GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSET MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

1.   HAVE A STRATEGY

a) Obtain corporate heritage commitment and adopt the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, or similar standards, as the basis for heritage asset management decisions

Standards and Guidelines

Agencies implementing the *Government Cultural Heritage Asset Management Principles* should become familiar with and commit to the set of charters and guidelines that outline standards and best practice principles for the conservation of places and objects of heritage significance. These include:

- The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1999).
- Australian Natural Heritage Charter: for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002)
- Ask First, A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values (2002)

The Burra Charter

The Burra Charter is the widely accepted reference document for heritage conservation standards, philosophy and methodology in Australia. It underpins Australia's local, state/territory and national heritage systems. By committing to using the Burra Charter framework, asset mangers can make more informed decisions about the management of places and objects of cultural heritage significance.

The principles inherent in the Burra Charter are:

- The place itself is important
- Understand the significance of the place
- Understand the fabric
- Significance should guide decisions
- Do as much as necessary, as little as possible
- Keep records
- Do everything in logical order

b) Establish an in-house committee to guide heritage asset management

Role of an in-house committee

It is recommended that an in-house committee be established to guide heritage asset management. The main task of the committee is to prepare, implement and monitor a heritage asset management strategy. Its role may include:

- Providing guidance and support to senior management about the management of heritage places
- Overseeing projects in accordance with a heritage asset management strategy
- Ensuring consistency between the heritage asset management strategy and other corporate objectives and directions
- Approving priorities and allocation of resources for implementation of the heritage asset management strategy
- Ensuring internal stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to heritage asset management.

- Ensuring stakeholders have an appropriate understanding of cultural heritage and its management.

c) Prepare a Heritage Asset Management Strategy

Heritage Asset Management Strategy
It is recommended that each agency prepare and put in place a heritage asset management strategy to implement the *Government Cultural Heritage Asset Management Principles.* The heritage asset management strategy should seek to ensure the conservation of the agency's heritage assets and should be integrated with the agency's corporate plan and other strategic asset management plans and frameworks. In developing the heritage asset management strategy consideration should be given to:
- relevant legislation
  - *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act* 1999 (Comm)
  - *Heritage Act* 1995 (Vic)
  - *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 (Vic)
  - *Aboriginal Heritage Act* 2006 (Vic)
- the whole of government's asset management policy framework
  - "Sustaining Our Assets"
  - "Victorian Government Cultural Heritage Asset Management Principles"
- the agency's core functions and budgetary considerations
- the agency's strategic objectives and service delivery strategy.

Key elements of the heritage asset management strategy should be:
- a management action plan;
- an asset maintenance plan;
- a redundant assets transfer plan;
- an asset transfer plan;
- performance and reporting.

Agencies will need to have regard to the implementation of the heritage asset management strategy as part of their annual budget planning process.

Heritage Victoria has developed a 'Heritage Asset Management Strategy Framework Model' to assist agencies with this task.

2. DEVELOP AN INVENTORY

a) Identify heritage assets including places and objects on the National Heritage List (Commonwealth), the Victorian Heritage Register and Aboriginal Heritage Register (State) and Heritage Overlay (local government)

Identifying heritage assets
Before an agency can manage and conserve its heritage assets, it has to identify the range and extent of heritage places and objects within its ownership and control.

Agencies are encouraged to establish and maintain a heritage inventory which identifies a list of heritage places and objects included on the:
- National Heritage List (national significance),
  http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/list.html

- Victorian Heritage Database (State significance)
  http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Home.aspx

- Heritage Overlay in a local government planning scheme (local significance);
  http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/PlanningSchemes/

- Aboriginal Heritage Register
  http://www.aboriginalaffairs.vic.gov.au/web7/aavmain.nsf/headingpagesdisplay/aboriginal+cultural+heritage

- any additional places or objects such as furniture, archives or collections that are likely to be of heritage significance.

The identification of heritage assets in heritage inventories should cover the full range of heritage places and objects in addition to historic heritage places:

- **Heritage Objects and Collections**
  This may encompass a wide range of object and collection types such as furniture, moveable equipment, transport vehicles and articles of everyday use which contribute to the understanding of the history of the State, region or local area.

- **Archaeological Heritage**
  Historic archaeological sites and objects can include above ground features, such as ruinous buildings and artefact scatters, and sub-surface features and deposits such as buried building foundations and objects. Sites with archaeological potential (sites where no physical evidence exists, but documentary evidence indicates there may be below ground features or deposits) are places which have the potential to contain sub-surface features such as building foundations, wells and buried objects.

- **Maritime Heritage**
  The *Heritage Act* 1995 protects historic shipwrecks and relics in State waters, which includes bays, harbours and rivers such as Port Phillip Bay, Gippsland Lakes and the Goulburn River. Agencies that own or manage State waters (including rivers, harbours, lakes, riverbanks and foreshores) should identify the presence, or likelihood, of these items within their jurisdiction.

- **Aboriginal Heritage**
  This covers Aboriginal places and objects as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act* 2006 (refer to www.aboringinalaffairs.vic.gov.au)

- **Multicultural Heritage**
  This includes items and places significant to ethnic communities. Cultural significance encompasses the breadth of Australia's cultural diversity and the diverse cultural origins and values of groups within the community.

Review of Heritage Asset Inventories
Agencies are encouraged to review and update Heritage Asset Inventories annually to reflect changing circumstances and available information. It is recommended that annual reviews include the:
- addition of newly transferred heritage assets to the agency's portfolio
- addition of new information about existing heritage assets, for example, following the completion of a detailed conservation management plan, or transfer of ownership of any item
- cessation of occupancy
- demolition of an item.

Format of the Heritage Inventory and HERMES

A spreadsheet may initially be the most appropriate tool to list heritage assets; however agencies are encouraged to use HERMES, a heritage data base fully supported by Heritage Victoria.

HERMES was initially built for Heritage Victoria's internal operations but it has been upgraded and modified for use by many local government authorities, state agencies and other organisations. More than 60 local government authorities currently use HERMES as well as the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne Water and the National Trust.

HERMES:

- is a single state-wide database for all post-contact heritage place and object information
- allows for multiple stakeholders to own their own heritage data on HERMES
- is centrally managed (secure, backed up, and with a strategic future)
- keeps heritage information in a standard, consistent format
- is accessible from anywhere through internet login
- has the potential to become part of local planning processes and is integrated with other planning systems (eg planning schemes on-line).

For further information about HERMES and how your agency can use it, contact Heritage Victoria's Information Technology Project Manager.

b) Prepare a thematic history of the government agency

It is preferable for agencies to prepare a thematic history outlining the development of the agency and its predecessors. This will provide a context for the agency's assessment of significance for items in its heritage inventory.

In developing a thematic history, consultation with the following parties can be useful:

- the community;
- current and former agency staff with knowledge of heritage assets;
- relevant peak heritage bodies;
- local government.

c) Assess the significance of heritage places and objects

An assessment of cultural heritage significance should be prepared for each place and object on an agency's heritage inventory.

A significance assessment enables the agency and stakeholders to fully understand the heritage asset and why it is of value for present and future generations. A significance assessment allows managers to consider opportunities for using heritage significance in a positive way, as well as making them aware of constraints or inappropriate development of the item. This means that the conservation of the asset and any new works can then be tailored to have the least impact on its heritage significance.

When preparing a significance assessment the following should be considered:

- the relationship of a place or object to people, cultural groups, communities and places;
- the relationship of an object or collection to a place;
- the relationship of an archaeological asset to the landscape and historic use of the area;

- any significant interiors and associated artworks, furnishings, contents, machinery and other movable objects and collections;
- any garden or landscape setting.

The significance assessment process should be thorough and based on sound research and analysis using documentary and physical evidence. It should not be based on conjecture. Helpful information on the process for assessing heritage places and objects is available at the Heritage Victoria website www.heritage.vic.gov.au and in the Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS).

Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance
The Heritage Council of Victoria has adopted a set of criteria to be used when assessing cultural heritage significance. The criteria have been nationally endorsed by the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand. See:

http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/pubs/nhl-guidelines.pdf

http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Registration/Criteria-for-assessment.aspx

The below criteria are designed to establish State level significance. To establish local level significance, replace "Victoria" with the relevant local area/municipality/region.

A place or object must meet at least one criterion to be considered to have cultural heritage significance. It is not necessary for all criterion to be satisfied.

The criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance are:

Criterion A:
Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion B:
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion C:
Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion D:
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.
Criterion E:
Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion F:
Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Criterion G:
Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

Criterion H:
Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

Statements of significance
A statement of significance is a concise description of the heritage values of a place or object.

The statement of significance describes:
- What is significant
- How it is significant
- Why it is significant

(Further information about writing Statements of Significance may be found on the Heritage Victoria website at http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/admin/file/content2/c7/09_Guidelines.pdf. This information is applicable to any heritage asset at any level of significance.

Curtilage
It is recommended that an appropriate curtilage be identified for all heritage assets to maximise an agencies' ability to retain the significance of the asset. Consideration of the following will assist in this process:
- setting and siting
- landscape and natural vegetation
- cultural plantings
- other landscape elements
- significant views to, from, and within the site
- complementary building groups and institutional complexes.

d) Nominate significant heritage places and objects to the relevant authority

Heritage assets identified by an agency as being of state significance may be nominated for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. Assets of local significance may be referred to the relevant local government authority for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the planning scheme.

For places of state significance, agencies are encouraged to complete the nomination form available from the Heritage Victoria website (http://heritage.vic.gov.au/Forms-Guidelines/Nominate-to-the-Victorian-Heritage-Register.aspx)

Heritage Victoria's publication *Guidelines for Nominators to the Victorian Heritage Register* will assist in the process of documenting and assessing heritage items whatever their level of significance:
http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/admin/file/content2/c7/09_Guidelines.pdfAssessing Heritage Significance

3.   GET APPROPRIATE EXPERTISE

a) Induct staff in heritage awareness

Agencies should ensure that employees, contractors, consultants and companies employed to manage and undertake works to heritage assets are trained in and are familiar with the requirements of the *Cultural Heritage Asset Management Principles.*

This should include strategies to ensure that anyone making management decisions about heritage assets are familiar with the heritage significance of the asset, the implication of their actions on that significance, and any statutory requirements to be fulfilled prior to undertaking works. Strategies and programs should be in place prior to actions taking place.

b) Use appropriately qualified and experienced consultants and contractors

If an agency considers expert advice is required there are a number of specialist heritage professionals available to provide expert advice and hands on work to heritage places and objects

A list is provided on the HV website at http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Heritage-places-objects/Consultants-and-contractors.aspx

c) Engage with other agencies to share experiences and knowledge

Coordination of Heritage Management Activities
It is recommended that agencies explore methods to improve the management of heritage assets such as:
- coordinating activities with other bodies, including other agencies, peak heritage bodies and community groups;
- considering cross agency agreements and resource sharing.

Assistance from Heritage Victoria
Heritage Victoria has a comprehensive website where a range of guidelines, publications and other information can be accessed to assist government asset managers in their work. See http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au

In addition the Heritage Victoria website has a Government Asset Managers Network and access to dedicated extranet resources can be arranged by emailing government.heritage@dpcd.vic.gov.au

Heritage Victoria provides support to heritage asset managers by:
- Co-ordinating and supporting communication across State government agencies managing heritage assets
- Establishing a heritage network of government asset managers for officers to communicate with their peers, share information, gain skills and keep up to date with heritage management
- Promoting implementation of the Victorian Government Cultural Heritage Asset Management Principles
- Developing asset managers skills in heritage management and policy, and in the technical aspects of heritage management through training opportunities, seminars and forums
- Disseminating models and standards establishing best practice in heritage management
- Promoting creative solutions & successful agency case studies
- Providing online resources and a secure 'Public Heritage' extranet

4. APPLY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

a) Integrate heritage management as part of existing best practice asset management tools

Condition Reporting
Agencies need to incorporate a system to monitor and report on the physical condition of heritage assets listed in a heritage inventory. Prompt action on changes in condition should be taken to ensure heritage significance is not eroded.

Maintenance
Agencies should regularly maintain, repair or store heritage assets so as to retard or prevent deterioration due to the effects of fire, vandalism, theft or weather. This will

reduce the need for major repairs (conservation works). An asset maintenance plan should be prepared that considers:

- linking the asset to the agency's service strategies
- defining the level of performance required from the place or object
- medium-term plans (five to ten years) including major impending tasks
- long-term plans (ten years plus) including conservation of major components.

Conservation works to heritage assets should be planned and undertaken so that the heritage significance is conserved. Repairs should follow the *Burra Charter* principle: "do as much as necessary, but as little as possible". Best practice conservation techniques should be used in repairing heritage assets. Ensure that all statutory approvals are obtained prior to undertaking conservation works.

Using Heritage Assets
The most effective way to ensure the long-term survival of a heritage asset is to have it used and/or occupied. The continued use of an asset for its original purpose may also be important to maintain its heritage significance. Wherever possible, an agency should endeavour to maintain that use. Where it is not desirable or practical to continue an original use, an agency should seek an adaptive re-use compatible with the asset's heritage significance. This will assist in its conservation and interpretation.

In considering re-use options, agencies should consider the following matters:

- the results of an examination to identify and implement options compatible with retaining the item's heritage significance.
- the significance of the site as a whole, not just the individual heritage asset. Consider the heritage significance of all components of the site (and their interaction) including the landscape, setting, views and vistas
- the rarity of the heritage asset. Consider the number of similar assets of the same type to determine the cumulative impact of change.
- the intactness of the heritage asset and whether this intactness is rare and contributes to its significance.

Information available from Heritage Victoria
The Heritage Victoria website has a number of technical notes that will assist an agency to develop an asset maintenance plan which achieves heritage conservation outcomes, while optimising the efficient use of funding for the agency's maintenance regimes. These are:

- Preparing a maintenance Plan
  http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/admin/file/content2/c7/prepmaintplan.pdf
- Documenting maintenance and repair work
  http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/admin/file/content2/c7/Maintenance&Repair.pdf
- Inspection schedule
  http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/admin/file/content2/c7/InspectionSchedule.pdf

There is also a series of technical notes about a range of heritage maintenance issues available about at:

http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Publications/Technical-information.aspx

Topics include:

- Walls – cleaning masonry
- Metal work
- Roof slating
- Corrugated steel roofing
- Timber wood preservation
- Timber tongue and groove floorboards

- Timber repairs
- Rising damp and salt attack
- Repointing mortar joints
- Heritage gardens
- Patching old floorboards
- Removing Paint
- The Need for Old Buildings to Breath
- Basic Lime wash

b) Ensure disposal and transfer processes are consistent with good heritage outcomes

Redundant Assets Plan
The heritage asset management strategy should include a plan for the management and conservation of heritage assets with no apparent economic re-use options. Where heritage assets do not meet the service delivery needs of an agency, alternate management options including transfer or lease to other parties should be thoroughly investigated, prior to any proposal to demolish.

Asset Transfer Plan
Agencies are encouraged to prepare and implement a plan outlining management requirements for heritage assets proposed for transfer. The plan should outline measures to achieve the long-term conservation of the heritage asset.

Actions Prior to Heritage Asset Transfer
An agency should use its best endeavours to have a heritage asset listed on the State Heritage Register or included under the Heritage Overlay in a local planning scheme prior to disposal, where timeframes allow.

c) Talk to relevant authorities early in any development proposal

It is recommended that where significant changes to a heritage asset are planned discussions are held with all relevant agencies and stakeholders as soon as possible so that any heritage issues can be identified up front.

The Heritage Victoria website has comprehensive information and guidelines on when a permit may be required for works to heritage asset included on the Heritage Register.

http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au//Permits.aspx

To determine whether a permit is required for works to a place included in the Heritage Overlay of a local planning scheme, check the local planning scheme online at:

http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/planningschemes/index.html

or contact the local government authority directly.

Conservation Management Plans (CMP)
A CMP is a useful tool to guide change and the long-term management of a heritage asset. It can also be used as the basis for seeking exemptions from the need to obtain permits to undertake work on a heritage asset of state or local significance. Agencies should aim to have a CMP prepared for every heritage asset listed on the State Heritage Register where major works are planned.

(For more information see http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Heritage-places-objects/Conservation-management-plans.aspx)

Records and Archives
Records about the history and conservation of a heritage asset should be conserved and made publicly available where possible.

Education and Promotion of Heritage Assets
Agencies are encouraged to develop and implement public heritage promotion and education initiatives celebrating and promoting heritage assets as well as highlighting the heritage outcomes achieved.

The Community and Change of Use
When determining uses for heritage assets, agencies should consider:
- the interest of the community in the asset;
- means for harnessing community interest; and
- potential community opposition likely to be created by a change of use.

Users of Heritage Assets
Users of heritage assets should be made aware of heritage significance and conservation requirements and be required to use assets in a way which retains that heritage significance (this may include lease/contractual requirements).

5. MONITOR PERFORMANCE

The heritage asset management strategy should include indicators relevant to the heritage asset type and functions of the agency to monitor performance. Such indicators could address:
- heritage conservation outcomes;
- business outcomes;
- service delivery obligations;
- asset portfolio performance requirements;
- community satisfaction;
- comparison of actual performance against anticipated performance.

Results of monitoring will inform the periodic reviews of the heritage asset management strategy by the agency and budget planning.

REFERENCES

Burra Charter http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html

Cultural Heritage Strategy 2008-2011, Preserving and promoting our cultural heritage by Melbourne Water

http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au

State Agency Heritage Guide, Management of Heritage Assets by NSW Government Agencies by NSW Heritage Office 2005

Cultural Heritage Asset Management Principles by Heritage Victoria October 2009