responsible for assessing recommendations for de-selection. The NFSA regards the de-selection of collection works as a serious undertaking that is open to public scrutiny.

As such, Senior Curators provide de-selection recommendations to the NFSA Board for final determination, through the Chief Executive Officer.

Senior Curators check the original acquisition records to ascertain copyright ownership and any restrictions that have been placed on the item before making a determination.

De-selection is the result of a thoughtful and well documented process. Documentation relating to the de-selection of collection items from the NFSA's holdings is kept on registry files and the de-accessioned status of an item is recorded in the catalogue record in Mediaflex.

Stakeholder relationships are also given due attention when de-selection activities are undertaken. Notifying the donor(s), when possible, is key to ensuring that relevant parties are fully and accurately informed.

Senior Curators evaluate disposal options and select the best method of disposal for a de-selected item ensuring that donor preference, where known, is undertaken in the first instance. This is then actioned by the Collection Stewardship branch and documented accordingly.

8. PRESERVATION

8.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Collection preservation includes all practices and procedures necessary to ensure the integrity of the medium or format of the original work and the permanent accessibility (with a minimum loss of quality) of the visual or audio content of the work. These practices and procedures include copying of the item, maintaining appropriate environmental conditions, monitoring and testing.

The Preservation and Technical Services (PATS) branch provides advice to the Curatorial Branches on physical risk, deterioration and obsolescence affecting the national collection. Senior Curators determine preservation priorities in light of this advice in conjunction with their own objective assessment of relative significance of items in the collection. This occurs in consultation with other NFSA operational areas who may require the availability of collection material for use in other NFSA programs.

Requests for access to collection material that can only be fulfilled if preservation activity is undertaken are referred by Collection Access staff to Senior Curators for guidance.

The PATS branch undertakes the majority of preservation and conservation work on film, video, sound services, or for formats outside the NFSA's technical capabilities, external providers undertake the services needed. A prime example being the established arrangement with *Deluxe/Kodak* which provides colour film copying services as the NFSA is currently unable to do so in-house.

8.2 Balancing Content and Format

Preservation activity is curatorially driven to ensure the most significant works receive priority attention in accordance with the *NFSA Collection Policy – Preservation Policy* and the NFSA Preservation Strategy.

In determining the preservation priority of a work, Senior Curators make a judgment based on research, their knowledge of the collection, significance assessment and consider whether the item:

- is an original
- is a single copy in the collection
- is deemed and documented as iconic
- meets research priorities and access potential.

In assessing the technical risk of a work, a number of criteria apply, including:

- the stability, fragility, and condition of the item
- obsolescence of the medium and equipment needed to replay the work
- whether duplicate preservation masters already exist or can be produced.

The NFSA aims to preserve audiovisual heritage in a form that allows us to recreate the original viewing or listening experience as closely as possible. Where preservation in the original format is not possible, the NFSA will preserve materials in formats which do not result in the loss of any significant characteristics of the original.

In line with international best practice and emerging standards, digitisation specifications employed by the NFSA do not use data reduction or other compression techniques that would introduce any perceivable or measurable loss of sound or image quality.

Senior Curators review preservation priority plans for their collection areas of responsibility as part of their regular business planning activities. These are detailed in the *NFSA Cross Media Preservation Plan*.

The collaborative approach undertaken between Curatorial teams and PATS ensures that technical and cultural factors balanced with research and access potential are considered when determining preservation priorities. Collectively, this approach ensures that corporate responsibilities and objectives for collection preservation are successfully met.



9. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS



9.1 Performance Measures

The *NFSA Planning and Performance Reporting Framework* requires that the NFSA establish organisation-wide key performance measures, both in qualitative and quantitative terms, to ensure program objectives are met.

Key performance measures serve the strategic outcomes identified in the NFSA Corporate Plan, and the *NFSA Annual Business Plan* and these achievements are reported in the *NFSA Annual Report*. Key performance indicators are also reported in the *Portfolio Budget Statements*.

Performance measures are determined each year and Senior Curators are a key source of information when identifying the categories and determining quantities of collection works that will be added to the national audiovisual collection (see Appendix E: Performance Measures for Acquisitions).

9.2 NFSA Collection Committee

The Collections Committee was established in 2009 as a forum to discuss collection management matters and share information on curatorial activity.

Senior Curators report on newly acquired material and highlight works of particular note as well as provide de-selection listings to the Committee for information.

9.3 NFSA Board

A standing item on the NFSA Board agenda for approval is Collection Reporting. For each Board meeting, Senior Curators present comprehensive collection acquisition reports and de-selection recommendations for the NFSA Board to approve.

APPENDIX A: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

These criteria¹⁷ reflect the standard selection parameters employed by NFSA curatorial staff in making informed acquisition decisions. They are defined in terms common to archives and museums worldwide and are incorporated into the acquisitions module of Mediaflex, the NFSA's Media Asset Management system design to ensure consistent, essential, centralised record keeping.

Primary Criteria

- historical: a work or body of work which documents or is associated with a particular individual, place, event, genre, movement, etc.
- aesthetic: intrinsic artistic value, excellence or innovation within the work. Reflection of broader aesthetic trends and influences, including the merging of creative and technological elements within a work
- scientific/research/technical: a work or body of work that represents excellence and innovation in relevant technical execution or production
- cultural/social/spiritual: works that meaningfully reflect social, spiritual or cultural bonds of community, belief, values and religion
- provenance: the origin, ownership history and context of a work.

- Comparative Criteria
- representativeness: the depth the work embodies the characteristics of a particular style, movement, genre, or period.
- rarity: rare or uncommon works of relevance to the National Collection.
- condition/completeness/intactness/integrity: the degree to which a work is complete in terms of both physical form and creative content
- interpretive potential: likelihood of a work or body of work to tell a meaningful story in terms of our mission, audiovisual archival and broader sociological themes.

¹⁷ Collections Council of Australia, 2009, *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections*. <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/significance2-0/index.html>

APPENDIX B: INDUSTRY AND PRODUCTION ACTIVITY

The following lists the key reference and information resources used by curatorial staff in their approach to assessment and selection of works to be acquired. The NFSA collection itself is one of the richest resources for curatorial decisions:

Publications

- Discographies
- Filmographies
- Biographies and autobiographies of artists and industry figures
- Published industry histories
- Genre specific reference books
- Journals published by professional associations and special interest groups
- Government publications
- Industry production publications
- Sales Records
- Box Office Reports
- Radio and Television programming schedules
- Audience Ratings

Networks

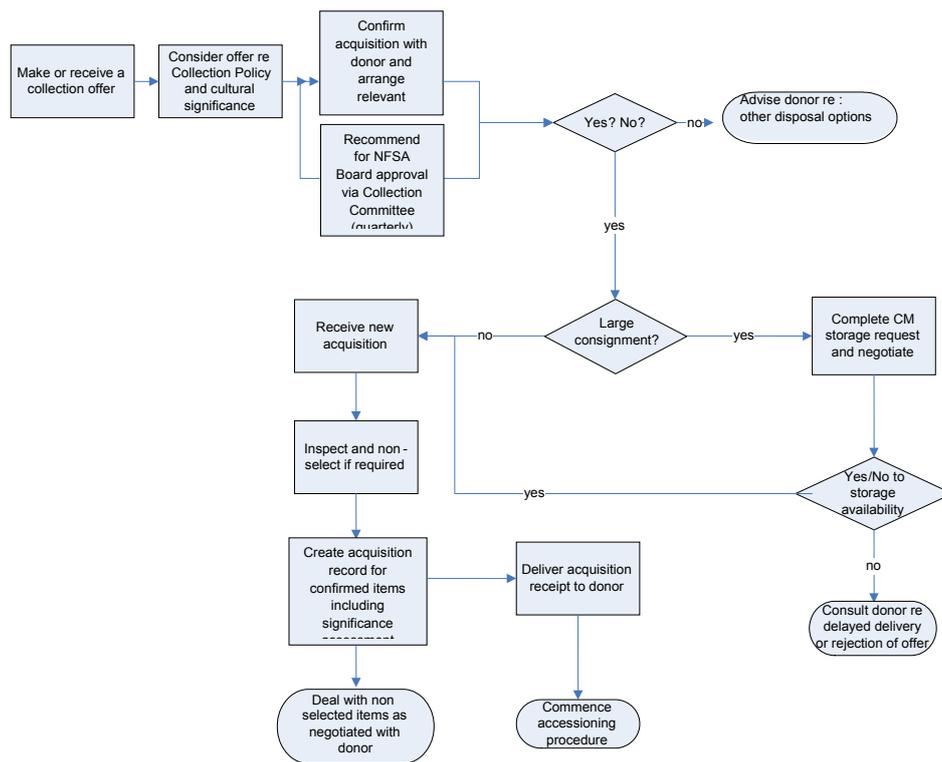
- National and international collecting institutions
- Professional audiovisual archiving associations
- Industry contacts and associations
- Auction houses and specialist traders
- Academics with special interests
- Amateur enthusiasts and collectors

Internet

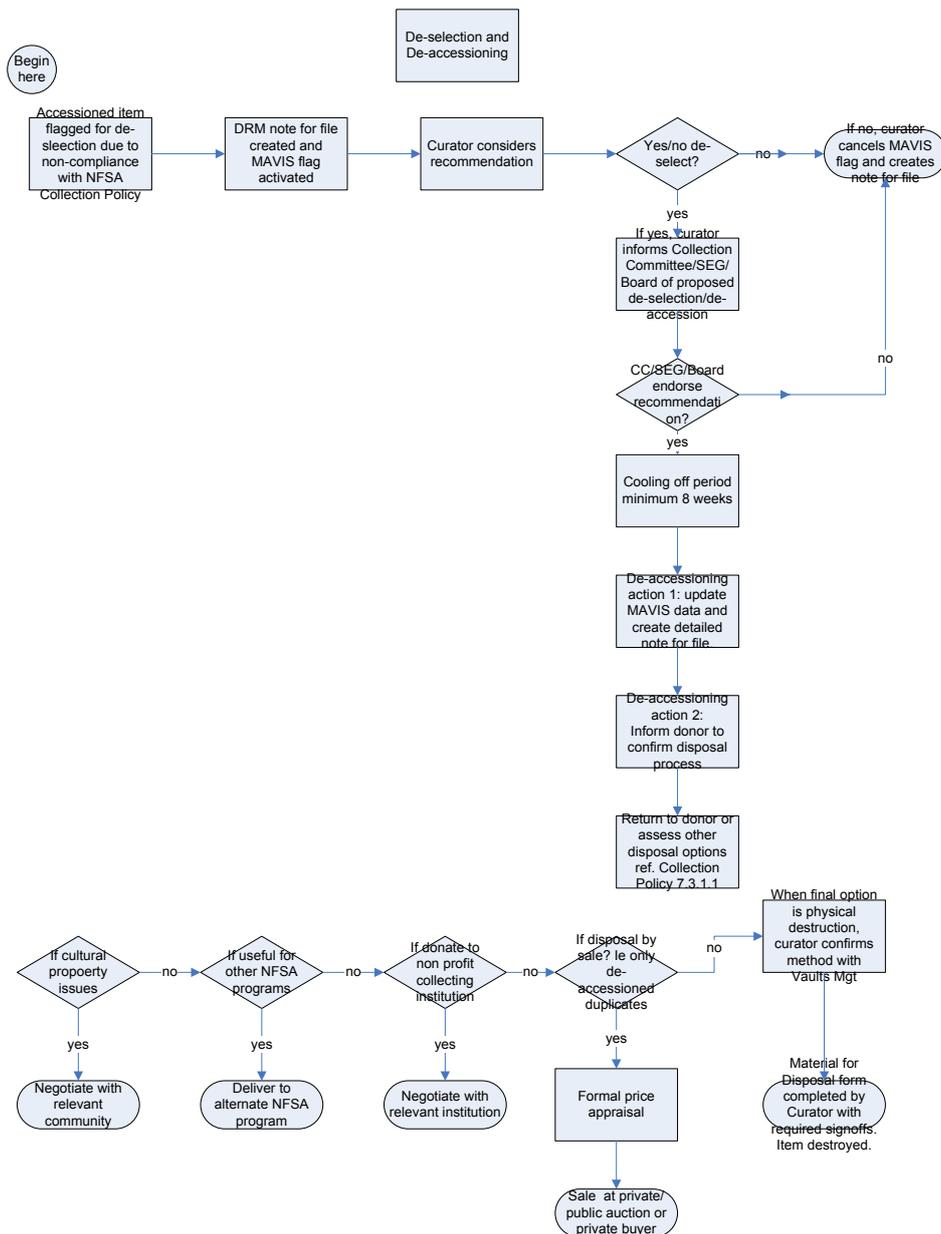
- Professional associations
- Industry associations
- Production and artist promotional sites
- Broadcasters sites
- Industry news
- Online databases and encyclopaedias

APPENDIX C: BASIC ACQUISITION WORKFLOW

This flowchart illustrates a basic overview of the acquisition process.



APPENDIX D: TYPICAL DE-SELECTION WORKFLOW



APPENDIX E: PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACQUISITIONS

The following table a list of the 2010-11 key qualitative and quantitative measures established by the NFSA. These measures are reviewed annually.

Performance Measure: A comprehensive collection acquired in accordance with an updated Collection Policy:

Acquisitions made in accordance with the Collection Policy	100%
Australian feature length films acquired	100
Australian short films acquired	100
Television works acquired	2,000
New Media works acquired	100
Documentaries acquired	150
Recorded sound works acquired	8,000
Documents and artefacts acquired	25,000
Oral Histories acquired	100
International film titles acquired	200
International sound recordings acquired	50
Total new works	35,800

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Accessioning	The process of creating catalogue records by entering descriptive and technical information about works, items and collections into the collection management database.
Acquisition	The process of formally accepting a work, item or collection into the NFSA collection, based on a negotiated agreement with a donor, depositor or other supplier.
Broadcast	Material for transmission through television, radio and online delivery.
Cultural significance	Aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.
Cultural diversity	Cultural identities, communities and groups who make up Australian society. The term includes ethnicity, gender, age, class, sexual orientation, religion and people with sensory, physical and mental disabilities.
Curatorship	The art of collecting, preserving, interpreting and presenting the works in the national audiovisual collection and in the context of world production.
De-accessioning	The process of amending catalogue records to document and indicate that a previously held work, item or collection has been removed from the National Collection.
De-selection	The formal process of research and assessment resulting in a decision to remove a previously acquired item from the collection.

Iconic Works	A creative work or object that is readily recognised and represents great cultural significance to a wide cultural group or alternatively may be regarded as having a special status as particularly representative of, or important to, or loved by, a particular group of people, a place, or a period in history.
Indigenous Collection	The dimension of National Collection works relating to and representing Indigenous people, community and culture. It also refers to productions about or created by Indigenous people.
National Audiovisual Collection	All film, television, recorded sound, radio, document and artefacts works in the NFSA holdings.
New Media	Interactive digital, computerized or networked information and communication technologies.
Non-Selection	The process of research and assessment resulting in a decision not to proceed with acquisition of a work, item or collection on offer.
Published Works	Material intended for release to the general public through purchase or hire.
Repatriation	The return of copies of audiovisual works to relevant organisations and communities.
Stewardship	The protocols, practices and standards that ensure the responsible and sustainable management of the national audiovisual collection entrusted to the NFSA.
Unpublished Works	Material created for private use and not intended for public release.

For a complete Glossary of Terms frequently used by the NFSA, see the NFSA Collection Policy.