

**REVIEW of MUSEUMS &  
GALLERIES NSW  
February 2010**

**10 Year Review and Analysis of the  
Current Role, Programs and Operations of  
M&G NSW  
Vol 1 – Report**

**Prepared for:**

**ARTS NSW**

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&**

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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Museums and Galleries NSW (M&G NSW) was established in 1998 as the result of a decision of the NSW government to fund one peak body to represent the museums and galleries sector. Prior to this funding had been provided to Museums Australia NSW Branch and also to the NSW Regional Galleries Association.

The sector encompasses galleries and museums throughout NSW and includes both professional and volunteer organisations. There are over 540 museums, 34 regional galleries, 27 artist-run spaces and 15 Keeping Places in NSW. M&G NSW has an increasing association with the 175 historical societies in NSW, many of which operate museums. With the convergence of some museums, galleries and libraries M&G NSW also has an association with some of the 266 libraries throughout the state.

M&G NSW has a particular emphasis on regional museums and galleries.

The NSW government currently provides M&G NSW with core funding of \$770,000 pa from its Arts Funding Program to fulfil its charter as *the leading agency to develop, support and promote regional, community and public museums and galleries across NSW*.<sup>1</sup> The government also provides \$245,000 pa for M&G NSW to devolve to its constituent organisations to deliver specific programs to museums and galleries. The NSW government's funding is 62% of the total income of M&G NSW. The Commonwealth Government, through the Australia Council and the Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts, currently contributes \$285,000 (16.3%) for specific programs. Income from M&G NSW programs is \$152,000. Smaller amounts of revenue come from sponsorship and grants.

M&G NSW is located in The Gunnery, 43-51 Cowper Wharf Rd, Woolloomooloo NSW. It is a company limited by guarantee with a governing board of 11 directors drawn from the sector, local government, academia and industry. The organisation employs 14 EFT staff. M&G NSW conducts a number of programs across the state with a particular emphasis on regional NSW. Its programs include grants; professional development; sector development; exhibitions; resources; awards; research and advocacy.

Arts NSW, as the major funding agency for M&G NSW, and as a matter of best practice, determined that it would be appropriate to undertake a review of M&G NSW after its first ten years of operation. The review has been conducted by Peter Watts AM and Leapfrog Research.

The review was conducted through a program of extensive consultation across the state involving face to face interviews with approximately 50 key stakeholders and constituents, an electronic survey of the sector with 158 returns, and desktop research.

This report presents an overview of the desk research material and the findings of the stakeholder interviews, qualitative research and online quantitative study.

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from *M&G NSW About Us*, brochure

The major findings of the review are:

- M&G NSW is fulfilling a vital function for the museum and gallery sector as a major form of support for a range of museums and galleries in regional, rural and metropolitan areas and deserves ongoing funding to maintain a role in the sector.
- With the growth of the sector in the past ten years and a more strategic approach being adopted by Arts NSW, changes in the sector environment as well as the substantially increased engagement of local government, it would be appropriate for M&G NSW and Arts NSW to work with the sector to develop a long term *Strategic Plan for the Development of the Sector*. Such a plan would clarify the role, structure and priorities of M&G NSW and guide its future development.
- Since the development of the sector in the long term is likely to result from strong advocacy, M&G NSW should focus more of its attention and resources on high level strategic and advocacy issues at the expense, but not to the total exclusion, of service delivery programs.
- The management structure and salaries of staff should be adjusted to reflect a more senior and strategic role for M&G NSW to attract fewer, but more experienced, staff.
- Arts NSW should take a more active role in working with M&G NSW to ensure it is responding to government priorities and is engaged with the key issues as it sees them.
- M&G NSW should review its constitution with a view to allowing some elected representation from the sector to the board.
- In keeping with its peak body status M&G NSW needs to improve its visibility with a broad range of government agencies and other organisations.
- M&G NSW needs to give particular attention to a rift that has developed between itself and regional galleries.
- M&G NSW should make some adjustments to its programming to improve effectiveness and viability and respond to sector needs.

## 2.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AGNSW	Art Gallery of NSW
CCA	Collections Council of Australia
CI's	Major State Cultural Institutions (Australian Museum, Art Gallery of NSW, State Library of NSW, Powerhouse Museum, Historic Houses Trust)
Constituents	The museums, galleries and keeping places to whom M&G NSW services are targeted.
DASR	Department of Arts Sport and Recreation, now called (as of 1 July 2009) Department of Communities
DEWHA	(Commonwealth) Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts
DGR	Deductible Gift Recipient ie an organisation with tax deductible status
DOCITA	(Commonwealth) Department of Communications Information Technology and the Arts
HHT	Historic Houses Trust of NSW
MA NSW	Museums Australia (NSW Branch)
M&G NSW	Museums and Galleries NSW
M&GS Qld	Museums & Gallery Services Queensland
NETS	National Exhibitions Touring Support Australia
RGA	Regional Galleries Association (changed to R&PGA NSW)
R&PGA NSW	Regional and Public Galleries Association of NSW
Sector	Refers to museums and galleries as a single sector
Segment	Refers to different parts of the sector, most particularly museums, and galleries, as two different segments
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales

Note: the expression '*Research, data collection and policy development*, or similar, is used in different forms throughout this report. It does not necessarily imply pure research. Rather it supposes the gathering of data and opinions from constituents that help to demonstrate issues facing the sector and allows for the development and articulation of positions and policies from which the sector can mount cases for support.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Development of the Sector

The museum, gallery and library sectors have seen significant change in the past 30 odd years. The museum and gallery domains have seen particular change whereas the library sector has been more stable since The NSW Library Act of 1939 centralised library services through the State Library of NSW and provided significant funding for the sector. This report, therefore, focuses on the museum and gallery sector, other than to refer to the impact of the growing trend to converge two, or sometimes even three, of the domains (museums, galleries and libraries) in some regional locations.

Until the 1970's there were very few regional galleries in NSW (Newcastle, Broken Hill, Tamworth Wollongong) and very few museums with any professional staff. The then three major state collecting institutions all delivered significant programs in regional NSW. These included:

- The Powerhouse Museum train;
- Art Gallery of NSW operated a truck and F/T driver and education staff permanently 'on the road';
- The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (now Powerhouse Museum) had satellite museums eg Bathurst and Broken Hill.

By the late 1980s and early 1990's, the financial pressure brought about through declining budgets and major new capital infrastructure at the city based institutions, caused them to gradually withdraw their large subsidised regional programs to concentrate on their core facilities and programs. However this coincided with a period where there was political pressure for these institutions to engage actively with regional communities and they responded with more targeted programs to support regional communities.

Grants programs to regional galleries and museums were modest and were delivered through the then Ministry for the Arts. Museums Australia and the Regional Galleries Association were funded for their secretariat and for occasional special projects.

By the mid 1990's, and having been encouraged by the Bicentennial celebrations in 1988, governments at all levels became increasingly interested in the development of cultural resources and there was an explosion of museum and gallery activity throughout the community. Government continued to provide direct funding for major projects and capital infrastructure but developed a model of Sydney based peak bodies to deal with professional and sector development and to manage smaller devolved funding programs.

### 3.2 Macdonnell Report 1996

In order to address the particular needs of regional communities Justin Macdonnell, was commissioned by the then Ministry for the Arts to enquire into this particular sector. His report, titled *Review of Regional Arts Development in NSW* was presented in December 1996.

One of the three key findings of the Macdonnell Report was for *an expanded brief especially, in remote and rural parts of the State, for the Regional Galleries Association of NSW with a clearer demarcation between its role and that of Museums Australia (NSW)*. Recommendation 21 of the report stated:

*That in line with its overall objective of ensuring a greater measure of coordination in funding and best value for the funds it expends on regional arts, the Ministry for Arts require that Museums Australia (NSW) and the Regional Galleries Association of NSW engage in a joint strategic planning exercise aimed at rationalising the anomalies and areas of overlap that exist between them; and that this exercise be completed as soon as possible and in any event within the next six months.*

Up to that time Museums Australia NSW (MA NSW) and the Regional Galleries Association (RGA) were perceived as the peak bodies for NSW museums and galleries respectively. Both organisations were membership based. In the case of MA NSW membership comprised museum organisations, their professional staff and interested members of the community. Membership of the RGA comprised the 30 odd regional galleries plus a number of metropolitan galleries. Both MA NSW and the RGA received funding from the then Ministry for the Arts for administrative purposes. Whilst the RGA was a state based organisation, MA NSW was a chapter of the national Museums Australia and remitted much of its funding to the central body which tended to dictate policy and priorities. Both organisations were member based. By the late 1990's there were divisions within each organisation and there was a view that they had become less effective.

### **3.3 Creation of Museums & Galleries NSW 1998**

In April 1998 on the advice of the Arts Advisory Council approval was given for the formation of a single service organisation for the museums and galleries sector. A Joint Working Party of both MA NSW and RGA was formed, facilitated by an independent consultant and assisted through six regional consultations. On the basis of this work the Ministry for the Arts withdrew funding from MA NSW and the RGA and agreed to fund a new organisation called the Museums and Galleries Foundation of NSW (now M&G NSW) to combine the functions of the previous two organisations. The Minister appointed the first Chair, Shane Simpson, for a period of three years. The CEO was appointed by the board in March 1999.

M&G NSW was established on 23 December 1998 as a non-profit company limited by guarantee and sees itself as *the key support agency for the museum and gallery sector in NSW*.

The benefits of operating services to the sector through a single new organisation were stated to be:

- *A coherent approach to the delivery of services to regions through one agency, not two;*
- *A reflection of recent developments in museums and galleries both in the field, particularly regionally, and within museum studies;*
- *To encourage greater synergy and resource sharing between museums and galleries in regional NSW;*
- *To create a strong, single voice to advocate for museums and art galleries;*



- *Achieve enhanced services through cost efficiencies via the elimination of duplication of administration and through consolidation of certain programs.*

On 11 December 1998 the Ministry for the Arts issued a document titled *Roles and Functions of the Museums and Galleries Foundation of New South Wales*. Appendix 1 (See Vol. 2). This set out the 24 core functions of M&G NSW under the following general areas:

- Advocacy;
- Professional Development and Training;
- Advisory Services;
- Provision of Resources.

MA NSW and the RGA continue to operate, albeit on a significantly reduced scale. RGA has become the Regional & Public Galleries Association of NSW (R&PGA NSW).

In 2008 M&G NSW received funding of \$834,000 from the NSW Government through Arts NSW, with additional funding of \$244,000<sup>2</sup> to administer specific devolved funding programs. M&G NSW was also assisted by grants totalling \$285,000 from the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council for the Arts and also Visions of Australia, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts. Income from M&G NSW programs is \$152,000. Smaller amounts of revenue come from sponsorship and grants.

### ***3.4 Changes in environment since creation of M&G NSW***

Since the establishment of M&G NSW there have been a number of changes in the sector including:

- Local government has become increasingly engaged with cultural issues and councils are now required to produce 10 year Community Strategic Plans which includes a cultural component. This has led to significant and growing support from local government for the development of the cultural sector, including museums and galleries, and an expectation that local government should support its own cultural organisations;
- Some local governments have engaged Regional Museum Officers or equivalents (Wollongong, Part Macquarie-Hastings, Wagga Wagga, Tweed River district). Orange has a Museum Advisor paid from devolved grant and Council funds
- Regional museums have begun to play 'catch-up' with their regional gallery colleagues as can be seen in Albury, Wagga Wagga, Bathurst, Dubbo, Newcastle and, in the near future Tweed Shire;

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<sup>2</sup> Figures are provided by M&G NSW and will vary marginally from those of Arts NSW as they are actual figures.

- A growing trend in local government, in an attempt to create efficiencies, by amalgamating - managerially and sometimes physically - the different domains of library, gallery and museum;
- Huge advances in ICT have/will/should enable business to be conducted differently and community expectations to change;
- Increasing political pressure for major CI's to engage more actively with regional communities has resulted in more targeted programs;
- Leadership from Communities NSW is causing the major CI's to work more cooperatively with one another in delivering regional services;
- Growing professionalism within the sector and the concurrent need for professional development and support;
- Change in focus from collections to audiences and greater accountability to communities;
- Growing diversity in the roles and responsibilities of institutions including an expectation that they will be involved in community cultural development;
- Increased community expectation of diversity and quality of exhibitions and other programs;
- Growing use of institutions for education purposes;
- Establishment of the Collections Council of Australia (though it was announced in mid October 2009 that its' funding would be withdrawn) which has driven an agenda of the establishment of regional hubs;
- New opportunities for grant funding through the Commonwealth for specialist grants for touring exhibitions and direct funding to individual arts organisations and state based organisations, such as M&G NSW;
- Changes to Arts NSW and specifically:
  - Arts NSW is now part of a much larger department, Communities NSW, and there have been changes in structures, strategic direction and personnel;
  - Arts NSW has recently established a Research Unit to undertake research to inform and underpin policy initiatives;
  - The Arts NSW Museum Committee and Visual Arts and Craft Committee no longer exist which has changed, to some extent, the relationship between M&G NSW and Arts NSW;
  - Funding provided for one CI each year to develop a major exhibition to tour regionally.

### ***3.5 Sizing-up the Sector<sup>3</sup>***

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<sup>3</sup> Information provided by M&G NSW

ABS information indicates that **over 31%** of museums and galleries in Australia are located in NSW. The following data was collected by M&G NSW in 2008:

- **621 museums and galleries in NSW**, broken down as follows:
  - **35** state or federally funded cultural institutions;
  - **37 regional galleries** managed by local government;
  - **38 museums** managed by local government;
  - **24 professionally-staffed galleries** including University-funded galleries;
  - **59 professionally-staffed museums** including those managed by Trusts, universities and community groups;
  - **59 community galleries and artist run initiatives**;
  - **349 volunteer community museums** ;
  - **20 Aboriginal keeping places and cultural centres.**
- Approximately **34%** of all these are located in **greater metropolitan Sydney**, with **30%** in **coastal regional areas** and **36%** in **non-coastal regional areas** of the state;
- Visitor numbers to museums and galleries in NSW are estimated at **7 - 7.5 million per year** including the major state cultural institutions;
- An average of **1.5 – 2 million people visit museums and galleries** outside the CBD each year. These organisations are managed by **300 - 400 staff** and **3,500 – 4,000 volunteers**.

### **3.6 Review**

As M&G NSW has now been in operation for ten years, and in accordance with best practice and in the context of emerging needs and changes that have taken place in the sector, the Department of Arts, Sport and Recreation (subsequently incorporated into the Communities NSW) resolved to undertake a review of the organisation. Peter Watts AM Emeritus Director Historic Houses Trust and Leapfrog Research, in partnership, submitted an Expression of Interest to undertake the work and were successful. The review was managed by Ms Mary Darwell, Executive Director, Arts NSW assisted by Martyn Killion, Principal Policy Officer, Arts NSW.

## 4.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following Terms of Reference were given in the Department of Arts, Sport and Recreation, Specification of Work – Review of Museums and Galleries NSW.

A detailed examination of M&G NSW's funding from the State Government in the context of: the State Plan priorities, the Report of the Review of the NSW Cultural Grants Program, the regional programs of the State's cultural institutions as well as other organisations, and major trends in the cultural sector, such as the increasing convergence of museums, galleries and libraries in regional areas, will be undertaken.

The review will include an assessment of M&G NSW's work in meeting the NSW Government's objectives for arts and cultural development in NSW and the priority needs of the museums and galleries sector, Local Government and the community, particularly in regional NSW.

*The review will:*

- *Review the current role, programs and operations of M&G NSW and assess its relevance in the context of services provided by other cultural sector organisations in meeting the priority needs of the sector and the NSW State Government;*
- *Examine the cost effectiveness of M&G NSW in delivering exhibition services and programs to museums and galleries, particularly in regional NSW;*
- *Identify opportunities for strategic partnerships between key stakeholder groups such as Local Government and the Australia Council;*
- *Analyse the impact and outcomes on the sector of NSW State Government funding provided to M&G NSW, particularly in relation to capacity building and professional development;*
- *Consider the efficiency and effectiveness of M&G NSW in managing Arts NSW devolved funding and assess whether the devolved funding arrangements are well targeted to priority sector needs;*
- *Make recommendations relating to the future provision of services to museums and galleries, in particular in regional NSW, having regard to the State Plan and other NSW Government policies and objectives.*

## 5.0 REVIEW METHODOLOGY

We adopted a staged approach of information gathering and progressive assessment using a discovery procedure to uncover issues and evaluate the role and effectiveness of M&G NSW as the project proceeded. Issues that emerged along the way were fed into subsequent interviews until an overall picture emerged. The project proceeded in the following way:

### ***5.1 Initial and Progressive Consultation with Arts NSW***

During the course of the review we consulted on a regular basis with Martyn Killion who facilitated access to documents and people and provided much

useful information. We met formally with Mary Darwell, Executive Director Arts NSW on 4 occasions, being 26 June, 8 July, 14 September and 15 October. These occasions provided an important opportunity to discuss the progress of the review including any findings as they emerged and to refine the approach as appropriate.

A draft report was submitted to Arts NSW on 11 November 2009, amended as a result of discussions, and the final report was submitted on 26 February 2010.

## **5.2 Information Gathering**

This took the form of:

- **Face to Face Interviews with Key Stakeholders**  
Following consultation with Arts NSW we identified 10 key stakeholders to interview. These interviews were generally of 1½ - 2 hours duration. Together with the Terms of Reference, these interviews set the scene for the range of issues to be explored in the process that followed. Those interviewed are listed in Appendix 2 (See Vol. 2).
- **Desk Research**  
A wide range of documents were reviewed in the early stages as part of the review.
- **Face to face Interviews with Cultural Organisations and Key Individuals**  
Following the advice of the Key Stakeholders and then consultation and approval of Arts NSW, 24 individuals were selected for interview. They were chosen to represent a range of geographic areas, different types and scale of organisation and different domains. By the completion of the study 42 people had been formally interviewed. A list of these interviewees and the place of interview is at Appendix 4 (See Vol. 2). More than half these represented regional institutions. Almost all interviews were conducted at the interviewee's place of employment so that the institution itself could be visited. This provided an opportunity to talk informally to other staff, volunteers and visitors and to gain an impression of the institution.
- **Telephone Interviews**  
Other individuals were suggested along the way and we spoke to these by telephone in order, generally, to explore a particular aspect of the review.

## **5.3 Quantitative Online Survey - Usage and Attitudes Study**

The third part of the review consisted of a quantitative study which was designed to obtain responses from a broader base of potential and current users of M&G NSW services. A quantitative online survey (Appendix 6) was conducted with users and non-users of M&G NSW services. It was proposed as the most cost efficient way in which information could be gathered from a broad range of organisation across both urban and regional areas.

The survey was constructed to be completed online and took from 25 – 30 minutes to complete. It was designed to elicit accurate responses to specific questions.

The key areas of inquiry were:

- Source of contact with M&G NSW
- Usage of services
- Frequency of use of M&G NSW services
- Funding derived through M&G NSW
- Areas in which funding received – grant/project funding/salary funding etc.
- Evaluation of services used
- Attitudes to M&G NSW services
- Satisfaction with services vs other providers
- Level of meeting expectations
- Future intent for use of services
- Willingness to recommend services to other organisations
- Usage of other service providers

The data was collected via an online survey approach to ensure efficient feedback and more accurate reporting of data. The survey went live on 5 August 2009 and remained open for two weeks. It was sent to 514 email addresses and 158 responses were received. The email addresses were largely provided by M&G NSW. Two reminders were sent to those who had been forwarded the email link to the survey. There were some respondents who were not able to access the survey during time the survey was open and who made a request by email to be included. These organisations were re-sent the link to the survey several weeks later and those who responded were included in the data.

## **DETAILED FINDINGS**

## 6.0 OVERVIEW OF MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES NSW

### 6.1 Corporate Entity

Museums and Galleries Foundation of New South Wales (M&G NSW) is a company limited by guarantee and has charitable status. It has a governing board of 11 Directors drawn from the sector, local government, academia and industry.

The company's constitution (Appendix 3) has been amended in several relatively minor ways on several occasions. The board of directors are also the members and there are no shareholders. The Directors are responsible for the appointment of new Directors who may serve for a continuous period of 8 years. The Chair is appointed by the board for a period of 5 years.

The company is listed on the Register of Cultural Organisations, and as such holds deductible gift recipient (DGR) status and is listed as income tax exempt with the Australian Tax Office.

M&G NSW is not a membership based organisation.

### 6.2 Role of M&G NSW

The document *Roles and Functions of the Museums and Galleries Foundation of New South Wales* December 1998 (Appendix 1) established the Government's expectation for M&G NSW. The primary functions of Advocacy, Professional Development and Training, Advisory Services and Provision of Resources set out in that document remain the primary programs of M&G NSW in 2009.

These are reflected in the objectives as contained within the M&G NSW Constitution. The key objectives were:

- *To act on behalf of and represent the museums and galleries sectors in developing and maintaining the infrastructure of museums and galleries throughout the State of NSW;*
- *To represent the museums and galleries sectors in NSW in public forums and debates locally, regionally and nationally;*
- *To provide advice to, and liaise with Government at all levels on museums and galleries issues;*
- *To develop and maintain networks linking and servicing museums and galleries in NSW in concert with State and local Government;*
- *To provide opportunities for skills development in respect of people and organisations working and operating in the museums and galleries sectors;*
- *To co-ordinate, organise and develop conferences, lectures, talks, events, training, programs and activities such as workshops and seminars related to the museums and galleries sectors;*
- *To develop a culture which promotes best practice and the highest standards in the museums and galleries sectors;*



- *To facilitate the management and maintenance of cultural programs in the museums and galleries sectors and to provide links to existing sectors and networks.*

M&G NSW describes itself now as:

*The leading agency to develop, support and promote regional, community and public museums and galleries across NSW. Our focus is on increasing community participation and engagement with NSW museums and galleries to create lifelong learning, improved communication and build harmonious communities.*

*M&G NSW presents strategic programs, provides ongoing advocacy and develops services which play a pivotal role in nurturing sustainable museums and galleries and keeping places within their community.*

*We respond to issues impacting the sector, such as sustainability, new operational models, such as convergence, and new legislation. We capitalise on opportunities to support our sector into the future through information sharing, new programs and the development of new resources. We aim to ensure the ongoing provision of enjoyable, enriching cultural experiences for the people of NSW.<sup>4</sup>*

M&G NSW acts as the NETS agency for NSW. NETS Australia is a national network of independent arts organisations committed to promoting and presenting contemporary art, craft and design through touring exhibitions and is funded through the Australia Council. The network provides a coordinated approach to touring exhibition programming, audience development initiatives, public and education programming and professional development, with an emphasis on regional access.

### **6.3 Board**

*The Museums & Galleries NSW Board plays a key role in the strategic development of the organisation and the management of its resources. The Board adds value to the organisation, through its expertise, judgment, knowledge, and connections. It focuses on critical issues which will impact on the effectiveness of the organisation to meet its functional responsibilities. The Board works through the CEO, who is delegated to manage the organisation's resources and strategic direction. The Board also appoints and monitors the work of the CEO.<sup>5</sup>*

The board is currently chaired by Ms Ros Strong who has broad experience and knowledge of both education and heritage issues at a state level. The current 11 board members (9 full directors plus two co-opted directors as provided for in the constitution) have backgrounds, at a senior level, in a range of areas:

- *Public sector management*
- *Heritage policy and management*
- *Community development*
- *Local government*

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<sup>4</sup> Extract from *M&G NSW About Us*, brochure

<sup>5</sup> Extract from M&G NSW website

- *Cultural planning*
- *Regional interests*
- *Law, Technology and media*
- *Art history and theory and associated curatorial interests*
- *State cultural institutions*
- *Indigenous issues*
- *Design and architecture*
- *Academia*

The board operates at a strategic level, meeting 5 times each year, with one such meeting being in a regional area where the opportunity is taken to visit local museums and galleries and meet the Councillors, staff, volunteers and community representatives involved in the museum and gallery sector.

## **6.4 Reference Committees**

M&G NSW has a number of Reference Committees with an average of 8 members drawn from a broad range of places and interests and who bring a depth of knowledge and experience to the work of M&G NSW. The committees each meet twice a year and assist in the development of programs and provide advice and assistance as required. Both the Volunteer Reference Committee and the Visual Arts Reference Committee also provide members for Grants Committees. Committee membership is reviewed annually and members are invited to join by the M&G NSW Convenor responsible for each committee.

Since 2008 MA NSW and P&RG NSW nominate a member for both the Museums Reference Committee and Visual Arts Reference Committee respectively. Both MA NSW and P&RG NSW have representatives on the IMAGinE Awards Committee.

M&G NSW currently has six committees:

- *Museum Reference Committee*
- *Economic Value Study Steering Group*
- *Regional Audience Development Committee*
- *Visual Arts Reference Committee*
- *Volunteer Reference Committee*
- *Standards Review Committee*

## **6.5 Management**

The CEO is responsible for the day to day operations of the company. The current CEO, Maisy Stapleton, has held this position since March 1999 . There are a further 12 staff, two of whom work 4 days/week. The business is structured under two General Managers (Programs and Services; Finance and Administration). Two of the staff and a consultant are funded through Australia Council grants – two (including a consultant) being allocated to the current Audience Evaluation Project and one through NETS funding to manage the touring exhibitions program. At any one time there are also a number of interns.

Whilst staff have particular programs to manage the nature of a relatively small organisation such as M&G NSW means there is a great deal of cross-over and most staff are multi-skilled and work across multiple areas.

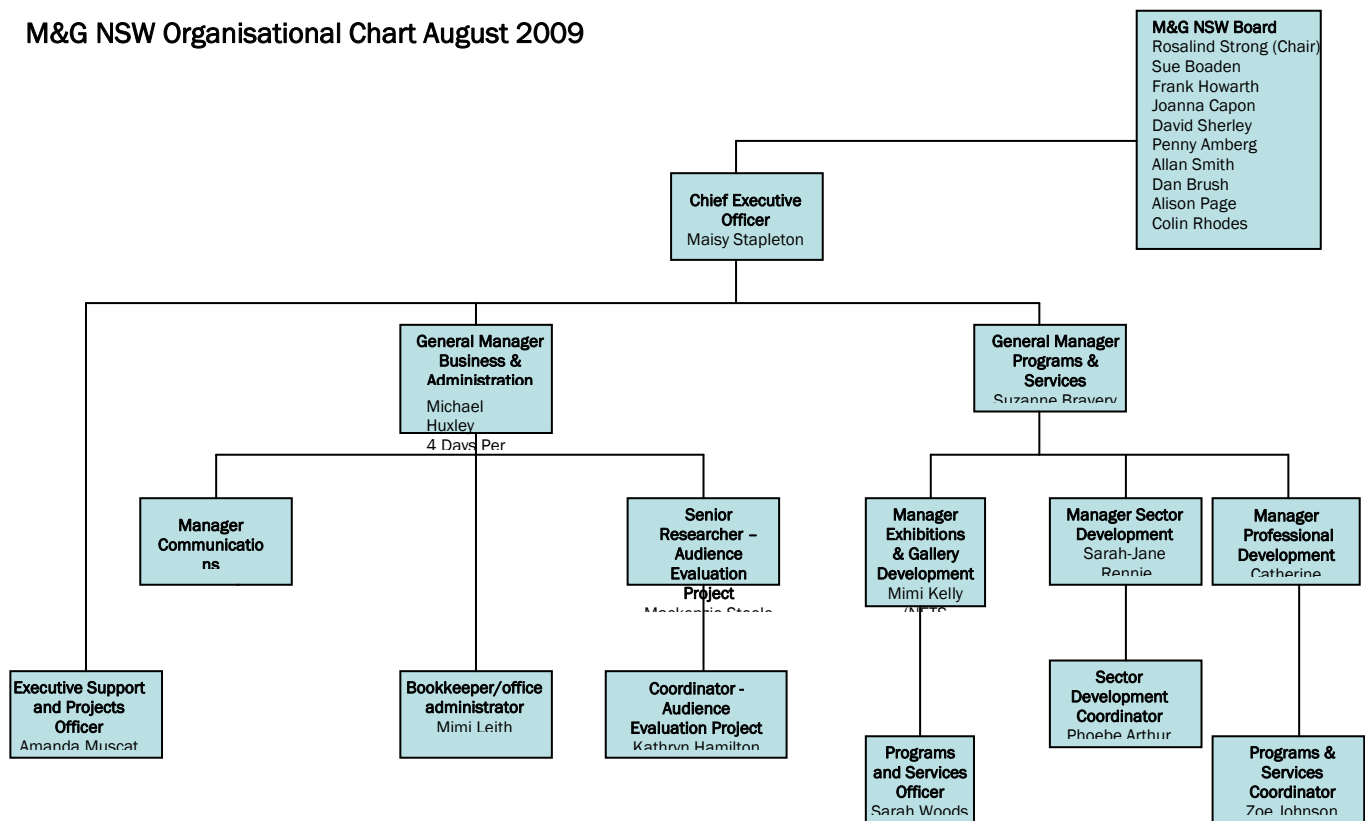
In recent times there has been considerable staff turnover. This has caused management difficulties and considerable disgruntlement with constituents.

The reasons advanced for this turnover have been:

- Low salaries by comparison with the sector;
- M&G NSW being an excellent training ground for entry level staff who quickly “learn on the job” and are then able to gain better salaried positions elsewhere;
- A recent high level of staff on maternity leave;
- An unusually high number of partners of staff gaining positions interstate leading to resignations;
- Limited career opportunities within M&G NSW.

This situation appears to have stabilised in the past 6 months or so.

M&G NSW Organisational Chart August 2009



## 6.6 Office Accommodation

M&G NSW is located in The Gunnery, 43 - 51 Cowper Wharf Rd., Woolloomooloo NSW 2011 together with other arts agencies including the Biennale, Arts Law Centre Artspace, and the National Association for the Visual Arts amongst others. M&G NSW leases 240 sq m from Arts NSW at a current annual rental of approximately \$13,000 incl. GST. The lease expires in 2012. There is no parking.

According to the CEO of M&G NSW: *"Management of the facility depends largely on how obliging and responsible each of the tenant organisations is. The premises are also subject to the peculiarity of being sandwiched between a contemporary art space – which often includes loud sound installations – and artists working in studios above – using strange solvents and playing loud music, or from time to time flooding their sinks with dire consequences for office equipment and desks below... The office size is fine, but I would prefer a better fit-out, with workstations, etc and some system of 'order'.... I have thought in an ideal world we need a large storage space for crates, etc to enable better touring and perhaps ... for a small exhibition space, if only to demonstrate hanging and lighting systems.*

## 6.7 Programs

From 2000 – 2008 M&G NSW presented 862 events, activities and individual programs. Of these, 714 or 83% were undertaken in regions beyond the Sydney metropolitan area.

M&G NSW operates nine major programs as described below:

### 1: Professional Development

#### Seminars and Workshops

In order to foster critical debate, increase standards and skills and build expertise throughout the sector M&G NSW offers a diverse program of seminars, master classes and roundtable discussions.

Up to 2008, 6,635 individual participants had attended 160 events, professional and skills development programs. Some 2,693 or 41% of participants were from regional NSW.

#### Mentorship and Fellowship Programs

M&G NSW has managed 35 Mentorship and Fellowship programs for museums and gallery professionals. These have allowed paid staff from regional museums and galleries to develop their skills in larger institutions. Mentorship's are generally aimed at mid-level and emerging professionals and Fellowships (which allow overseas placements) at senior professionals. To date there have been four overseas Fellowships awarded.

In 2008 Arts NSW provided \$10,000 from its Museums Program Funding specifically for this program.

### 2: Sector Development

#### Museum Advisor Program

This program, modelled on the very successful Heritage Advisers Program managed by the Heritage Council, allows an expert to work in a regional area for approximately 20 days each year, usually making 10 x 2-day visits. Advisers work with Councils, local museums, volunteers and community groups undertaking whatever work is seen to have priority.

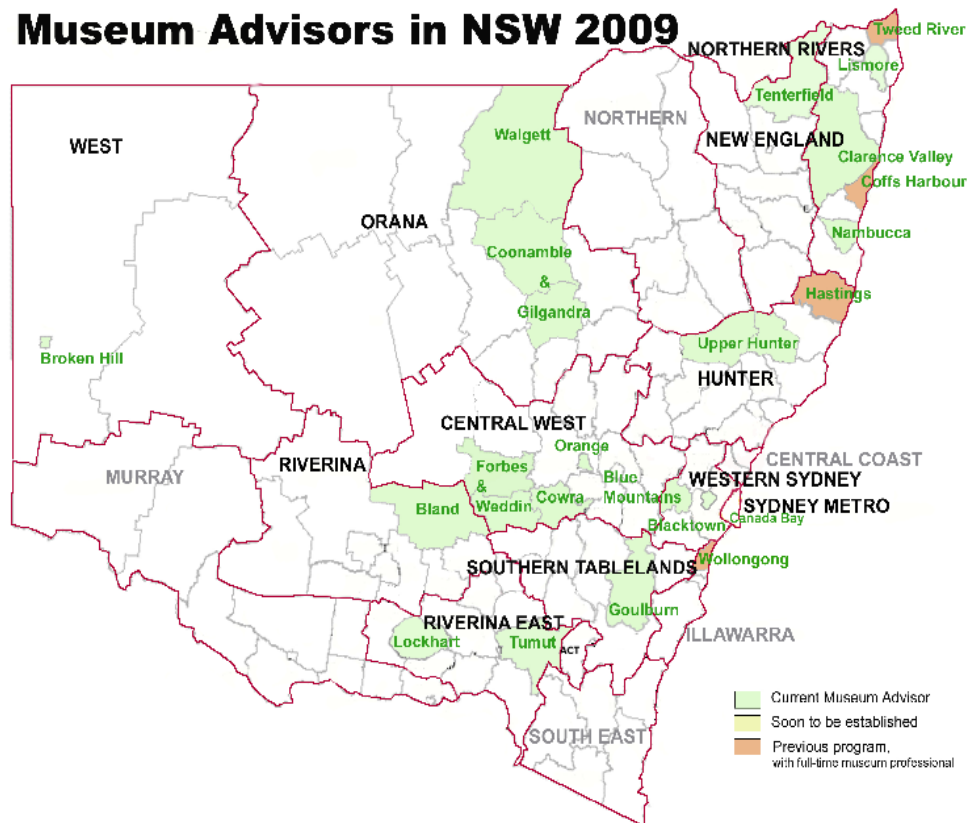
Since the program started in 2001 there have been 24 Museum Adviser Programs working across 30 local government areas (out of a total 149). The program is dependent on local government financial support and has varied in length from 12 months to 8 years. There are currently 18 active programs distributed across the state as shown in the following map.

There are currently nine Advisers in the program with five based in Sydney, three in regional areas and one in Adelaide (servicing Broken Hill).

M&G NSW convenes a meeting of Advisers twice each year to provide it with grass roots information and to provide professional development to Advisers and coordination of the program.

In 2008 Arts NSW provided \$130,000 from its Arts Program Funding specifically for this program. This funding is matched by local government through a contractual arrangement with M&G NSW. In some instances Council also contribute additional funding beyond the matched amount.

## Museum Advisors in NSW 2009



### 3: Standards Program

The Standards Program was introduced by M&G NSW in 2003 and supports community museums through a process of self review and external feedback. It provides an opportunity for museums to assess their practices and policies against minimum standards developed for public museums. The program aims to establish a long term network for sustainable community museums as well as acknowledging the work undertaken by volunteers and paid staff.

The Standards, which have now been developed as *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries*, cover areas such as governance, planning, collections management, finance and conservation.

The program, which is overseen by a Standards Review Committee, provides a professional museum officer, working with an expert volunteer (who has generally been through the program) to engage with a community museum to guide them through a set of standards. For reasons of efficiency the program focuses each year on a small number of local government areas. In 2008 three councils contributed a total of \$14,800 to the program.

To date, 73 museums (including some galleries) in 45 local government areas have participated in the program, undertaking year-long intensive work.

In 2008 Arts NSW provided \$60,000 from its Arts Program Funding specifically for this program. Eight museums and one Keeping Place completed the program with 2 museums taking on an 'observer status'. Seventeen museums in the greater Sydney area are participating in 2009.

#### 4: Touring Exhibitions

M&G NSW acts as the NETS (National Exhibitions Touring Support Australia) agent for NSW and receives \$62,000 pa from the Australia Council to support this program. The program supports the touring of contemporary visual art and craft and Aboriginal exhibitions. M&G NSW also tours a limited range of non-contemporary visual art and social history collections.

M&G NSW has toured 44 exhibitions over 9 years, to an average of 25 venues per year. See Appendix 5 (See vol. 2). The majority of exhibitions have related to the visual arts reflecting the NETS funding which is restricted to visual arts and craft. M&G NSW has toured the Archibald Prize every year, on behalf of the AGNSW, since 1999 and is paid a fee by the AGNSW to manage the tour.

Of these 44 exhibitions 4 have been developed in-house after receipt of external funding through Visions Australia, NSW Heritage Office, Department of Veteran's Affairs and Centenary of Federation.

Since 1999 exhibitions have been provided to 59 NSW venues with a total of 180 presentations, and have also been provided to 43 interstate venues on 65 occasions. These exhibitions have attracted just over 1.05 million visitors.

Between 1999 and 2008, approximately 645,000 visitors attended exhibitions toured by M&G NSW in regional NSW.

#### 5: Grants

In the years between 2000 – 2008, a total of 555 grants (from 790 applications) valued at \$851,000 were provided through the following programs.

##### Volunteer Initiated Museum (VIM) Grants

This grant program is designed to provide volunteer managed museums with funding to assist with skill development, operational planning and strategic planning.

In 2008 Arts NSW provided \$75,000 from its Arts Program Funding specifically for this program. Applications are assessed, and grants awarded, by the Volunteers Reference Committee assisted by outside experts.

In 2008, 94 applications were received with 64 being successful as follows:

NO. OF GRANTS	GRANT CATEGORY	TOTAL GRANTS \$	AVERAGE GRANT \$
8	<b>Leg Ups - Skills Development Grant</b> – for training and skill development	2,667	333
12	<b>Leg Ups – Bursary Grants</b> - for volunteers to attend MA NSW Chapter Conference	5,538	462
3	<b>Leg Ups – Skills Initiative Grants</b> – to support larger regional or state-wide events managed by volunteer museums	7,812	2,604
35	<b>VIM – Small Grants</b> - up to \$5,000 –	31,956	913

	for all manner of assistance including purchase of computers, mannequins, cameras, archive boxes and display cases		
7	<b>VIM – Development Project Grants</b> - up to \$5,000 – for strategic and innovative projects with mid to long term outcomes	27,000	3,857
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$74,973</b>	<b>\$1,153</b>

### **Incoming Touring Exhibitions Grants**

This program provides assistance to visual arts organisations, and craft and design centres to host touring exhibitions. It is funded by devolved funding from Arts NSW though this is not expressed in the Financial Statements. It was a traditional part of an understanding between the Arts NSW Visual Arts and Craft Committee and M&G NSW that \$50,000 of its total allocation to M&G NSW would be used for this purpose.

A committee comprising largely external members assesses applications and determines grants. In 2008 M&G NSW received 22 applications from 12 institutions. Ten organisations were successful and 13 exhibition programs were supported with an average grant of \$3,800.

### **Gallery FocusED Grants (2007 - 2008)**

These grants are provided to public galleries throughout NSW for the development and/or implementation of educational initiatives that build relationships with schools and increase access to quality arts experiences for state school students (K-12). This is part of a larger ConnectED program.

In 2008 Arts NSW provided \$25,000 from its Arts Program Funding specifically for this program. M&G NSW contributed a further \$25,000 by gaining corporate sponsorship. Eight regional art galleries (out of 16 applications) received an average grant of \$6,250.

FocusED grants were administered by M&G NSW for 2 years (2007 & 2008), prior to that they were administered by Arts NSW. In 2009 Arts NSW has again administered the grants. When administered by M&G NSW applicants were assessed and grants determined by an independent panel comprising largely external industry experts.

## **6: Resources**

### **Exhibitions Register**

M&G NSW provides an Exhibitions Register on its website which is updated in May and November each year, and promotes available touring exhibitions. The Exhibition Register is a free online publication for public venues to promote or source touring exhibitions available for tour throughout NSW and Australia. M&G NSW calls for submissions from public galleries, museums, curators, artists and artist-run initiatives for exhibitions to be included in the Register. The current calendar has no exhibitions from any of the state institutions apart from the Archibald Exhibition from the AGNSW.

The Exhibitions Register is accessed primarily via the M&G NSW website:  
Webpage hits since 1 January 2009:

Exhibitions Register Information Page	846 pageviews
Exhibitions Register Issue 1 2009	229 pageviews
Archived editions of the register	476 pageviews

The Exhibitions Register is also distributed via email by M&G NSW staff upon request. This has occurred approximately 20 times in 2009.

Submissions for inclusion on the register are received from organisations including State Cultural Institutions, Regional Galleries, NETS agencies, independent curators and Aboriginal Cultural Centres and have steadily increased in the past two years. An exhibition is accepted onto the register only once.

Issue 1 2008	17 submissions from 11 organisations
Issue 2 2008	15 submissions from 14 organisations
Issue 3 2009	25 submissions from 18 organisations

### **Consultants Register**

The Consultants Register provides referrals, upon request, to skilled consultants in the sector. Access to the Register is free of charge and consultants need to register to be included. The aims of the register are:

- To maintain and provide public access to an extensive listing of consultants able to provide expert service in gallery and museum work;
- To ensure that the sector has an extensive choice of consultants;
- To provide consultants with an opportunity to promote their services.

The register currently has 61 listings and has received 58 telephone and email enquiries from 1 January 2009 to October 2009 and over 1,000 web hits. These came from staff and volunteers from museums, galleries, local councils, archives, visitor's centres, heritage centres and service organisations.

The M&G NSW electronic newsletter? *Alert* includes a *Consultant Feature Profile* that changes each fortnight.

The register will shortly go on-line and M&G NSW believes this will dramatically increase the accessibility of the Register as well as the number of consultant registrations.

### **Distance Advisory Service**

M&G NSW maintains a toll free line in order to provide expert advice to the sector on matters ranging from collections management, strategic planning, touring exhibitions and informing the sector with general museum and gallery information.

M&G NSW staff respond to around 300 enquiries a year – mostly recorded on a data base. These may require a 10 minute chat and perhaps a referral to another institution – or a longer search, taking much time to locate and send information and resources. Consideration is currently being given to developing 'clinic days' to replace the random call ins.

## **7: Information Resources**

M&G NSW produces a wide variety of sector resources, from fact sheets about Disaster Planning and Collection Management, to conference podcasts and papers and the annual *Grants and Funding Booklet*, which detail funding sources available to museums and galleries in NSW. Many of these resources are available on the M&G NSW website.

### **Website, Alert! And The MAG Website**



M&G NSW publishes a website which is focused on delivering information to regional NSW. In the period of 23 Sep 2008 – 23 Sep 2009 [www.mgnsw.org.au](http://www.mgnsw.org.au) received:

- 33,390 Visits
- 112,112 Page views
- 57.59% % New Visits

The top five most viewed pages for that period were:

1. Homepage
2. About Us – M&G NSW Overview
3. Resources Overview
4. Current Exhibitions
5. Grant Overview

Specifically regarding information resources on the website, the resources overview page was the 3<sup>rd</sup> most viewed page for the same timeframe with 3,894 Pageviews (3.47%) and 2,858 Unique Views.

Within the Resources Section, the top 5 resources pages are as follows:

1. Resources Overview
2. Fact Sheets
3. Collection Management
4. Useful Links
5. Audience Research

### ***Alert!***

M&G NSW also produces a weekly email bulletin every Wednesday titled *Alert!* This is divided into the following sections:

- M&G NSW News
- Sector News
- Professional Development
- Exhibitions & Events
- Employment Opportunities

### ***The MAG***

*The MAG*, a quarterly magazine, was produced until early 2009 when it was suspended after M&G NSW's consultation with the sector revealed that the website and *Alert!* were more effective tools of communication with the sector.

## **8: Research, Advocacy and Partnerships**

M&G NSW has always played a role in research and advocacy, undertaking many projects, participating in numerous meetings, presentations, conferences and seminars and partnering with many organisations in pursuit of its goals. These are outlined in the annual Acquittal documents to Arts NSW. Some of these were in response to requests from government.

Since 1999 M&G NSW has undertaken a number of research and special projects, many of which have involved active partnerships. These have included:

- Employment of a Multicultural Arts Development specialist (2000 – 2002) with funding from the Australia Council for the Arts;
- Three conservation audits across regional NSW with funding from the Centenary of Federation (2001);

- Development of a *Museum Training Package* for Certificate III and IV, for Department of Education (2001-2002);
- *Contribution to Travelling Exhibitions* – a practical handbook for regional galleries and museums (2002);
- Production of the *Assessing Significance* Training Package for Department of Communications and the Arts (2002);
- A special report for Arts NSW on the Age of Fishes Museum, Canowindra (2004);
- Research into collections in NSW associated with World War I and II, with funding through a NSW Heritage Grant (2004 – 2006);
- Managed Artport (a skills development and advocacy program) for a coalition of Artist-Run-Initiatives in Sydney (2002 - 2005);
- A report on *Assessing the Social, Cultural and Economic Impacts of Museums in Local Communities* with various partners (2004-2006);
- Coordinated the *Regional Galleries Scoping Study* (2005) funded by Arts NSW and undertaken by the Australia Street Company; This led to the *Cultural Intelligence* study discussed below;
- Provided the M&G NSW Standards Program as a model to Museum & Gallery Services Queensland (M&GSQ) to enable cross-border collaboration with QLD (2005 onwards);
- Partnered in an ARC Linkage grant with the University of Wollongong (UOW) and Object Gallery on audiences for contemporary art (2005-2008);
- Contributed towards national standards for museums with similar bodies across Australia (2006 onwards);
- Developed *Learning Circles for Significance Assessment* for DCITA (2006);
- Undertook *Great Indoors* - an audience development project for galleries with Dubbo Regional Gallery (2006) with funding from the Australia Council for the Arts;
- Coordinated the publication of *Beyond Region: Public Galleries in NSW* (2007) in association with Arts NSW and the Australia Council.

M&G NSW has become increasingly focussed on detailed research projects with a particular focus on audience development as one of its key strategic priorities. Its two current projects are:

- **Cultural Intelligence: a Strategic Audience Evaluation and Development Study for Galleries in NSW (2007 - 2010)**  
This is a strategic audience evaluation benchmarking project of gallery audiences across NSW and is funded for three years by the Australia Council at approximately \$80,000 pa. The project will cover all areas of the state in different stages - Hunter Valley/Central Coast/ Western Sydney (2007/08), Sydney Metropolitan (2008/09) and all other regional areas (2010). In the first two years 23 galleries participated in the program. The project is being managed in-house, through a coordinator and expert consultant working within the M&G NSW office and overseen by an external advisory committee.
- **Economic Value Study of Cultural Facilities and Activities (2009)**  
This 6-month study is being conducted by the Western Research Institute at Charles Sturt University in Bathurst on behalf of M&G NSW. The project is being partnered with Dubbo, Orange and Bathurst Councils. The total cost of the study is being contributed by the three councils and by M&G NSW. The study is being managed in-house and is employing an external consultant to undertake fieldwork. An external advisory committee advises on the study.

## 9: IMAGInE Awards

These awards, begun in 2008, are a partnership between M&G NSW, R&PG NSW and MA (NSW & ACT). They were introduced to encourage best practice and innovation, and recognise achievements and individual accomplishments in the museum and gallery sector. They replace the MA NSW Awards that were abandoned a number of years ago. The awards aim to:

- Promote the value and importance of the museum and gallery sector;
- Encourage best practice and innovation within museums and galleries;
- Recognise achievements and individual accomplishments in the museum and gallery sector;
- Support and celebrate the work of NSW museums and galleries;
- Acknowledge collaborative and support-projects that aim to enhance the position of museums and galleries within the community;
- Raise the profile of museums and galleries.

In 2008 there were 57 nominations and cash sponsorship of \$16,000 plus in-kind sponsorship including from:

- MA NSW \$2,000
- MA ACT \$2,000
- RPG NSW \$2,000
- AGNSW (in-kind for venue).

In 2009 there were 64 nominations with similar sponsorship. Awards were given across five categories:

- Collections management
- Exhibitions
- Education and Public Engagement
- Excellence
- Individuals

Awards for each category were broken into volunteer, small and medium to large organisations.

## 6.8 Finances

Figures used in this section are raw figures and have not been adjusted for inflation.

### 6.8.1 Revenue

M&G NSW derives most of its core funding through a triennial grant made by Arts NSW. Taking account of inflation this funding has remained relatively stable since the inception of M&G NSW. Minor changes have reflected specific projects, policy changes and circumstances. None of these are material.

Revenue for the calendar year 2007 - 2009 was as follows – leaving a small surplus for each year.

Note: figures are rounded to nearest '000<sup>6</sup>.

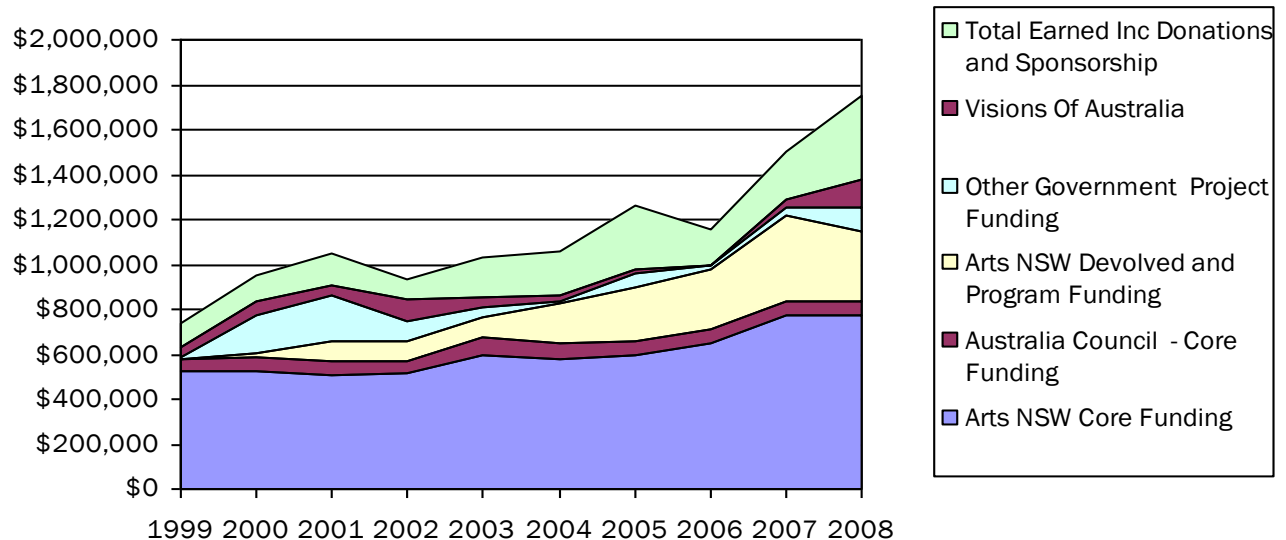
REVENUE SOURCE	2009	2008	2007
<b>Arts NSW<sup>7</sup></b>			
Core Funding			
Arts NSW Visual Arts and Craft Committee		204,000	204,000
Arts NSW Museum Committee		570,000	570,000
Sub Total	770,000		774,000
Devolved and Program Funding			
Museum Mentorship	10,000	10,000	10,000
Gallery Mentorship	9,000	10,000	10,000
Regional Museum Advisory Service	176,000	74,000	149,000
Standards Program	50,000	60,000	59,000
Volunteer Museum Grant Program	75,000	75,000	77,000
Gallery FocusED Program		25,000	25,000
Incoming Touring Exhibition Grants	55,000	50,000	50,000
Sub Total	375,000	304,000	380,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,145,000</b>	<b>1,078,000</b>	<b>1,154,000</b>
Australia Council			
Audience Evaluation and Development	77,000	94,000	16,000
Visual Arts and Crafts Board Triennial (NETS core funding)	66,000	66,000	64,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>144,000</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
<b>Department of Communications Information Technology and the Arts</b>			
Visions Grant - exhibition tour		23,000	27,000
Visions Grant - Exhibition Development		62,000	13,000
Visions Grant - exhibition tour	109,000	40,000	-
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>109,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>
Other			
Interest	35,000	108,000	46,000
Other grants and subsidies	72,000	17,000	18,000
Fee for Service	54,000	42,000	18,000
Program Income	167,000	152,000	86,000
Sponsorship	22,000	65,000	60,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>350,000</b>	<b>384,000</b>	<b>228,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,748,000</b>	<b>1,747,000</b>	<b>1,502,000</b>

The following table shows all forms of income since the inception of M&G NSW. In the long term there have been several modest trends in revenue:

- An increase in Arts NSW Devolved and Program Funding.
- An increase in earned income from sponsorship and donations.

<sup>6</sup> Because figures are rounded they will vary very slightly from the Annual Accounts

<sup>7</sup> Under its Triennial Funding Agreement M&G NSW receives \$1.099m in core and devolved funding per annum from Arts NSW. The figures in this chart are slightly different as they reflect actual figures which include minor amounts of 'carry forwards'.

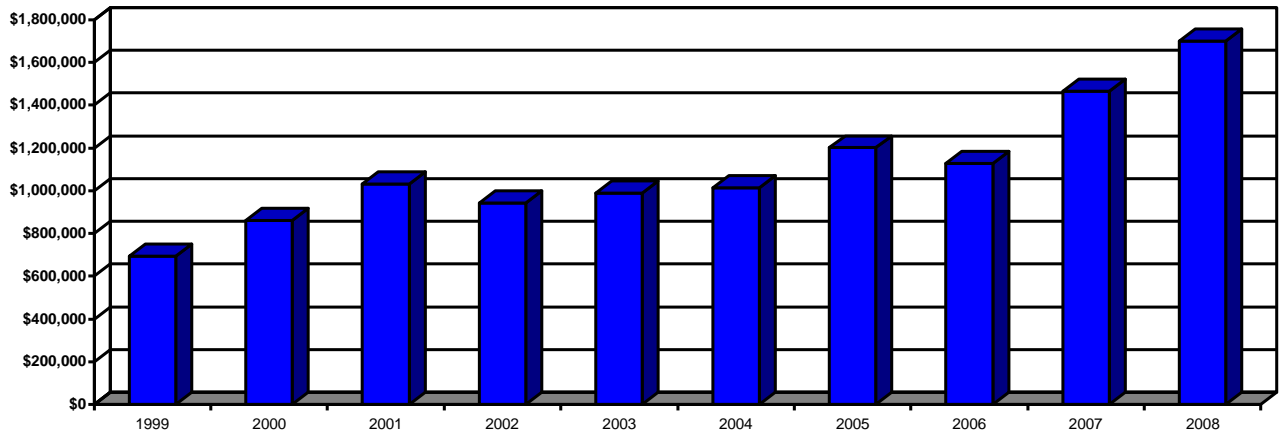


## 6.8.2 Expenditure

Expenditure for the calendar year 2007 and 2009 was as follows – leaving a small surplus for each year.

ITEM	2009		2008		2007	
<b>Costs of Personnel</b>						
Salaries and wages	733,000		791,000		699,000	
Superannuation, training, recruitment, staff amenities, payroll tax, FBT	76,000		85,000		72,000	
Leave pay provision charge	4,000		(13,000)		(22,000)	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>813,000</b>		<b>863,000</b>		<b>749,000</b>
<b>Project and Program Costs</b>						
Project Costs	428,000		517,000		362,000	
Consultants	87,000		42,000		34,000	
Internet and website	11,000		12,000		8,000	
Freight and courier	132,000		67,000		60,000	
Accommodation and travel expenses	118,000		68,000		104,000	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>770,000</b>		<b>706,000</b>		<b>568,000</b>
<b>Administration Costs</b>						
Auditor, bank charges, depreciation	25,000		25,000		28,000	
Rent and cleaning	15,000		15,000		16,000	
Telephone	15,000		14,000		15,000	
Postage	5,000		7,000		8,000	
Copying and printing	32,000		30,000		33,000	
Insurance	21,000		20,000		24,000	
Consumable, repair utilities, equipment, maintenance	21,000		19,000		24,000	
Miscellaneous	3,000		2,000		4,000	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>137,000</b>		<b>132,000</b>		<b>152,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>1,726,000</b>		<b>1,701,000</b>		<b>1,469,000</b>

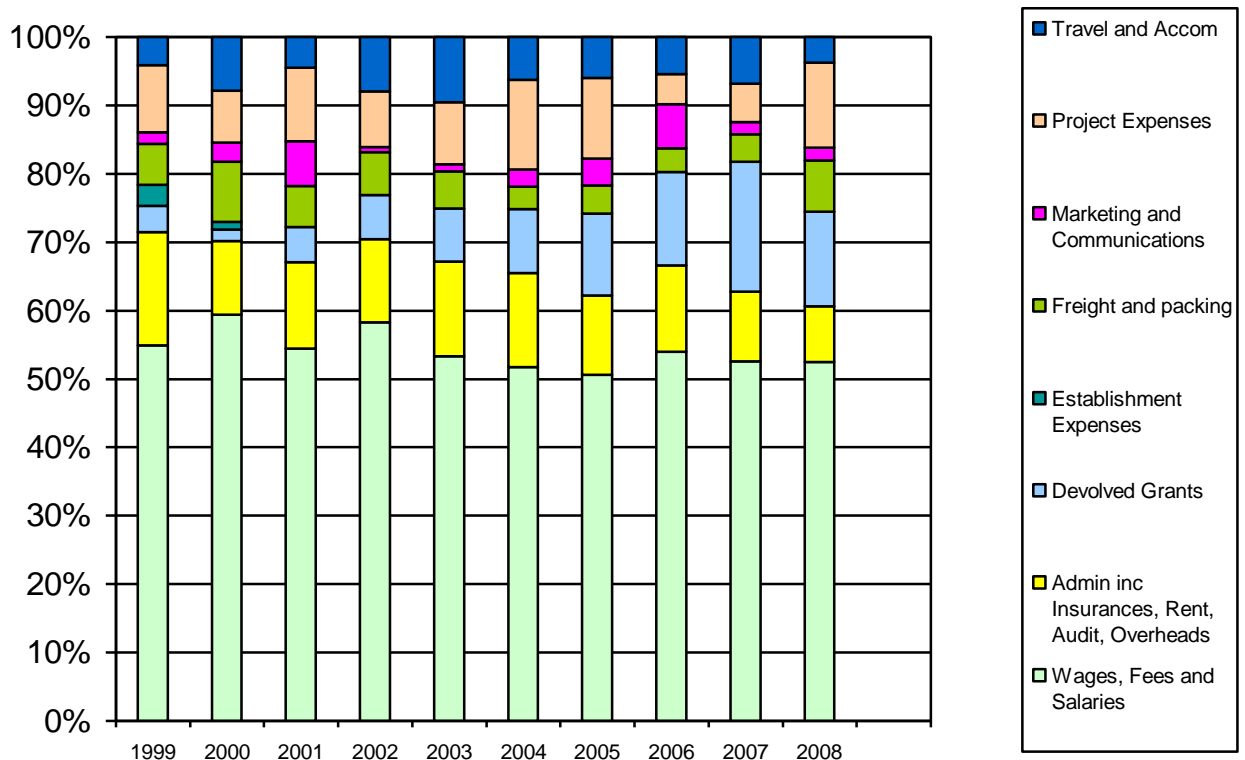
The following bar chart shows total expenses since the inception of M&G NSW. There has been little change in core funding, apart from an increase due to new projects.



**TOTAL EXPENSES 1999 - 2008<sup>8</sup>**

**Expenditure over time in different sectors**

The following table shows expenditure broken down into %'s of cost areas which also shows relatively little change over time.



<sup>8</sup> The figures are 'raw' and do not take account of CPI increases.

## 7.0 KEY OBSERVATIONS, ISSUES, ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

The following are the principle matters that arose during the course of the review.

A perusal of the section on Quantitative Findings will support the summary views and conclusions put forward here.

### 7.1 M&G NSW Current Role and Relationship with State Government

M&G NSW was effectively created by the NSW government and continues to receive the majority of its funding from that source - 62% of total revenue in 2008. In its formative years, and until very recently, M&G NSW had a very close working relationship with Arts NSW, through the latter's Visual Arts and Crafts Committee and its Museums Committee as well as through the respective art-form program managers. The Museums Committee, in particular, articulated sector needs and provided work programs. This resulted in more of a 'partnership' association between M&G NSW and Arts NSW than appears to exist at present.

M&G NSW straddles a difficult place between the need to represent its constituents as well as being reliant on government funding. Its history would suggest that, in its establishment, it was to reflect both sector needs and government priorities. M&G NSW itself believes that its work is influenced from the 'ground up', through its extensive network across NSW, but also from the 'top down' through Arts NSW.

Arts NSW is well placed to influence the work of M&G NSW since the latter:

- Submits its Triennial Strategic Plan to Arts NSW for approval;
- Submits an Annual Business Plan to Arts NSW and funding is allocated for the following year on the basis of this Plan;
- Provides Arts NSW with a detailed Annual Report, or Acquittal, against its Arts NSW Performance Agreement.

(Both the above Plans include the entire M&G NSW program whether funded by Arts NSW or from other sources).

Although these documents are submitted for approval there is almost no active dialogue about them between Arts NSW and M&G NSW and the process is more of a mechanical exercise than an opportunity for any strategic dialogue between the parties.

With ongoing change at Arts NSW in the past 18 months, and further change expected, there is a sense of uncertainty about the relationship between M&G NSW and its major funding agency. Communication between the two is somewhat strained and not as open and frank as it might be. Comparisons were made with Regional Arts NSW which was seen to be more robust in its role and advocacy of its sector.

The situation is exacerbated by:

- the lack of a comprehensive State Framework for the cultural sector and in particular the museum and gallery parts of it;

- M&G NSW not having a place at any particular NSW table of influence or information exchange;
- Many constituents 'deal direct' with Arts NSW which causes some confusion;
- The scale and complexity of the sector.

In its *Submission on NSW Cultural Grants Program Review*, 29 October 2007 M&G NSW articulated what it considered to be the role of Arts NSW vis-a-vis its own role. This was stated as follows:

*Arts NSW focus on funding large scale and strategic programs which may include:*

- *Cross art form programs*
- *Programs which integrate a whole of government approach*
- *Capital investment support*
- *High level investment in key art form delivery*

M&G NSW proposed its own role was to provide:

- *Professional development and raising of standards in the sector*
- *Audience development*
- *Delivery of touring programs*
- *Partnership with all levels of government, the sector, the community, the corporate sector and private philanthropists*
- *Coordination of state government cultural institutions' services to regional galleries and museums*

During the course of this review constituents indicated they preferred the tasks of data collection, research, and policy development for the purposes of advocacy within the sector to be undertaken independent of government and hence M&G NSW was seen as an appropriate body to undertake these tasks.

M&G NSW has limited relationships with other government agencies, seeing Arts NSW as its primary point of contact with government. As a peak body it should engage more actively with other departments and agencies where they are relevant to its strategic direction. These might include Departments of State and Regional Development, Education and Training, Local Government etc.

M&G NSW itself feels that it has "no place at the table" where it can be engaged with the key issues of the day and believes it would be significantly advantaged if it did so. This applies especially since the demise of the Arts NSW Visual Arts and Craft Board and Museums Board.

## CONCLUSIONS

**The structural arrangements between M&G NSW and government are no different to many other 'peak bodies' and it is our view that the relationship should be able to work given an appropriate and agreed framework, flexibility, common sense and constant dialogue.**

**All parties – Arts NSW, M&G NSW and its constituents – want clarity about their respective roles, responsibilities and expectations. M&G NSW is seen as relevant to the sector and plays an important role in providing key services to a broad range of constituents across NSW. Perception of its role and effectiveness have, however, been limited by the overlap in services offered by other bodies, and by the extensive range of services it offers to a broad constituency.**



**M&G NSW plays a very important role and should focus on those programs and activities that use the advantages it has over Arts NSW including independence, networking, grass roots knowledge and tax deductibility to continue to promote and support the sector.**

**It would be easier for M&G NSW to undertake its work if there was a clear long-term strategy for the development of the sector.**

**Communication with government, including with Arts NSW, could be more robust and wide-ranging.**

## **7.2 Clarity Of Purpose**

The document *Roles and Functions of the Museums and Galleries Foundation of New South Wales* December 1998 (Appendix 1 See Vol.2) and the M&G NSW Constitution (Appendix 3) set out the objectives of the organisation.

Because of the scale and breadth of issues in the sector there are multiple programs and issues that have been, and could be, developed. This results in different views about:

- Where the emphasis should lie in relation to:
  - The broadly twin roles of high level data collection, research, policy development for the purposes of advocacy vs. service delivery.
  - City vs. regions vs. Sydney Basin
  - Museums vs. Galleries
  - Volunteer vs. professional
  - Theory vs. practice
  - Long term capacity building vs. short term programming
- Whether M&G NSW represents government or the sector;
- How the CI's relate to M&G NSW and its programs;
- The boundaries between the role of Arts NSW and M&G NSW.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

**There is so much action that is needed in the sector and so many players with different and competing priorities and expectations that it is essential that there be clarity and consensus on where the effort by M&G NSW is best placed. Once agreed this needs to be clearly communicated to the sector. All parties want clarity about this so that expectations are not unreasonably held.**

**In our view the following should have priority, but not to the total exclusion of its counterpoint:**

- **Data collection, research, policy development for the purposes of advocacy;**
- **Regional interests;**
- **Volunteer and small organisations;**
- **Long term capacity building;**
- **Sector representation.**

**Service delivery is critical to maintain good contact at the grass roots. It should, however, be strategically targeted so that it will always deliver long term capacity building and sustainability within regional areas. It should complement and not compete with services**

**provided by CI's and close dialogue should be maintained with the CI's in this respect.**

## **7.3 Expectations and Priority Needs of the Sector**

During the course of this review there were many suggestions for increased services from the various stakeholders and constituents. The total scope of what they would like M&G NSW to achieve would be impossible to deliver given the resources available to M&G NSW. By comparison with other sectors, such as libraries and the performing arts, and given the scale of the issues – especially in the museum sector – only a significant change in government policy accompanied by substantial funding would ever be able to adequately address the many issues facing the sector. That is not to say that significant advances have not been made in the past ten years. They certainly have and M&G NSW has been central in that development.

Different parts of the sector have very different needs as would be expected from a sector that represents well established and professional organisations, as well as many volunteer ones. The key needs that were consistently requested in interviews are indicated below. They are divided broadly into government, professional, volunteer and joint (where government, museums, galleries and other stakeholders were generally aligned in their views) although there are inevitable overlaps and differences of opinion.

### **Joint - all Stakeholders and Constituents**

- Clear and forceful articulation of the key issues facing the sector;
- Strong leadership and representation for the sector.
- Clarity of role and strategic direction;
- Research, data collection, policy development for the purpose of strong advocacy at all levels;
- Stability in staffing at M&G NSW and more experienced staff to give the sector confidence.

### **Government – State and Local**

- That M&G NSW programs will reflect government priorities and in particular:
  - Capacity building in the sector
  - Indigenous issues
  - Regional support
- Data collection and statistical analysis;
- Contribution to discussion on creative industries;
- Strong and active engagement at senior levels of local government and the LG&SA;
- Strong engagement with other peak bodies in the sector.

### **Established Professional Organisations**

- Professional development eg exchange programs, regular forums, overseas travel opportunities, mentorship's, fellowships and "continual conversations";
- Practical programs and information sessions delivered in the regions eg lighting, conservation, exhibition installations, ICT opportunities, latest security information;
- Want to 'deal wholesale' with Arts NSW, CI's and national institutions and not 'retail' with M&G NSW;
- Engagement with strategic research projects at the 'front end';
- Long-term sustainable employment strategies;
- Sense of collegiality and networking opportunities.

### **Small Emerging and/or Volunteer Organisations**

- On-the-ground support through:
  - General advice and access to resources
  - Small grants
  - Museum Advisers
  - Standards Reviews
  - Hands-on assistance programs
  - Networking opportunities with other organisations.

The compilation of this list of key needs and expectations does not, of itself, suggest that M&G NSW should have prime responsibility for each task. The relevance of M&G NSW in the context of providing each of the service needs varies. Indeed there were sometimes very different views expressed eg most constituents believe that the independence of M&G NSW made it the ideal vehicle for the collection and aggregation of data whereas some stakeholders believed this was a prime responsibility of government.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

**M&G NSW is expected to work at the highest strategic levels and also to deliver hands-on programs to many remote and often volunteer constituents. This is an especially difficult task though the value in understanding grass roots issues cannot be underestimated in developing high level policy and advocacy strategies.**

**Although there has been change in recent years the current focus and structure of M&G NSW are weighted towards service delivery and less to research, policy, advocacy and strategic policy development. The latter are more likely to lead to long term capacity building and sustainability in the sector. Achieving a better balance between these two primary roles of M&G NSW needs to be addressed.**

**M&G NSW needs to be very strategic so as to use its resources where they are most effective and not to try to do too much. It is our view that the focus should be on:**

- **Research and data collection to enable articulation of issues and strategic outlook;**
- **Advocacy at all levels of government;**
- **Providing strong leadership for the sector including a role in enhancing interaction between CI's and regional areas and advising Arts NSW of needs in the regions;**
- **Hands-on advice and assistance to the volunteer segment;**
- **Professional development and network facilitation for the professional end of the sector.**

## ***7.4 Delivery of Services to the Sector***

When M&G NSW was established in 1998 there was a strong intention, and will, to bring the museum and gallery segments together under the umbrella of a single peak body for the benefit of both. There was an expectation that the sector would be strengthened because of this. This has not eventuated, at least not to the extent that was anticipated. Indeed the two segments have fractured to an unhealthy situation at the present time. This is best demonstrated by:

- Strongly divergent responses from the two segments to many different questions in the online survey;
- The attitude of a number of Gallery Directors expressed about M&G NSW during face-to-face interviews. This ranged from hostility to ambivalence. There was a strong and consistent view from this group that M&G NSW was not sufficiently engaging with the issues of importance to regional galleries and the gallery segment has little confidence in M&G NSW as a peak body representing its particular interests;
- The growing re-emergence of the R&PG NSW as a focus for regional galleries rather than M&G NSW. R&PG NSW has an expanded membership beyond regional galleries that includes AGNSW, MCA, Object, SH Ervin Gallery, Manly Art Gallery, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, University of Sydney and Parliament House amongst others. This is seen by regional galleries as a real benefit.

On the other hand it was suggested, including by some Gallery Directors, that Regional Galleries and their Directors were “hard beasts to satisfy”.

There is certainly an understandable bias in M&G NSW towards museums. This derives from:

- The source of funding:
  - Where almost all the devolved and program funding from Arts NSW is specifically targeted at the museum segment;
  - The Museums Committee of Arts NSW contributed almost double the core funding than that contributed by the Visual Arts and Crafts Committee (both committees were disbanded in 2008).
- The scale and needs of the museum segment have been considered to be much greater than the gallery segment and this is generally acknowledged by the gallery segment;
- The lack of a senior ‘gallery person’ on the board, and also on the staff, of M&G NSW.

Perhaps the gulf is not surprising given the broadly different state of development of the gallery sector compared with much of the museum sector. The former is, by comparison with the latter, well funded, well established, more professional, better connected, smaller, more focussed, well networked etc. At the top end the regional galleries see themselves as smaller CI’s and behave accordingly. They ‘deal direct’ with Arts NSW, state and national institutions and other parties. They say they have little need of most of what M&G NSW offers. Despite this they are significant users of its services as shown in the online survey.

A number of Gallery Directors felt so strongly about this issue that they considered the two segments should be separated.

The advantages of maintaining the segments together would seem to be:

- Greater strength in the core areas of research, data collection and advocacy;
- Many of the same issues confront the sector - professional development, collections management, ICT, capital development, local government relationships etc.;

- As convergence/co-location becomes more common in regional areas there is an advantage in keeping the segments together, albeit acknowledging their differences;
- It is pre-existing in the structure of M&G NSW;
- MA NSW also represents both segments;
- Cost efficiency;
- There is already a plethora of peak bodies and the prospect of dividing museums and galleries into two bodies would create further confusion;
- The differences in the sector should be able to be effectively managed.

It is worth noting that these issues, whilst they still exist to some extent, have been better managed by Museums & Gallery Services Queensland (M&GS Qld) through its constitutional and management arrangements which have given the constituents strong ownership through:

- A company limited by guarantee with two Members, being the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland and Museums Australia (Qld).
- Of the seven board members:
  - Two each are appointed by Regional Galleries Association of Qld and Museums Australia Qld respectively;
  - The remaining three are selected by the above four.
- A part-time staff member engaged jointly by RGA Qld and MA (Qld), to manage their respective membership lists, is located in the M&GS Qld office.

## CONCLUSIONS

**The fracturing of the gallery segment from M&G NSW is a significant issue that must be addressed urgently. It is our view that there are sufficient advantages for the two segments to remain under one peak body. This is especially at the strategic and advocacy levels.**

**The museum and gallery segments have different service delivery needs and these should be reflected in the structure and programming of M&G NSW. The needs of regional galleries are largely focussed around networking and professional development opportunities and those of the museums are focussed around professional development albeit at a generally different level to galleries, and a full range of advisory and other programs and small grant opportunities.**

**Adjustments should be made to the governance, structure and programs of M&G NSW to ensure a higher level of accountability to each of the two segments than exists at present whilst at the same time not compromising M&G NSW's ability to represent sector-wide needs and respond to government priorities.**

## ***7.5 Compliance with Government Priorities***

There are numerous government policy frameworks against which the operations of M&G NSW could be measured to ensure it is responding appropriately to government policies and priorities. Many of these are outdated, not especially relevant or are too generic to enable a really careful evaluation of M&G NSW activity in fulfilling government priorities. M&G NSW has undertaken its own self-assessment of each of those that seem most relevant is considered in more detail - see Appendix 7 (Vol. 2).

M&G NSW undertakes such a wide variety of activity that it can relatively easily demonstrate that it is complying with government priorities. It is our view that there are several gaps and/or opportunities in the following areas:

- Support for Indigenous cultural expression, noting this will be addressed by the recent appointment of an Aboriginal Professional Development Officer;
- More active engagement with the opportunities for using technology for the disbursement of information, and in particular the significant holdings in regional museums and galleries;
- With its deep knowledge and network of the regional museum and gallery sector M&G NSW has the opportunity to represent these interests to Arts NSW, and to the CI's, to ensure that regional activity by the CI's is coordinated and appropriately targeted.

## CONCLUSIONS

**The nature of the work undertaken by M&G NSW means that it intersects with many NSW government priorities and it currently endeavours to respond to all of these. Care needs to be taken that M&G NSW does not fill its program with a lot of busy activity that covers all bases but does not necessarily have a long term strategic intent. More consideration should be given to working with indigenous issues and with the opportunities technology affords, especially in regional communities.**

**A significant strength of M&G NSW is its knowledge of, and huge network, with regional museums and galleries. A mechanism needs to be found so that the regional activity of the CI's can tap into this reservoir of information.**

## ***7.6 Effectiveness of M&G NSW Service Delivery***

This is where much of the energy of M&G NSW is directed and it is widely respected and appreciated by its constituents. Over the years M&G NSW has conducted and administered many programs that have significantly helped raise the standards of the sector, in particular the volunteer museum sector. It has delivered at both a theoretical and a practical level through its various programs. A brief assessment of each existing program follows:

### **7.6.1 Professional Development**

#### **Seminars and Workshops**

In all measurements – participation, satisfaction and importance - professional development was ranked very highly by constituents. There is an especially high level of satisfaction with the program from the museum sector, and very high usage from the gallery sector. Inevitably everyone wants more. Consistent comments, where modest changes were requested from both segments were:

- More programming should be delivered in the regions;
- Without losing the theoretical programs, more programs that address practical needs such as the latest lighting, security and display systems and techniques would be appreciated;
- Travel costs are a bar to attendance, especially for small and volunteer organisations.

Curiously, despite the gallery segment's intensive usage of the services (84% compared with 55% for museums) it was not especially satisfied with the services provided, and increasingly so in the past two years.

### **Mentorship and Fellowship Programs**

There is a high level of satisfaction with the program. It should be noted that a number of the CI's operate their own programs, formal and informal, separate from the M&G NSW sponsored program.

Feedback from those who have participated in the M&G NSW programs has been universally positive. One of the principle benefits has been the development of networks in the CI's that are sustained long after the program is completed. This works to the benefit of both regional institutions and CI's, the latter gaining first hand perspectives of the issues confronting their regional colleagues.

## **7.6.2 Sector Development**

### **Museum Adviser Program**

There is a high level of satisfaction with the program and it has led to significant capacity building in areas where local government has made a staff appointment as a result of the ground work done by a Museum Adviser.

It was regarded as highly desirable that Advisers be able to operate at a strategic level with Councillors and senior Council officers as well as at a grass roots level. Success is very dependent upon the Adviser's attitude, skill and personality. Further training, and constant updating, in understanding the processes involved in cultural planning in a local government context should be a priority.

### **CASE STUDY**

#### **Holistic and strategic approach yields results**

A Museum Adviser position was created in the Hastings Port Macquarie area in 2001. Over the next three years the Museum Adviser and participants from the ten museums and heritage places in the district, collaborated on a number of projects focussed on collection documentation and assessment. Collaborative thematic studies were the chosen model to research and assess the collections, resulting in *Timber Stories* and *Her Story*, about timber places and collections, and women's history and collections respectively. Both projects, supported by Arts NSW and Hastings Council funding, resulted in linked exhibitions, public programs and publications.

Strategic planning and analysis of the collections held across the Local Government Area in a variety of ownership and management regimes highlighted the need for additional resources to catalogue the collections and properly manage these important heritage assets. A case was made to Council and Arts NSW to support a full time cataloguer's position, and in the following year to appoint a full time curator, part funded by Arts NSW and Hastings Council. A Museum Development Plan for all the volunteer museums in the Local Government Area was adopted by Council and used to make the case for funding for the curator's position.

Four years after the Museum Adviser's appointment, Council's museum program funding had grown from the initial \$6,000 investment in the Adviser's fee to over \$100,000 pa. Importantly the program has been sustained in the years since the Adviser was replaced by a full time curator in 2004.



### Standards Program

There is a high level of satisfaction with the program and it has helped to improve professionalism in the volunteer sector where it has been implemented. The benefits of the Standards Program are many and participants have articulated these in their own words in the standards directory to be found on the M&G NSW web site - [http://mgnsww.org.au/sector\\_development/2009\\_standards\\_program/](http://mgnsww.org.au/sector_development/2009_standards_program/) They include a more holistic understanding of museum practice and the ability to attract new volunteers to a 'renewed' museum. M&G NSW also observes that the sharing of information and resources through an enhanced network of regional participants in the program is one of the most important outcomes of the Standards Program, in addition to individual benefits realised by each museum.

### 7.6.3 Touring Exhibitions Development and Touring

There were a wide range of views expressed about M&G NSW role in exhibition development. There was strong agreement there is a role in coordination and facilitation. However there were strong views expressed about M&G NSW playing a producer role. These views focussed around the *Great Collections* exhibition produced by M&G NSW and curated by John McPhee. The views ranged from strong disapproval to strong support. The range of views was expressed by both the gallery and museum segments. This single exhibition has caused considerable controversy. Those who disapproved did so because they considered it was not core business of M&G NSW, that the exhibition should have been developed by a regional institution as a staff development opportunity and that it had absorbed too many M&G NSW resources. Those who supported M&G NSW's role in the exhibition pointed to exceptionally high attendances and all funding having come from the Commonwealth's Visions Program. M&G NSW itself considered it *"was best placed to undertake Great Collections as a model and pilot in order to:*

- *Present a spectacular show for the regions (the high audience numbers have shown that regions want this sort of exhibition). Our experience with the Archibald as the most popular show we tour gave the impetus for this;*
- *Develop audiences both for regional institutions and also for Sydney state-based institutions (high audience numbers to show have proven the regional audience development model; additional publicity will increase interest in state cultural institutions and their collections.(eg ABC Collectors Program);*
- *Work in collaboration/partnership with state institutions that were not renowned (at that stage) for working together;*
- *Demonstrate cross connections across all collection organisations (backing up the government's interest in models of convergence);*
- *Build new partnerships with cultural institutions and gain a better understanding of their workings (to assist brokerage role);*
- *M&GNSW can work more efficiently than Cultural Institutions thus able to achieve this exhibition at relatively low cost;*
- *The Exhibition was only possible because we received extra funds from Visions of Australia, who know our capabilities re touring and value our*

*relationships with Regional Galleries and Museums. While it added considerably to our workload, it also increased the professional skills of M&G staff. It bettered our understanding of the different cultural institutions. We did not curate the exhibition; we conceived it and project managed it. In touring the exhibition we have spent considerable time in the regions working alongside the regional galleries and thus are able to forge better partnerships and relationships and a better understanding of the regional organisations as well.*<sup>9</sup>

At the core of this issue is a fundamental one about the role of M&G NSW. There are those who believe it should be about capacity building and advocacy. And there are those who believe it must have a wider remit. The exhibition certainly caused M&G NSW considerable problems in delivery, being a much more complex undertaking than it had expected and as a consequence it required far greater staff resources than had been anticipated. Arguably this must have distracted it from its core services. It was an unusual project for M&G NSW, which had previously only ever produced three much less complex exhibitions.

There are several factors worth considering:

- There is a view that M&G NSW, without the constraints of the public sector, can tour exhibitions far more cost effectively than the CI's. By way of example M&G NSW is paid a fee by the AGNSW to tour the Archibald Prize and the Director of another CI suggested that M&G NSW is being considered to manage the touring of some of the CI's exhibitions because of staffing cost efficiencies not available in the public sector;
- There was a strong view that exhibition development and touring is a highly specialised area and one that is best managed by the CI's who already have considerable expertise in this activity;
- From 2009-10 Arts NSW has decided to allocate funding, on an annual revolving basis, to one of the CI's to develop a major travelling exhibition on a similar scale to *Great Collections*. The first of these *Built for the Bush: the green architecture of rural Australia* is currently touring under the auspices of the HHT.
- M&G NSW receives \$62,000 pa from the Australia Council to administer the NETS program and act as the NSW NETS agent;
- There are many others organisations that are travelling exhibitions in NSW. As a basis for comparison the following table has been prepared. This is not comprehensive but captures some of the key players in order to put the M&G NSW program into some perspective.

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<sup>9</sup> Email communication from Ros Strong, Chair, M&G NSW

Institutions travelling exhibitions in 2008/09	Number of Exhibitions on Tour in 2008/09	Number of NSW venues shown	Number of Interstate venues shown	Total Attendance during 2008/09 at all touring venues	Approx average cost/ venue	Was the exhibition first shown in your institution? Y/N
Powerhouse Museum	5	8	6	193,000	\$1,200 <sup>10</sup>	Y x 2 N x 3
Australian Museum	3	4	3	35,000	\$5,500	Y x 3
Historic Houses Trust	5	9	1	254,000	\$1,500	Y x 2 N x 3
AGNSW	1	4	1	44,000	\$5,000	N x 1
Object Gallery	6	6	9	239,000	\$6,750	Y x 6
SLNSW	2	20	0	50,000 est	Nil	Y x 2
Maitland Regional Art Gallery	3	24	6	34,000 est	\$3,500	Y x 1 N x 2
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>849,000</b>		
M&G NSW (NETS agent) <sup>11</sup>	11	24	4	142,000	\$3,000	N/A as no venue

This table would suggest that M&G NSW is one of the most significant players in the touring exhibition market. About 40% of galleries who responded to the electronic survey participate in the program compared to 12% of museums. This reflects the NETS funding which is directed to the visual arts

## 7.6.4 Grants

### VIM Grants

#### Incoming Touring Exhibition Grants

#### Gallery Focused Grants (transferred to Arts NSW in 2009)

There was a high level of satisfaction with the grants program as would be expected. This was generally put down to:

- Quick turnaround
- Specialised and detailed knowledge of the recipient context
- Excellent peer review processes
- Cost effective administration
- Close liaison with recipients

M&G NSW is well placed to deliver this program and has noted that it has witnessed both a growth in applications for grants from small organisations and a growth in the level of skills as a result of those grants.<sup>12</sup>

For a very modest outlay (\$150,000 in 2008) there is considerable leverage applied to these grants and they provide very tangible benefits to the volunteer museum sector. Exponential benefit would come from increasing the pool of funding available.

M&G NSW is best placed to assess funding applications at this lower end. A clear distinction needs to be made between the amount of the grants available from M&G NSW and the larger grants made by Arts NSW, though

<sup>10</sup> Excludes one fee of \$40,000 for an interstate venue that was negotiated to offset transport costs etc.

<sup>11</sup> The information for M&G NSW is for the 2008 calendar year and not the 2008/09 financial year. However the comparison with the other institutions whose statistics are gathered on a financial year is considered a reasonable one.

<sup>12</sup> M&G NSW Submission on: NSW Cultural Grants Program Review, October 2007, p 7

there needs to be clear communication between the two so that complementary grants have the best strategic outcomes.

### 7.6.5 Resources

There is a high level of satisfaction with the resources provided by M&G NSW. Particular issues that arose related to the following programs:

#### Exhibitions Register

The register provides a useful planning resource. It is the only one of its kind that specifically promotes exhibitions available for tour within NSW. The increasing number of submission downloads and general enquiries regarding the Register reflect its usefulness to the sector. It is curious, however, that the register has no entries for travelling exhibitions available from Powerhouse Museum, HHT or Maitland Regional Art Gallery, all of whom have very active programs. Reasons advanced for this by those institutions are:

- They prefer to deal direct with borrowing institutions;
- They often negotiate tours during the course of an exhibition's development;
- M&G NSW only allows an exhibition to be placed on a single 6-month register and many of the exhibitions tour for a number of years and need ongoing promotion of availability;
- The developing institutions know the most appropriate and likely venues for their travelling exhibitions and do not need third party promotion or support. They generally approach venues with an offer for strategic reasons i.e. touring route, type of venue and relationships built up over years;
- Demand would be so high if it was promoted on the M&G NSW register that most responses would have to be negative.

#### Consultants Register

The Consultants Register is used to connect museums and galleries with specialized consultants who are capable of fulfilling needs specific to the sector. It is a useful service that ensures the sector has an extensive choice of consultants. It is often used to assist members of the sector in obtaining quotes for specific services to support grant applications.

The usefulness of the register will be greatly increased when it goes online in the near future.

#### Website, *Alert!* and *The MAG*

Both the website and the weekly email newsletter *Alert!* are well used and well rated. The suspension and review of *The MAG* in early 2008 seemed appropriate given its lower relevance as judged by the response to the on-line survey.

### 7.6.6 Research, Advocacy and Partnerships

There is a very strong view from all parts of the sector that its long term growth and development will come from strengthening research, policy development, advocacy and partnerships.

'*Research and policy development*' does not necessarily imply pure research. Rather it supposes the gathering of data and opinions from constituents that help to articulate and demonstrate issues facing the sector and allow for the

development of policies and positions from which the sector can mount cases for support.

The online survey resulted in the following views in relation to advocacy:

- Raising the profile of the sector, research and advocacy were ranked highest for future programming;
- There was a relatively high level of dissatisfaction from galleries for M&G NSW's role in advocacy;
- M&G NSW's effectiveness in advocacy was perceived to be relatively low;
- Almost 80% of respondents considered advocacy to be either critical or important.

M&G NSW has undertaken a number of important research projects, and is continuing to do so. A number of these projects have had excellent outcomes and been used very strategically for advocacy purposes.

However there is a view among constituents that these programs are developed with insufficient consultation with constituents and that the results are not used sufficiently for long term strategic advocacy. Care needs to be taken that these research projects are not seen as short term 'one-off' studies, but as part of a long term strategic view of research needs.

Partnership issues are dealt with at 7.6.

### **CASE STUDY** **One study leads to another**

Arts NSW commissioned M&G NSW to coordinate a scoping study into regional galleries in the state. Completed in 2006, through the Australia Street Consultancy, the study analysed the role and operations of public galleries in regional and metropolitan Sydney. Amongst the observations and recommendations of the study was the need to develop more effective measurements of audiences to galleries and importantly to ensure a more coordinated approach to audience research across the state.

Fuelled by the recommendations of the scoping study, M&G NSW approached the Australia Council seeking funding to carry out an audience research project to gather material on audiences to galleries across the state. The Australia Council funded this research over three years and the data resulting from two of the three years of the study has provided individual galleries with detailed reports on their audiences as well as regional and ultimately a state-based survey of information.

The results from two years of survey work has yielded new information for the sector and for its funders – the prime information being that gallery audiences are not an elitist group as has commonly been perceived, but visitors come from every educational, financial and age group in the community.

## **7.6.7 IMAGInE Awards**

These awards have been welcomed by the sector after the demise of the Museums Australia Awards a number of years ago. They are seen to be celebratory for the sector and a means of drawing attention to excellence.

At the same time they are not seen as being especially important being ranked lowest in importance of M&G NSW programs with only 41% of

recipients ranking them critical (8%) or important (33%). Provided they do not occupy significant resources, and are turned to good advocacy purpose, they are probably sensible to continue. As they are only in their second year they should be continually reviewed to ensure they are fulfilling their aims without draining resources. Such a review should explore the option of combining the awards with the annual Local Government Cultural Awards arranged by the LGSA.

### 7.6.8 Services Provided by other Cultural Sector Organisations

In relation to a number of the programs, especially Standards, Museum Advisers Programs, Distance Advisory Service, and Exhibition Development and Touring, there are a number of other service providers, albeit who do not necessarily offer such structured programs but who nevertheless cover similar territory. In many cases these are valued very highly in the regions. Indeed, in a significant number of cases they are ranked more highly than services provided by M&G NSW. Whilst M&G NSW is seen to be very clearly the peak body, Arts NSW, Powerhouse Museum, Local Government and Museums Australia were seen to provide very significant support to the sector. The most prominent of those providing practical 'on the ground' services are:

- Powerhouse Museum Regional Program which has 3+ staff undertaking regional outreach services;
- For those institutions within a few hundred kilometres of Canberra, the National Institutions (National Library of Australia, National Museum of Australia, Australian War Memorial, National Archives, National Gallery of Australia, Questacon) were a significant provider of services and support;
- Museums Australia (NSW) Lachlan Chapter annual *Working Spaces for Museum Volunteers* program.

These providers are often preferred over M&G NSW because they:

- Come from collecting institutions that understand the issues from a practical perspective;
- Are frequently senior professionals and remain in their institution for lengthy periods thus allowing the development of long term relationships that has not been the case with M&G NSW;
- Can draw on other expertise within their institution when required.
- Are generally very good trainers;
- Have a particular remit (especially the national institutions) to assist organisations across the country and see it as an important part of their role and not as an 'add on' and are therefore prepared to invest time and resources in providing support and establishing long-term relationships.

## CONCLUSIONS

**M&G NSW undertakes many projects and engages with many constituents and this work is respected and appreciated, especially by the volunteer museum segment. To a considerable extent this occurs at the expense of dealing with the more strategic issues. M&G NSW, its constituents and Arts NSW need to be clear about striking an agreed balance between service delivery and the more high end strategic needs of the sector and be prepared to sacrifice some service delivery programs if there is a consensus that the strategic issues are more likely to result in long term sector development.**

**Because of its independence, and coverage of both museum and gallery segments, M&G NSW is ideally placed to play a key role in research, policy development, advocacy and coordination.**

**There are other service providers in some areas who deliver excellent services and who, in some instances, are best placed to do so, or to support the programs operated by M&G NSW. This applies particularly to:**

- **sector development opportunities such as training and advisory services**
- **exhibitions development**

**More professional development programs should be delivered in the regions and be more practically oriented.**

## **7.7 Satisfaction with Services**

During this review there were many positive comments made about M&G NSW. These can be summarised as follows (any qualifications are noted):

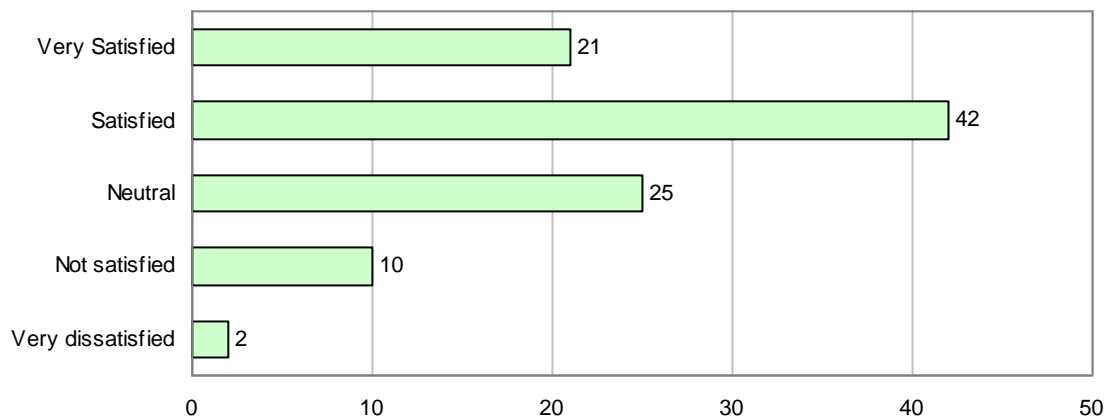
- Assists and supports the volunteer sector at a grass roots level that is much appreciated;
- Delivers a range of programs in the regions and provides much assistance, especially to the museums sector. Particular programs that drew favourable comments were:
  - Mentoring program
  - Touring exhibitions program
  - Standards program
  - Museums advisers program
  - Grants program – small strategic grants (\$3 - \$5k) have resulted in high leverage with local government with very positive results.
  - Seminars and conferences – but are best delivered in the regions.
  - Research that leads to strategic outcomes
- Has been successful in gaining funding from Australia Council and DEWHA;
- Works holistically – getting all the parts to work together;
- Excellent and broadly based board;
- Understands regional circumstances and the need for on-the-ground advice;
- Independence from government very important. It is trusted and seen to have independent control and ownership of its projects and programs;
- Excellent clearing house of information for local government;
- Is undertaking excellent audience research – but perhaps not doing enough with it when it is complete.

These positive comments were supported by the online survey – see section 8.6. Overall satisfaction was at 63% as shown below. – though different parts of the sector responded differently as also shown below.

### Overall satisfaction with M&G NSW programs

Base: All respondents n=158

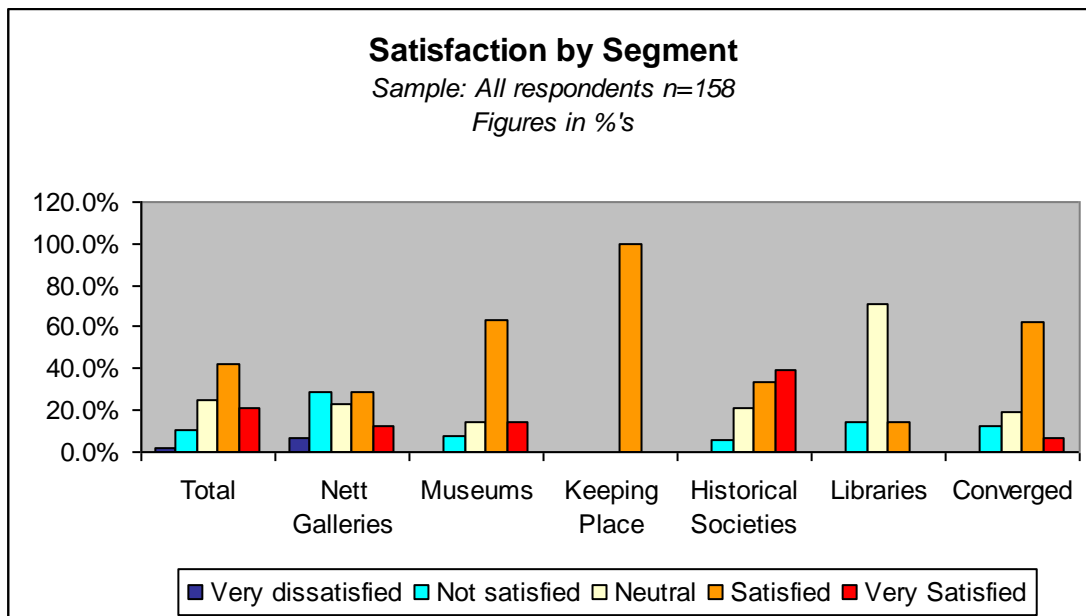
Figures in %'s



### Satisfaction by Segment

Sample: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



The main drivers to satisfaction of the services offered are:

- Help, support and interest shown by M&G NSW 29%;
- M&G NSW professionalism, responsiveness and organisation 21%;
- Grants funding, easy applications, assistance with grants 18%.

Access to information, publications, bulletins and advice on conservation and collection management are also appreciated by another 31% of organisations.

## CONCLUSIONS

**There is a reasonable overall level of satisfaction (63%) with M&G NSW from its constituents. This is more so with the museum segment - which is grateful for any support it receives, no matter how modest - than with the gallery segment where satisfaction levels are considerably lower.**



**With the diversity and spread of the sector, and the limited resources available to M&G NSW, it is unlikely that the entire sector will ever have a collectively high level of satisfaction. However, as a peak body, M&G NSW should aim to improve satisfaction levels with its constituents.**

## **7.8 Strategic Partnerships, Relationships and Communication**

As a peak organisation M&G NSW needs to, and does, maintain very active and effective relationships at many different levels to successfully fulfil its objectives. This includes managing relationships with constituents, government at all levels and many other stakeholders. The focus of these relationships will depend on where M&G NSW determines the emphasis of its activities should lie. At present these relationships seem to be strongest in the small and volunteer museum sector where they are used to very good effect.

In our view the following areas require some attention:

### **7.8.1 State Government**

If there is to be a strengthening of the more strategic roles of M&G NSW as suggested above then relationships with government would need to be cultivated more broadly (as proposed at 7.1 above) than they presently are and significantly strengthened.

### **7.8.2 Cultural Institutions**

The relationship between M&G NSW and the CI's is an ambiguous one and there is little engagement with one another. The CI's do not need the services of M&G NSW but they should be engaged with it to the extent that they:

- Have a good understanding of its role and the issues it is dealing with;
- Have a commitment to support M&G NSW's role in regional NSW;
- Ensure their own programs are complementary to M&G NSW's and that they use their particular strengths, especially in areas such as collections management, online documentation and access, object conservation, exhibition development and touring, conservation, capital development, schools education programs etc.;
- Work with M&G NSW to ensure duplication is avoided and that resources are most appropriately targeted to greatest need and distributed equitably around the state;
- Use their considerable expertise to assist with the development and management of a fundraising and corporate sponsorship program.

### **7.8.3 Local Government**

The importance of local government in the future development and sustainability of the sector was constantly reinforced by almost everyone who was interviewed. The strong relationship of the sector to local government was reinforced in the online survey where almost half the constituents had a primary responsibility to local government and it was the main source of support for the largest percentage (24%) of participants.

66% of constituents frequently or regularly used the services of local government.

Since M&G NSW was established local government has become increasingly involved with cultural development and Cultural Planners are becoming more common in the larger councils. New legislation means councils must prepare 10 year Community Strategic Plans and this presents excellent opportunities for museum and gallery development to be incorporated into local government's long term strategic planning. The Local Government and Shires Association is keen to work with M&G NSW at this strategic level.

It is worth noting that a key factor in the growth of Regional Galleries from the late 1970's and into the 1990's was the strong support gallery development was able to attract from Local Government.

M&G NSW has good links with local government through its board, Museum Advisers and other programs and needs to use these links to maximum effect.

#### **7.8.4 Sponsors and Donors**

M&G NSW has the benefit of DGR status with a tax advantage available to donors. There has been modest growth in donations and sponsorships over the past 10 years. With the range of programming and the state-wide reach of M&G NSW's activities there should be good opportunities for growth in this area though it will need a concerted effort and clearly articulated strategy.

The fundraising expertise that resides within the CI's should be tapped by M&G NSW to help develop and support a strategic approach to attracting support for its work. This should be possible without compromising the CI's own fundraising programs.

#### **7.8.5 Other Strategic Partnerships**

There were countless numbers of partnerships that were suggested that M&G NSW could cultivate. However, apart from those already singled out above, consistent views were expressed that M&G NSW should:

- Foster regional groupings of constituents;
- Forge closer relationships with the other peak bodies and in particular:
  - LG&SA
  - Regional Arts NSW.
  - Accessible Arts.
  - Arts Law in relation to licences, standard fees, artists engagement, IP, Standards eg photography, collections.
- Businesses with wide ranging regional interests such as:
  - Rural Press
  - Regional Airlines
  - Stock Agents
  - NRMA
- Government agencies such as:
  - Department of Education and Training
  - Tourism NSW
  - National Library of Australia (in relation to Picture Australia)
  - Department of Aboriginal Affairs
  - Department of State and Regional Development
  - Tertiary institutions

Whilst it is not possible for M&G NSW to maintain close strategic partnerships with all bodies mentioned, a more proactive approach to seeking support from a range of other bodies is likely to enhance the profile and opportunities for capacity building within regional areas. Seemingly small or short-term programs, initiated by M&G NSW, may have outcomes with long-lasting benefits for the sector as demonstrated by several of the Case Studies included in this report.

### **CASE STUDY**

#### **The getting of a new museum**

In 2001, funds from the Centenary of Federation in NSW were applied to conservation assessments of collections in three regions in the state. This entailed a conservator spending 6 weeks in the field, working with community and volunteer museums and assessing the state of their collections and issues relating to collection management and care.

The results were forwarded to the local government as well as to the museums themselves. The information surprised local government in The Tweed, which had previously given little thought to the state of the collections in its community. M&G NSW provided advice to the Council and met with the volunteers to advise closer cooperation with Council and between separate museum groups. A consultant was employed to advise on future action and an M&G NSW Museum Adviser was engaged.

The Museum Adviser helped to bring disparate groups of volunteers to work together to form a plan for the collections of the region, developed a Museum Strategic Plan that proposed the creation of a single regional museum from the three historical societies at Tweed Heads, Murwillumbah and Uki. A Memorandum of Understanding underpinned the agreement between Council and the historical societies. The plan proposed, among other things, a new museum building at Tweed Heads, upgrading the museum at Murwillumbah and the employment of a curator to implement the project.

It was an ambitious program and Council saw the need for continued advice on implementing the project and advising on the employment of the curator. It successfully approached M&G NSW to fund a Museum Adviser position for a year to maintain the project momentum.

An experienced senior curator was engaged for the museum, and a new regional museum is currently under construction.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

**There is likely to be considerable advantage from M&G NSW cultivating close relationships with local government at senior levels in the LG&SA, Department of Local Government and also individual local governments, including with cultural planners, especially as they are preparing their strategic plans. The Museum Advisers program is well placed to take advantage of this opportunity and should be strategically targeted to those areas where there is a willingness to engage in cultural planning at a strategic level. Museum Advisers should be well versed in the strategic planning process.**

**Communication and relationships could also be improved with government agencies, including CI's and other parties. M&G NSW**

**has the opportunity to use its DGR status and network to significantly increase its sponsorship income.**

**M&G NSW should develop information, including case studies, models and best practice, for the development of the museum and gallery sector in regional areas. This should include data on convergence/co-location. The State Library's publication *Library Models in NSW* is an excellent precedent.**

## **7.9 Impact and Outcomes of Government Funding**

M&G NSW has a total annual budget of about \$1.7m.

The breakdown of revenue for 2008 was as follows:

- 44.3% comes from Arts NSW as Core Funding
- 17.4% comes from Arts NSW as Devolved Funding
- **(Total 61.7% comes from NSW government sources)**
- 22% is self generated
- 16.3% comes from Commonwealth Government sources

The only substantive changes in revenue over the past ten years have been:

- A significant increase in Arts NSW Devolved and Program Funding.
- A significant increase in earned income from sponsorship and donations.

The breakdown of expenditure for 2008 was as follows:

- 50.7% costs of personnel
- 41.6 costs of projects and programs
- 7.7% administration

There has been almost no change in the pattern of expenditure.

Considering the size of the sector the funding base is pitifully small, though it is recognised that capital and other funding for major projects is made direct by Arts NSW. There is little room to manoeuvre providing funding levels remain the same.

M&G NSW administrative costs seem modest and appropriate.

Significant advances have been made in the sector over the past 10 years. These have frequently come about when M&G NSW, and others, have worked at a strategic level with local government resulting in significant resources being allocated by state and local governments.

Possibilities for new sources of funding might be:

- Sponsors and Donors. M&G NSW has a very significant advantage over the CI's and many others in that it covers the entire state. This should be attractive to commercial sponsors who have wide ranging regional networks.
- Partnerships with State government agencies (see 7.6.5) where programs align.

## CONCLUSIONS

**M&G NSW uses its financial resources efficiently. All program areas could be expanded to good effect if more funding was available.**

**Good strategic planning and good advocacy are likely to lead to long term improvement in financial resources to the sector. In the short term M&G NSW should use its DGR status and state wide reach to attract sponsors and donors and also work with other government agencies where it is able to attract funding by developing partnerships and/or delivering outcomes.**

**M&G NSW should use the expertise that resides within the CI's to assist it with developing fundraising strategies.**

### 7.10 Sydney-centric

A number of constituents expressed the view that M&G NSW had become too focussed on Sydney and that it was not visible enough in regional areas. This was especially the case in the delivery of professional development seminars and workshops. On the other hand there were those who wanted M&G NSW to be much more active in the Sydney Basin, believing that this was a neglected area. Perhaps more telling was the view, again expressed by many, that M&G NSW had become too focussed on itself and was not sufficiently representing its regional constituents. 'Woolloomooloo' was frequently used in a pejorative manner.

Some thought the office should be located in regional NSW, whilst others thought it essential that it be located 'close to the centre of power'. There is recognition that to engage in the critical strategic issues the organisation needs to have very strong presence in Sydney, and even an upgraded presence – in terms of status and premises. Some thought the offices too grand, whilst others thought them inappropriate to a peak body.

Regional Arts NSW, which was constantly mentioned by way of comparison, has a different governance and management model that is useful to understand since it may inform a different approach by M&G NSW. It is a company limited by guarantee with a board comprising five regional arts representatives and four co-opted directors. It meets five times each year. It has a small central staff in Sydney. Thirteen Regional Arts Development Officers (RADO's) who are located in the regions work to and are employed by 13 different Regional Arts Boards.. Their priorities are generated locally. The Chairs of the Regional Arts Boards compromise an Advisory Council and meets annually. A significant difference between Regional Arts NSW and M&G NSW is that the former has the area from Newcastle to Wollongong (including the Sydney Basin) excluded from its remit.

## CONCLUSIONS

**There is a perception that M&G NSW has become increasingly focussed on Sydney and that it is increasingly difficult to get staff to visit regional areas. This reinforces a view held by some that M&G NSW is not sufficiently engaged with regional issues and is uncomfortable engaging with regional people.**

**M&G NSW needs to generate a much stronger sense of commitment to regional areas to counter the perception that it is too Sydney**

**centric. It is possible there is a different governance and management model that could address this matter.**

## **7.11 Governance**

M&G NSW has excellent and broadly based skills amongst its board members. However the board in general, and individuals on it, are not seen by the constituents to represent their interests and are seen to be relatively remote from their constituents. This is felt most strongly in the gallery segment where there is no current board member with a strong background in regional galleries. Constituents consistently noted that they had little contact with the board and that the board had little understanding of the 'on the ground' issues.

There is a perceived lack of transparency and accountability in the governance processes and many constituents felt they had little opportunity to contribute and were not sufficiently consulted. It was suggested a number of times that there appears to be no contest of ideas and no opportunity for constituents to have input. This has resulted in a view in some quarters that M&G NSW serves either itself, or the government, and that the sector and the issues it faces are not its primary drivers. This is not a position we necessarily agree with and we note it only because of the frequency with which the view was expressed.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

**Whether true or not, the perception that the board is unrepresentative and lacking in transparency and accountability to the sector is a real issue amongst constituents and needs to be addressed. This would be best done by ensuring that constituents take some ownership of the organisation by having an opportunity to 'elect' their own representatives and have a say in the decision making processes of the board.**

**The government's interests should be adequately served by Arts NSW being more actively engaged with the existing reporting mechanisms.**

## **7.12 Management**

M&G NSW manages its resources well and operates its programs efficiently. The management structure reflects, to some extent, an organisation based on a service delivery model. However there was a very strong and consistent view that a peak body needs to look and behave very differently from an administrative one. Many strident views were made about the management of the organisation.

The most consistent of these were:

- Staff are generally too young and inexperienced and low pay does not attract people with more gravitas;
- Lack of staff continuity through rapid turnover;
- There is no staff member with senior regional gallery experience;
- Top heavy management;
- Previous specialists have been replaced with generalist managers;
- Management has become homogenised, and lost its edge over the past few years;

- There is insufficient dialogue with the sector and limited opportunity for constituents to contribute to major policy issues.

These sentiments, which come from all parts of the sector, have led to some loss of confidence in M&G NSW and need to be addressed urgently.

A comparison of the current salaries paid to M&G NSW and those of approximately comparable positions within the CI's indicates that salaries paid by M&G NSW are, on average, about 22% less than those paid in the CI's.

This difference is not a situation peculiar to M&G NSW. At a recent meeting of peak organisations it was noted that:

*Staff salaries in small to medium organisations remain too low. They have not been able to match those recommended as industry standards & offered by the bigger art institutions or in other sectors. This results in high staff turnover & consequent:*

- drain of expertise from the small/medium sector
- loss of corporate knowledge
- need for constant training of new staff
- difficulty in finding Indigenous staff<sup>13</sup>

By way of comparison the salaries<sup>14</sup> for two other peak bodies, where approximately equivalent positions exist, confirm the relatively low salaries paid in peak bodies.

## CONCLUSIONS

**For M&G NSW to engage appropriately as a peak body, and to have the confidence of its constituents, it needs to have continuity of staff that has excellent corporate and industry knowledge and experience.**

**If it is agreed that there should be a refocus on more strategic issues then there should be a staff restructure to reflect this with fewer, but more senior and competitively paid, staff. If this is not accepted then there remains a need for a review of staff and programs to rationalise these so as to be able to bring salaries up to reasonable parity to stabilise the organisation and attract more experienced staff.**

**M&G NSW needs mechanisms where it engages with the sector at a senior level so that it feels part of the team and is engaged in constant dialogue about the most pressing issues. Likewise constituents need mechanisms where they feel they can have input into major issues.**

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<sup>13</sup> Extract from minutes of meeting provided by Maisy Stapleton

<sup>14</sup> Exact comparisons are difficult because of salary packaging and superannuation arrangements in some organisations. The figures should be regarded as very general only

## 7.13 Alternative Models

There may be other organisational models for the peak body that are more appropriate to the needs of the sector. Until these needs are agreed it is not possible to determine an appropriate model. However on the basis that it is our view that there needs to be a refocus on high level strategy the following models may provide food for discussion:

### 7.13.1 Model 1 – Existing

- Refresh current governance and management and refocus on more strategic issues.

### 7.13.2 Model 2 – Regional Arts NSW Model

- Downsize head office to deal with research, advocacy, coordination, leadership, devolved funding.
- Place Regional Museum Development Officers throughout state in similar way to Regional Arts Development Officers to deal with service delivery, regional networking etc.
- Form Regional Museums and Galleries Development Boards as for Regional Arts NSW.

### 7.13.3 Model 3 – Cultural Institutions Model

- Downsize head office to deal with research, advocacy, coordination, leadership, devolved funding.
- CI's to deliver regional services with devolved funding from Arts NSW as follows:
  - Powerhouse to museums
  - AGNSW to regional galleries
  - Australian Museum and HHT to undertake special projects that use their particular expertise

### 7.13.4 Model 4 – Abolish M&G NSW

- Arts NSW to become responsible for research, advocacy, coordination, leadership, devolved funding as per models 2 and 3.
- CI's to deliver regional services with devolved funding from Arts NSW as follows:
  - Powerhouse to museums
  - AGNSW to regional galleries
  - HHT and Australian Museum to undertake special projects that use their particular expertise

This model is unlikely to be welcomed by all the cultural institutions as providing the services to the degree necessary would entail considerable expense and change in focus. Some others would be happy to extend their reach.

### 7.13.5 Model 5 – Merger with Regional Arts NSW

- Combined head office to be responsible for research, advocacy, coordination, leadership, devolved funding for museums, galleries, community arts, performing arts.



- Regional Arts Boards add responsibility for museums and galleries to their current remit.

This model is problematic since Regional Arts NSW does not cover the area from Wollongong to Newcastle.

### **7.13.6 MODEL 6 – ABOLISH M&G NSW AND REVERT TO 1998 MODEL**

Arts NSW would provide funding to MA NSW and R&PGA NSW to act as peak bodies for each of the segments.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

**There are advantages and disadvantages in each of the above models and also variations of each of them. It is not possible for us to come to a conclusion about a preferred model. This would need much more discussion with those affected by it to fully understand the implications. We do, however, believe that the following principles should apply:**

- **Many of the issues discussed in this report would be satisfactorily dealt with by maintaining the status quo and clarifying the strategic direction of M&G NSW and dealing with a number of governance and management issues;**
- **The peak body should remain independent of government;**
- **Service delivery should be done by those most expert to provide it;**
- **Locating some staff in regional areas is, in principle, appropriate to the nature of the work of M&G NSW and would enhance its work and reputation;**
- **The sector needs to have ownership of its peak body;**
- **The sector is strengthened by retaining museums and galleries under the one peak body.**

**If these principles are accepted it would narrow the options down to models 1 and 2, and to a lesser extent 3 and 5. It is our view that Option 1, the existing model, remains the most practical and relevant and that more dramatic change is unnecessary providing there is a sharpening of focus within M&G NSW as recommended in this report.**

## 8.0 QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

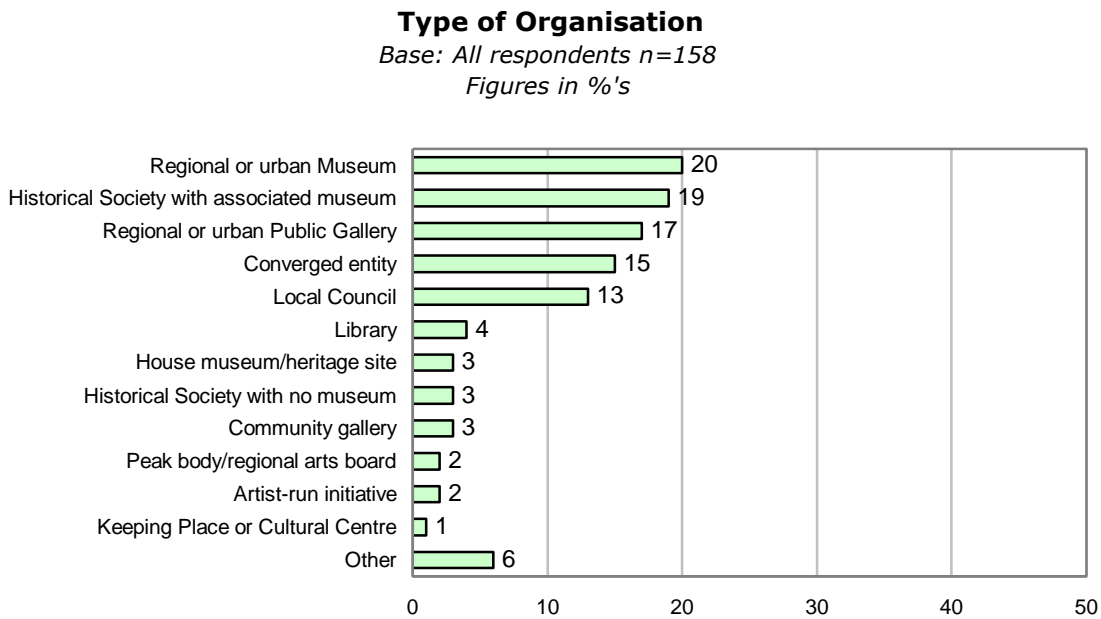
### 8.1 Profile of M&G NSW Users

#### 8.1.1 Organisation Type

A broad range of organisation types participated in the study evaluating M&G NSW.

The main stakeholders represented in the survey were:

- Historical societies with associated museums, who represent 19% of participants in the study;
- Museums representing 20%;
- Public Galleries representing 17%;
- Converged entities representing 15%, and
- Local councils representing 13%

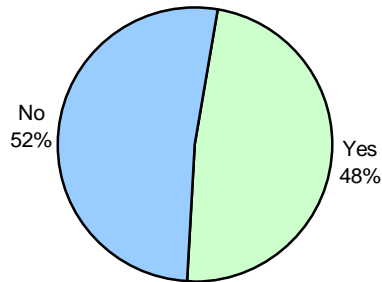


## 8.2 Local Government Responsibility

Just over half the organisations that were not part of Local Council who were included in the survey were not responsible to local government in their actions.

### Responsibility to local government

Base: Respondents whose Organization type is not Local Council n=138  
 Figures in %'s



Amongst those using M&G NSW services 42% had Local Government responsibility.

## 8.3 Size of the organisation

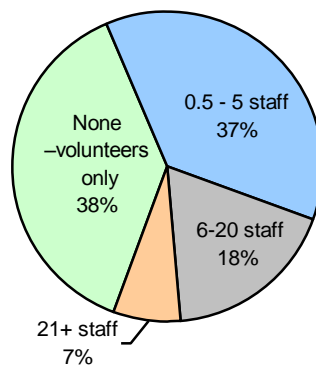
The majority, 75% of those who participated in the study were resource poor and had no full time staff or 5 or less full time staff:

- 38% of organisations were volunteer based with no full time paid staff;
- 37% had one part time staff member or up to five full time paid staff members;
- 18% had from 6 up to 20 full time staff;
- A small proportion had over 21 full time staff.

M&G NSW services are most likely to be used by smaller organisations with few paid staff. 79% of those with no full time staff had used M&G services

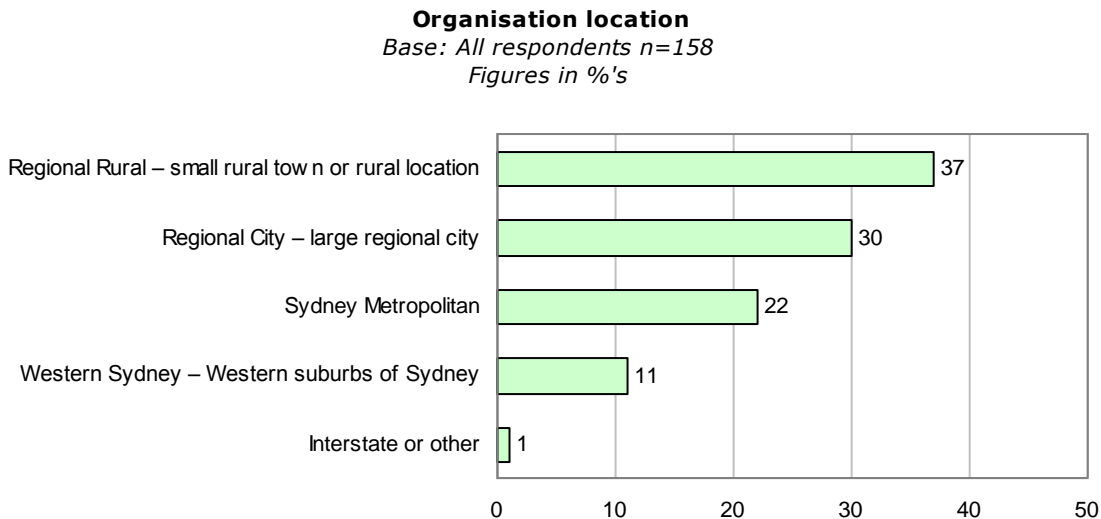
### Number of staff in the organisation

Base: All respondents n=158  
 Figures in %'s



## 8.4 Location of Organisation

The survey contained an equal spread of urban organisations, including both Metropolitan Sydney and Western Sydney areas 33%, regional cities 30%, and regional rural 37% locations. A very small proportion was from interstate.



Of those using M&G NSW services, the majority were from rural areas, 33% from Regional Rural areas and 33% from Regional City areas. 21% were from Sydney metropolitan and 12% from Western Sydney.

## 8.5 Participation and Usage of M&G NSW Programs and Support Services

### 8.5.1 Usage of the service past 2 years

Participation in programs and services offered by M&G NSW over the past 2 years indicates that the bulk of users are most likely to access the information services offered by M&G NSW or its professional development programs. Both of these services have been used by nearly two thirds of organisations in the past two years.

Other services offered by M&G NSW important to organisations and used by around one third of organisations in the past 2 years are:

- Resources 35%
- Sector development 32%
- Devolved funding grants 32%

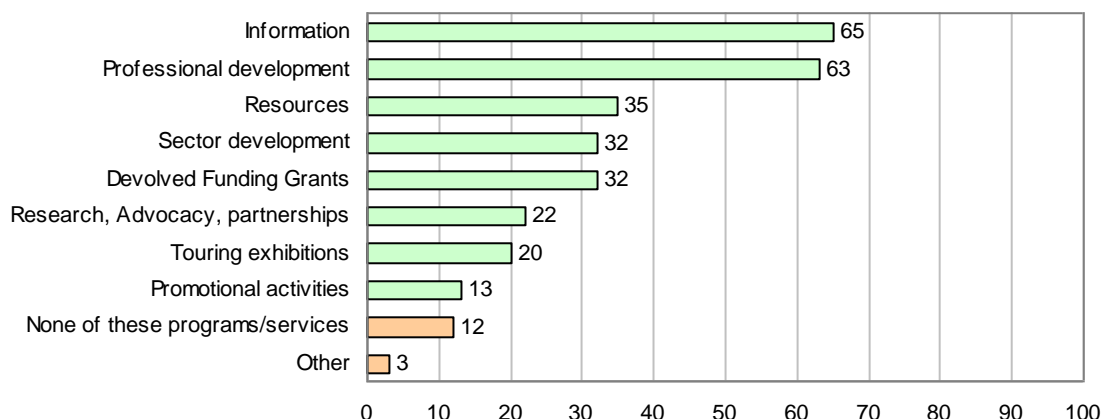
One fifth of users use the research, advocacy and partnerships services 22% Or the touring exhibitions services, 20%.

12% use none of the services provided by M&G NSW.

### M&G NSW programs participated in over past 2 years

Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



Galleries are more likely to be users of professional development, conferences, seminars and workshops compared with museums and historical societies. They are increasingly using these services. They also use the resources exhibitions register, consultants register and advisory resources of M&G NSW more than museums and historical societies. Whilst museums also are most likely to use professional development, conferences, seminars and workshops relative to other services, they are slightly more likely than galleries to use website information, e publications, papers and information and sector development, museum advisor program.

Usage of professional development services, conferences and seminars and information website and e publications by galleries sector has grown since 2006.

### Usage of M&G NSW Services by Galleries and Museums Sectors

Base: Galleries and Museums Sectors

Figures in %'s

Key Programs participating in:	Nett Galleries % <sup>'s</sup> n=31* Recent to 2009	Nett Galleries % <sup>'s</sup> n=31* Prior to Dec. 2006	Nett Museums/ Hist.Soc. % <sup>'s</sup> n=60 Recent to 2009	Nett Museums/ Hist.Soc. % <sup>'s</sup> n=60 Prior to Dec. 2006
Professional development, conferences, seminars and workshops	84	68	55	57
Information website, e publications, papers and information	65	45	68	53
Resources, exhibitions register, consultants register; advisory	39	32	27	25
Touring exhibitions internally created and curated	39	42	12	12
Devolved funding grants. Incoming touring exhibitions grants; volunteer	36	32	37	35
Sector Development, audience development, museum advisor program	29	13	32	22
Research, advocacy partnerships	29	13	20	12
None of these programs	12	19	17	22

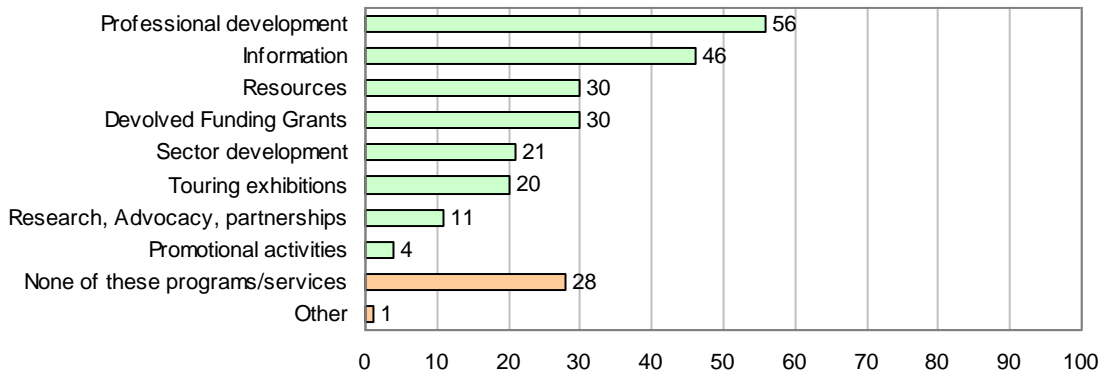
### 8.5.2 Usage of the service prior Dec. 2006

M&G NSW has accessed a substantial number of new users of its services in the past 2 years. 28% of organisations had not used these services prior to 2006.

#### M&G NSW programs participated in prior to Dec 2006

Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



Usage of many services offered by M&G NSW is recent with a large proportion of users not having used a number of the services offered prior to December 2006.

The Professional services and the information services are the most used services of the majority of organisations prior to December 2006.

30% had not used the resources or devolved funding grants prior to December 2006.

### 8.6 Overall Satisfaction with M&G NSW

Overall satisfaction with M&G NSW is 63% with 21% very satisfied and 42% satisfied. Those most likely to be very satisfied are historical societies (39% historical societies vs. 21% total) and museums and converged entities most likely to be satisfied (63% museums, 63% converged vs. 42% total).

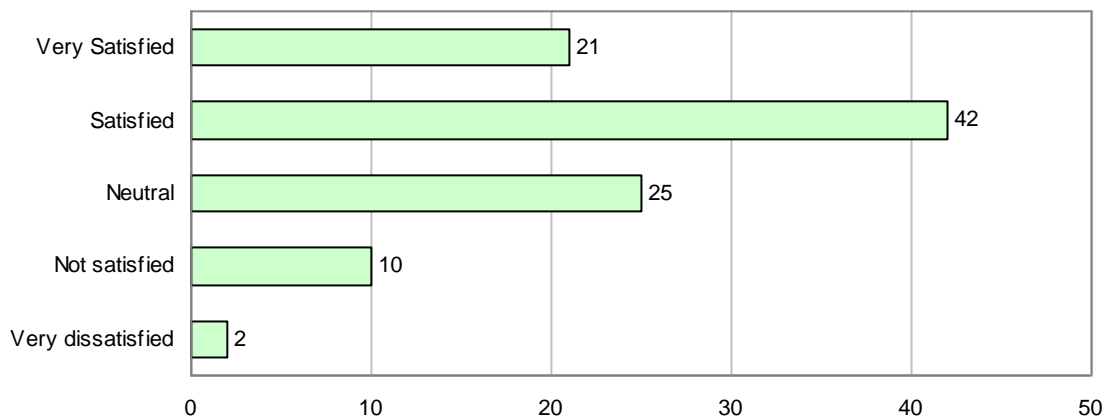
25% of organisations are neutral in response to the programs and services offered by M&G NSW, these organisations most likely to be Libraries (71% Library vs. 25% total).

12% of users are dissatisfied in some way with the services offered. Galleries are most likely to be dissatisfied (29% nett galleries vs. 10% total) and those very dissatisfied also most likely to be galleries (7% nett galleries vs. 2% total).

**Overall satisfaction with M&G NSW programs**

Base: All respondents n=158

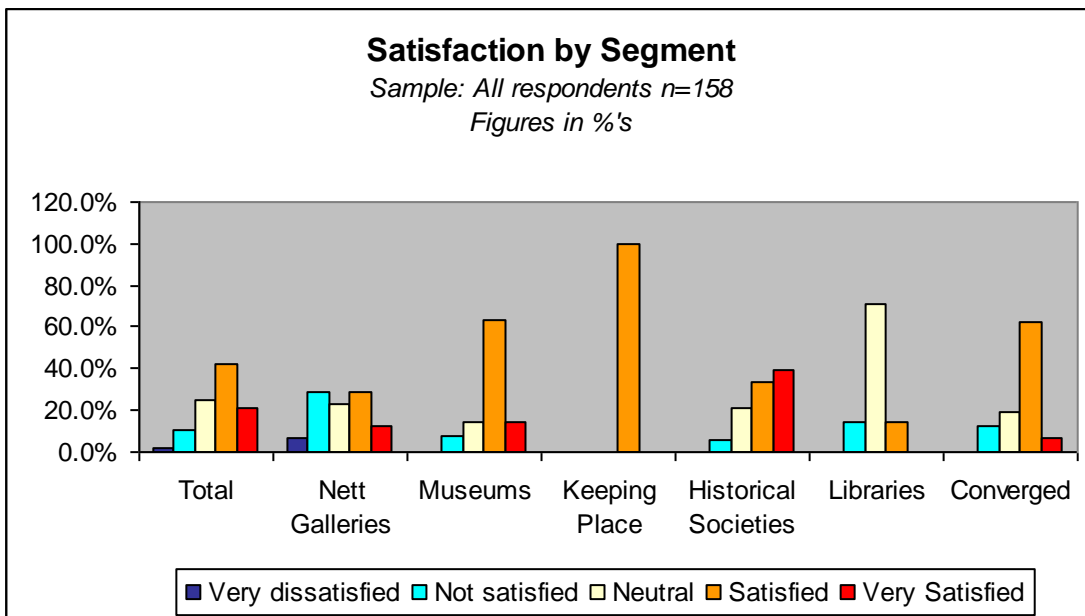
Figures in %'s



**Satisfaction by Segment**

Sample: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



**8.6.2 Reasons for Satisfaction**

It is clear that M&G NSW offers valuable service to organisations, their role in supporting, providing professional advice and the devolved grants offered constitute 68% of the drivers to satisfaction.

The main drivers to satisfaction of the services offered are:

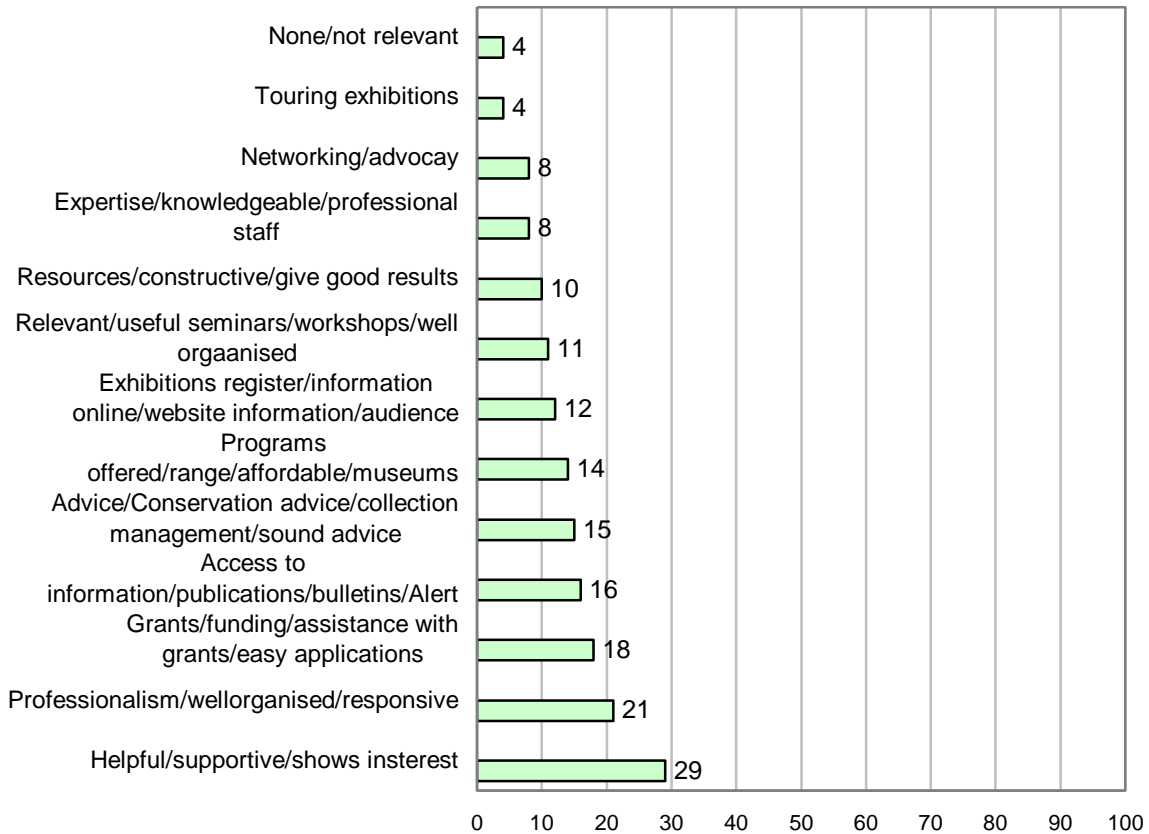
- Help, support and interest shown by M&G NSW towards our organisation 29%;
- M&G NSW professionalism, responsiveness and organisation 21%;
- Grants funding, easy applications, assistance with grants 18%.

Access to information, publications and bulletins and the advice on conservation and collection management are also appreciated by another 31% of organisations.

The programs offered, the exhibitions register and information online and the seminars and workshops are less likely to contribute to real satisfaction with M&G NSW.

### Reasons for overall satisfaction with M&G NSW programs

Base: Satisfied respondents n=100  
Figures in %'s





### 8.6.3 Reasons for Dissatisfaction

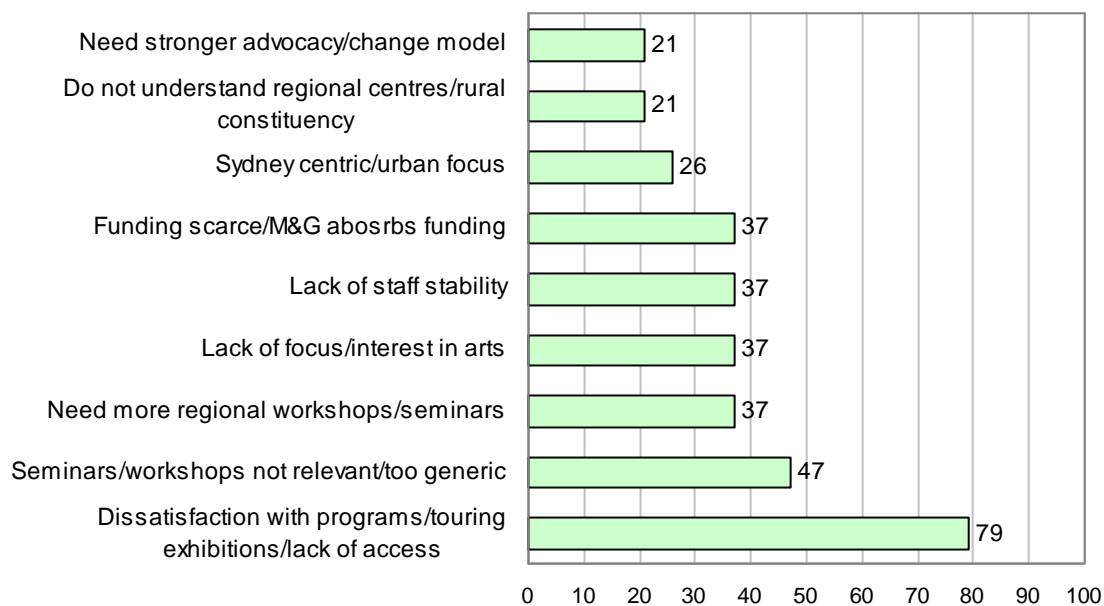
Of the small proportion (12%) of organisations dissatisfied with M&G NSW there are a few key causes:

- 79% (or 15 organisations) are dissatisfied with the programs and touring exhibitions, or feel there is a lack of access to these services;
- Nearly half, 47% (or 9 organisations) believe the seminars and workshops are irrelevant or too generic.

#### Reasons for overall dissatisfaction with M&G NSW programs

Base: Dissatisfied respondents n=19

Figures in %'s



### 8.6.4 Satisfaction with Each Area of Service Provided

The majority of organisations are satisfied with four key areas of services offered by M&G NSW:

- Resources – 69% overall (23% very satisfied) and museums more likely to be satisfied;
- Professional Development – 69% (23% very satisfied) and museums more likely to be satisfied;
- Devolved funding grants – 57% satisfied (21% very satisfied) galleries not very satisfied and museums and historical societies more likely to be satisfied;
- Sector development – 55% (20% very satisfied) with galleries and keeping places highly likely to be quite dissatisfied;

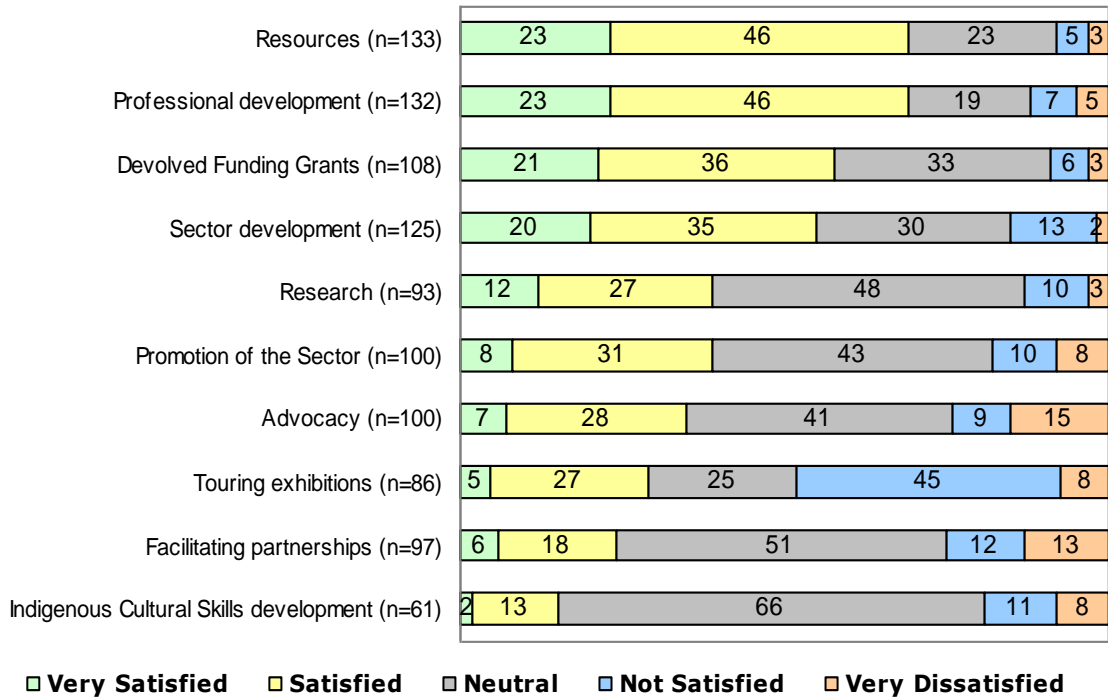
The areas of least satisfaction are facilitating partnerships and Indigenous Cultural Skills Development where 23% are dissatisfied with facilitating partnerships area and a large proportion, 51%, are neutral, and in

Indigenous cultural skills development where 19% are dissatisfied and a large majority, 66%, are neutral.

**Satisfaction with M&G NSW service areas**

*Base: Organisations Applicable*

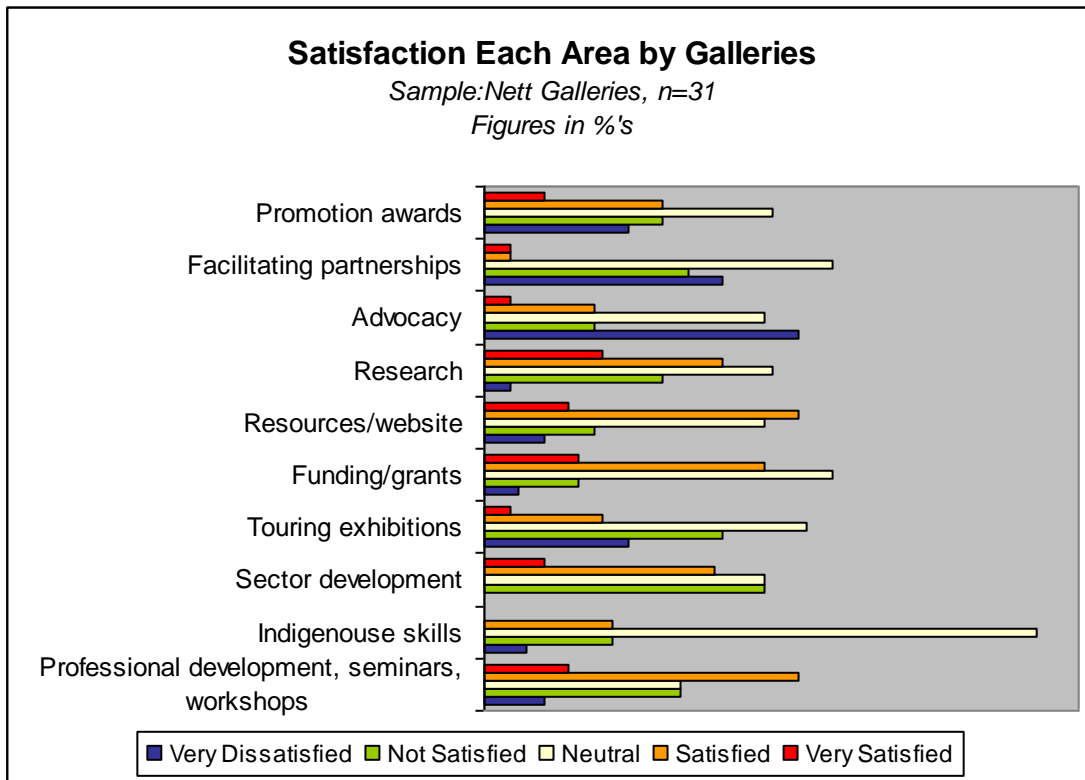
*Figures in %'s*



### 8.6.5 Gallery Satisfaction with Each Area of Service Provided

Galleries are most likely to be satisfied with research, funding and grants and resources and websites. They are also highly satisfied with professional development seminars and workshops.

Areas of least satisfaction for galleries are in the area of indigenous skill development where they are neutral and in facilitating partnerships. Advocacy, facilitating partnerships and touring exhibitions are areas of greater dissatisfaction for this sector.



### 8.7 Effectiveness of M&G NSW

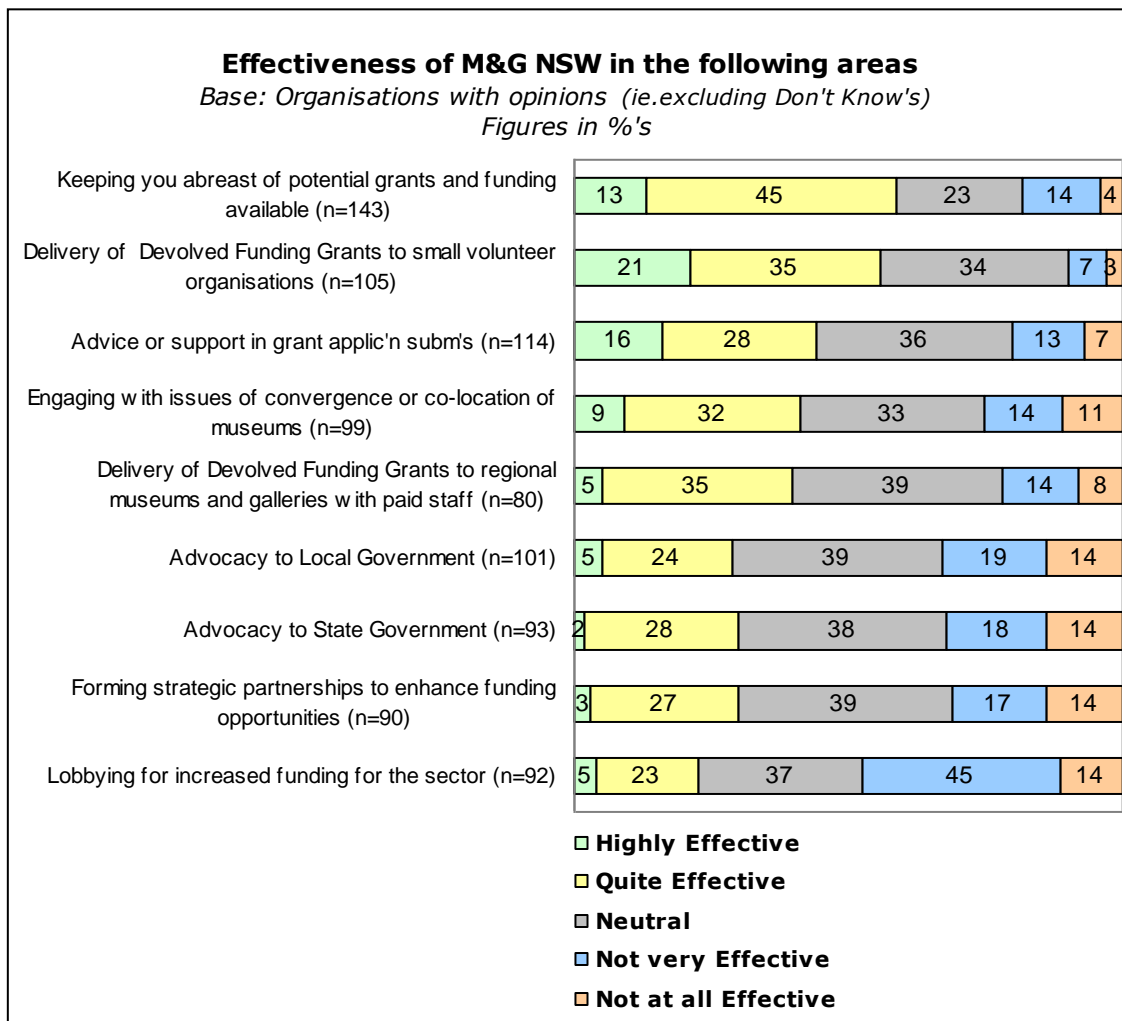
The area of perceived greatest efficacy for M&G NSW is the area of keeping organisations aware of potential funding and grants available 58% consider this area quite or highly effective. Museums and historical societies are more likely to consider this area effective than galleries.

It is also seen as fairly effective in the delivery of devolved funding to small volunteer organisations (56%) with 21% considering M&G NSW highly effective. This view is particularly held by historical societies and museums and less so galleries. M&G NSW is also seen as effective in giving advice and support in grant applications and submissions (44%) a view held more strongly by museums and historical societies.

It is considered fairly effective in engaging with issues of convergence or co-location of museums (41%) and in the delivery of devolved grants and funding to museums and galleries in regional areas with paid staff (40%).

Its role in advocacy to both State and local government, its role in forming strategic partnerships to enhance funding opportunities, and in lobbying for increased funding for the sector are seen as the least effective areas of its operations.

The small sample of keeping places were particularly critical of M&G NSW in its effectiveness in the areas of advocacy, lobbying strategic partnerships and lobbying.



## 8.8 Perception of Peak Bodies and Support Organisations in the Museums and Galleries Sector

### 8.8.1 Peak bodies in the Museums and Galleries Sector

M&G NSW is seen as the peak body by nearly one third of organisations, historical societies in particular see M&G NSW as providing Peak Body support. Museums Australia remains important to nearly 20% of organisations particularly museums and Arts NSW is also perceived as a peak body by 17% particularly galleries.

Key players in providing support to the sector are seen to be Local Government 47% and the Powerhouse Museum 46%. In addition, the support for Museums and Galleries sector is seen to come from Arts NSW 41% and M&G NSW 38% and Museums Australia 39%.

Collections Australia Network, Regional Arts NSW, Regional and Public Galleries NSW and The National cultural institutions also play a role in supporting the sector.

	Peak body for the development of the museums and galleries sector	Provide significant support to the museums and galleries sector
Base: All respondents n=158	%	%
M&G NSW	31	38
Museums Australia	18	39
Arts NSW	17	41
National Cultural Institutions (NLA, NMA, NGA, ANMM, AWM)	6	21
Local Government	4	47
Australia Council	3	16
Powerhouse Museum	3	46
Regional and Public Galleries NSW	3	23
Museums Australia Regional Chapter	1	20
Regional Arts Development Board (RADO's)	1	15
Regional Arts NSW	1	27
Corporate Sponsor	1	14
Local Government & Shires Associations	1	11
Philanthropic Foundations	1	20
Private Philanthropist	1	16
Public Libraries NSW - Country	1	8
Royal Australian Historical Society	1	22
Art Gallery of NSW	0	16
Australian Museum	0	13
Collections Australia Network CAN	0	28
Historic Houses Trust	0	17
Public Libraries NSW - Metropolitan State Library of NSW	0	11
State Records	0	8

Visions of Australia	0	19
Other	8	9

## 8.8.2 Sources of Support

Local Government and M&G NSW are the two key areas of support for organisations. M&G NSW provides the main support for 20% of organisations and Local Government for 24% of organisations.

The Powerhouse Museum is viewed as a significant source of other support to 31% of organisations this View is held by both larger organisations employing 6 – 20 staff and by volunteer organisations. Local Government also provides significant other support to 30% of organisations with larger organisations least likely to view them as significant other support.

Arts NSW and Museums Australia are also offer significant other support for organisations, Arts NSW most likely to provide support to those with .5 – 5 full time staff and those with 5 – 20 full time staff. Museums Australia most likely to provide support to those with volunteers only.

	Main source of support for your organisation	Other source of support for your organisation
Base: All respondents n=158	%	%
Local Government	24	30
M&G NSW	20	30
Arts NSW	13	27
Royal Australian Historical Society	5	12
Private Philanthropist	4	13
Powerhouse Museum	4	31
Museums Australia	3	23
Regional and Public Galleries NSW	3	13
Australia Council	2	8
Local Government & Shires Associations	2	11
Museums Australia Regional Chapter	2	15
Public Libraries NSW - Metropolitan State Library of NSW	2	8
Corporate Sponsor	1	17
Historic Houses Trust	1	11
Philanthropic Foundations	1	8
Regional Arts NSW	1	16
Collections Australia Network CAN	1	10
National Cultural Institutions (NLA, NMA, NGA, ANMM, AWM)	1	11
Public Libraries NSW - Country	1	6
Regional Arts Development Board (RADO's)	1	9
Art Gallery of NSW	0	9
Australian Museum	0	7
State Records	0	8
Visions of Australia	0	9
Other	8	20

### 8.8.3 Frequency of Use of Support Services

Local government is seen to provide frequent support to 44% of organisations and another 22% benefit from its services or programs regularly.

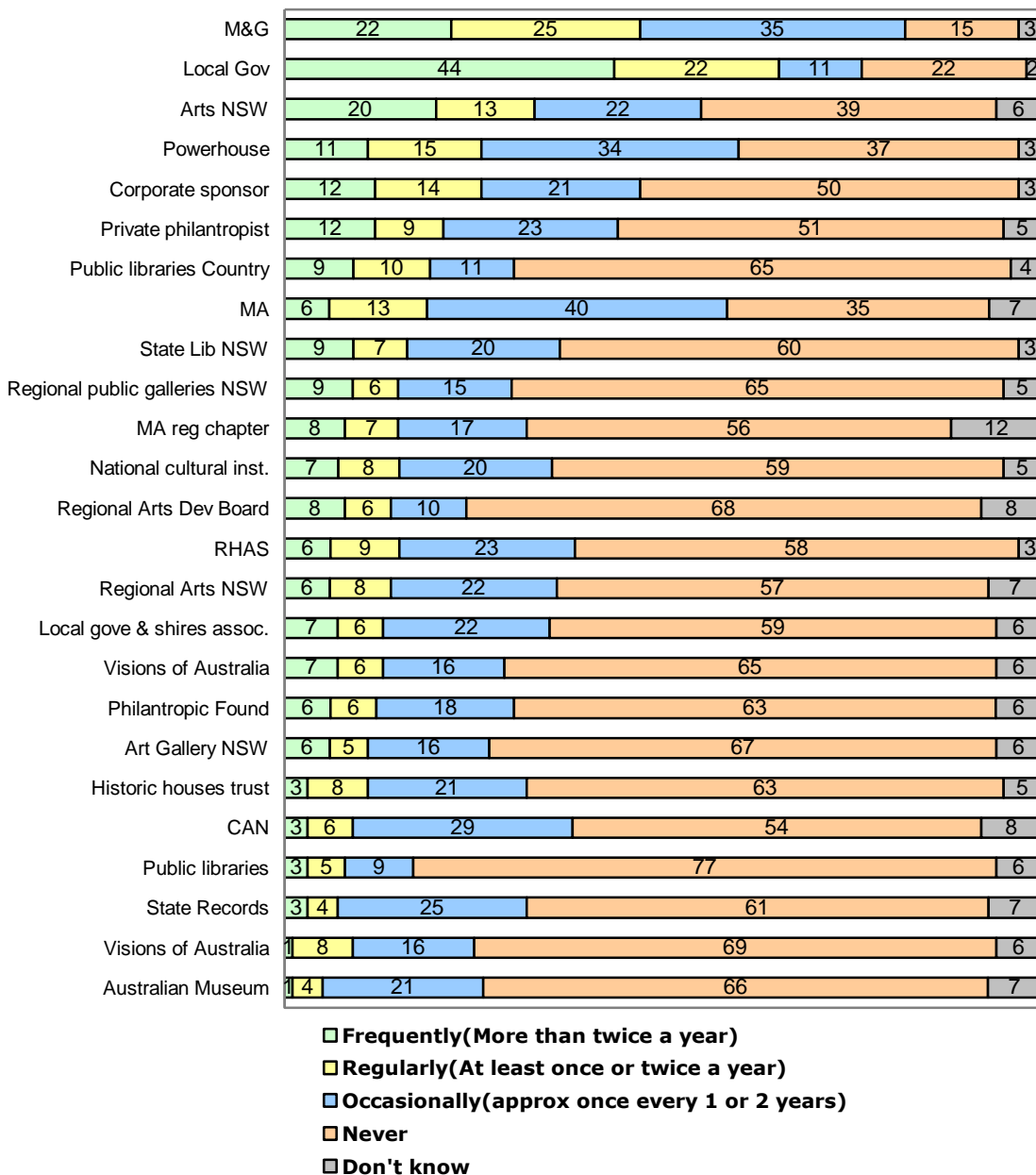
M&G NSW offers frequent support to only 22% of organisations with another 25% benefiting regularly from its services. M&G NSW provides more frequent and regular support to organisations than the Powerhouse Museum. Similar to the Powerhouse Museum just over one third use its services only occasionally, once every 1 or 2 years. Museums Australia services are also used by many occasionally.

18% of organisations have never used the services of M&G NSW or do not know whether they have or not.

#### How often you benefit from programs or services offered by each of these organisations

Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



## 8.9 Usage of Funding Support

One quarter of all organisations have received volunteer initiated museum grants over the past 10 years and less than 20% have received one other of the types of funding or grants available. A small percentage of organisations receive regular funding from any one of the different types of grants and support offered.

30% had applied for funding in the Volunteer Initiated Museum Grants area and around 20% in the other areas.

The volunteer initiated museum grants are considered the most useful by 44% of organisations and one third of users see the other forms of funding and grants the most useful.

	Received support in the last 10 years	Applied for funding	Funding received regularly	Most useful
Base: All respondents n=158	%	%	%	%
Volunteer Initiated Museum Grants	26	30	12	44
Funding for Mentorships, Fellowships and bursaries	20	23	3	37
Incoming Touring Exhibition Grants	18	19	6	33
Gallery FocusED Grants/ConnectED Arts Program	15	22	9	31
None	52	46	77	16

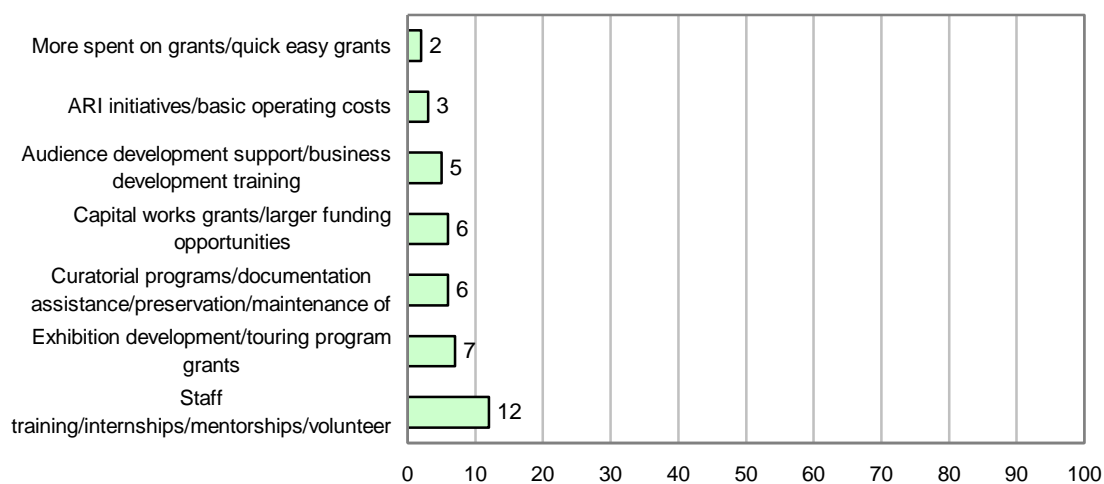
### 8.9.1 Other Funding Offerings

The most common request for other types of funding is for staff traineeships mentorship and volunteer training.

#### Other types of funding you would like to see offered

Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s





## 8.10 Importance of M&G NSW Service Provision

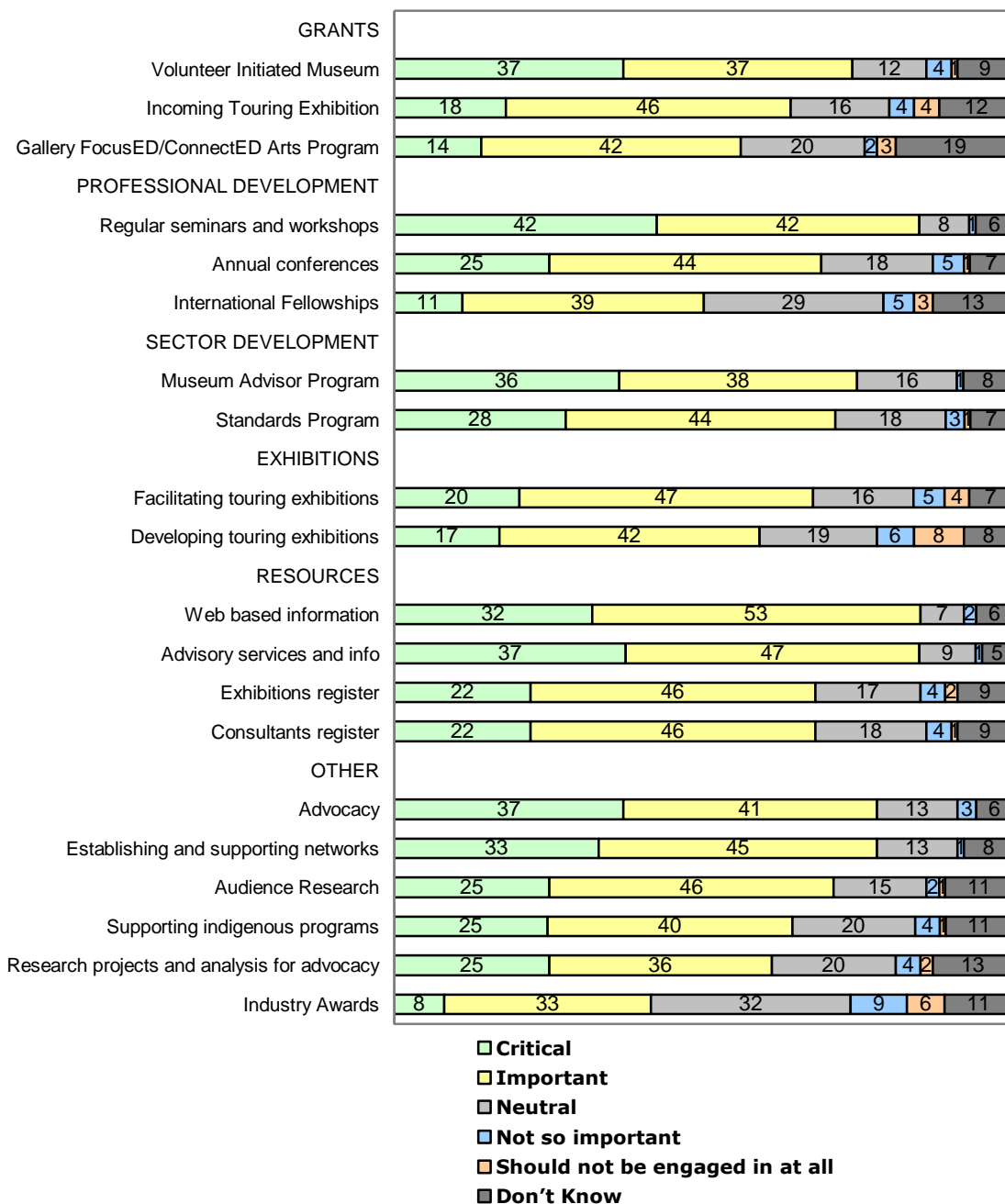
Professional Development in the form of seminars and workshops is seen as the main form of service provision with 84% saying they are critical or important services for M&G NSW to provide (42% critical) and the majority also believe that Resources, in the form of web-based information 85% (32% critical) and advisory services and information 84% (37% critical) are also of importance.

Other services in the form of advocacy 78% and establishing and supporting networks 78% are of importance to a large proportion of organisations. Grants in the form of Volunteer Initiated Museum grants are important to 74% and the Museum Advisor Program to 74%.

### Importance of the following M&G NSW programs

Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



## 8.11 Attitudes towards M&G NSW

The most prominent attitudes in relation to M&G NSW are that it is seen as a highly respected organisation, efficient and understanding of the needs at a volunteer level by most.

It does have a proportion of its users who believe it doesn't listen to its constituents, but at the same time a proportion say it communicate well with them.

It is seen as strategic in its direction and innovative and dynamic by just over half but there is strong disagreement with the statements that it meets the needs of either small museums or regional galleries, or that it most relevant to galleries. There is also strong disagreement with it has highly skilled staff and that it is open and transparent but also that it is conservative.

### Level of agreement with statements about M&G NSW

Base: All respondents n=158

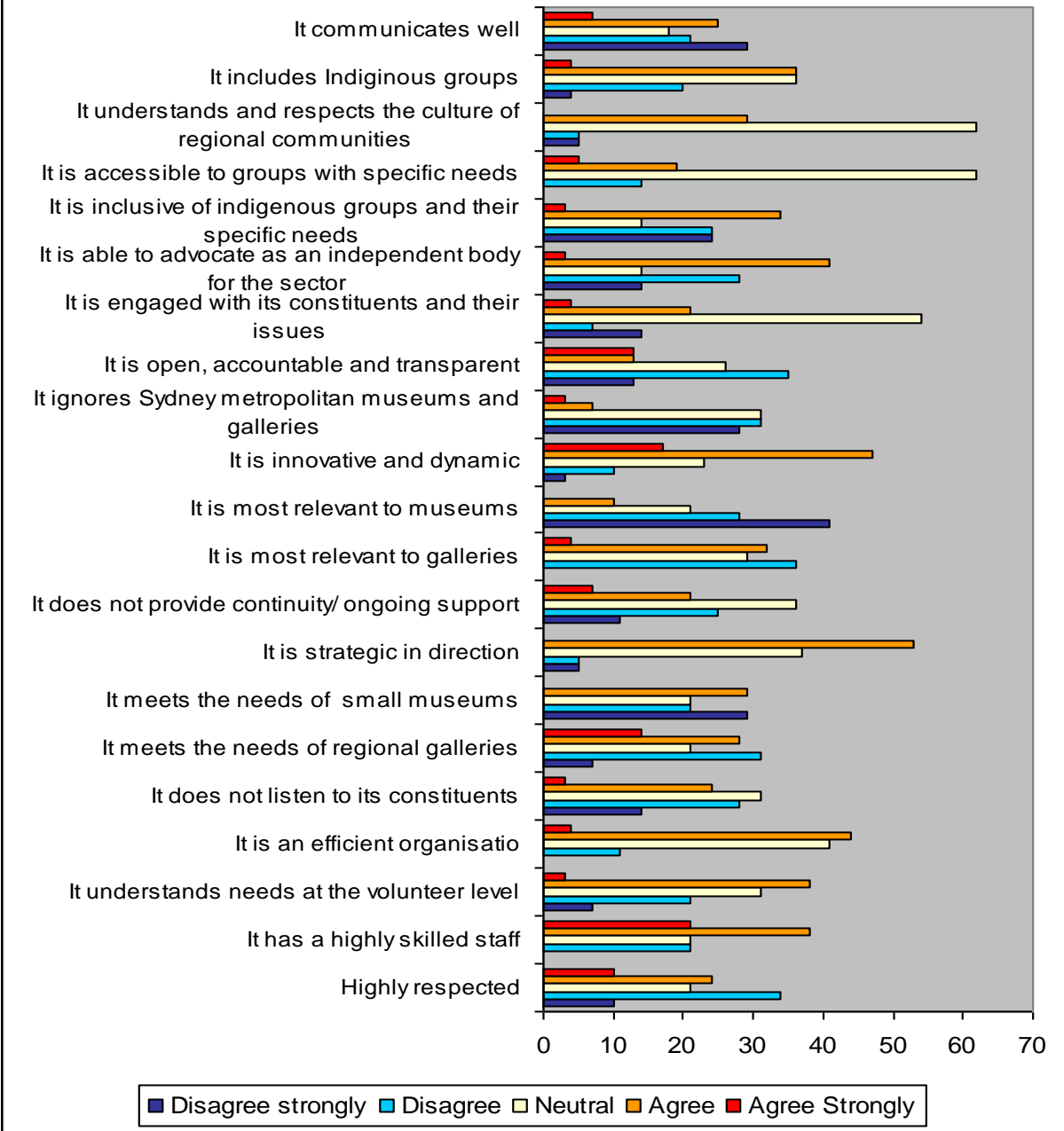
Figures in %'s

It is a highly respected organisation	24	45	18	9	4
It understands needs at the volunteer level	14	50	27	4	4
It is an efficient organisation	14	45	33	6	1
It does not listen to its constituents	13	40	33	8	5
It is strategic in direction	10	46	31	9	3
It is innovative and dynamic	10	40	31	13	5
It communicates well with its constituents	9	43	29	11	9
It does not provide continuity/ ongoing support	9	36	41	8	5
It is able to advocate as an independent body for the sector	7	46	37	8	7
It is inclusive of indigenous groups and their specific needs	7	41	34	9	9
It has a highly skilled staff	7	28	39	26	
It is conservative in outlook	7	28	40	26	
It is engaged with its constituents and their issues	6	32	53	4	5
It meets the needs of small museums	6	16	30	39	10
It meets the needs of regional galleries	6	16	30	39	10
It is most relevant to museums	5	17	46	20	12
It is most relevant to galleries	4	19	29	39	10
It understands and respects the culture of regional communities	3	26	61	6	3
It is open accountable and transparent	3	6	26	17	8
It is accessible to groups with specific needs eg. People with a disability, English as a second language	6	37	48	5	4
It ignores Sydney metropolitan museums and galleries	4	23	50	14	9

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

### Attitudes to M&G NSW by Galleries

Sample: nett Gallerieis n=31,  
Figures in %'s



## 8.12 Importance of Future M&G NSW services

The key services perceived as important for M&G NSW to undertake in the future are:

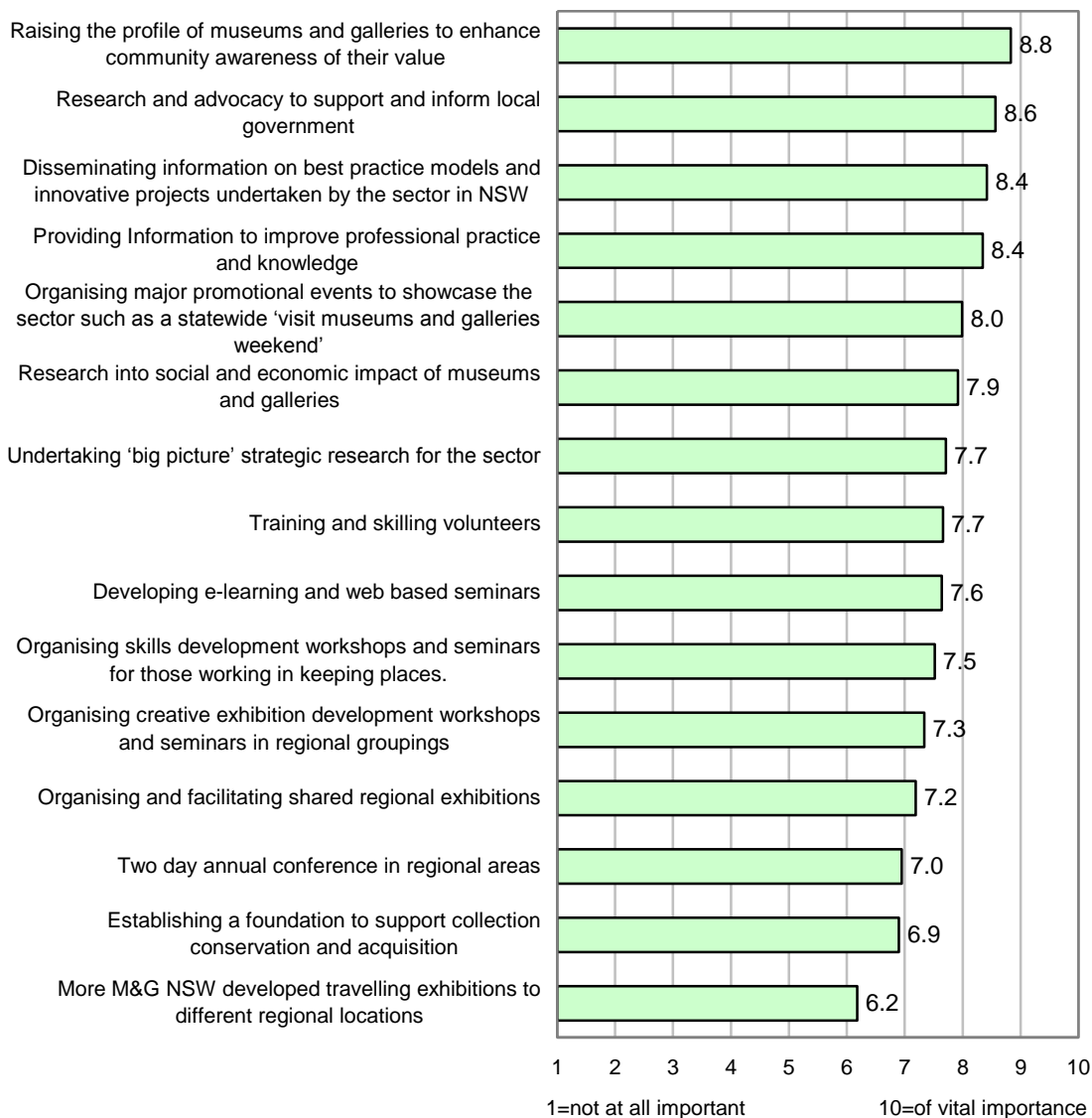
- To raise the profile of museums and galleries to enhance community awareness of their value;
- Research and advocacy to support and inform local government;
- Disseminate information on best practice models and innovative projects undertaken by the sector;
- Provide information to improve professional practice and knowledge.

Travelling exhibitions to the regions and establishing a foundation to support collection and conservation are seen as the least important initiatives.

### Importance of possible M&G NSW initiatives/activities

Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



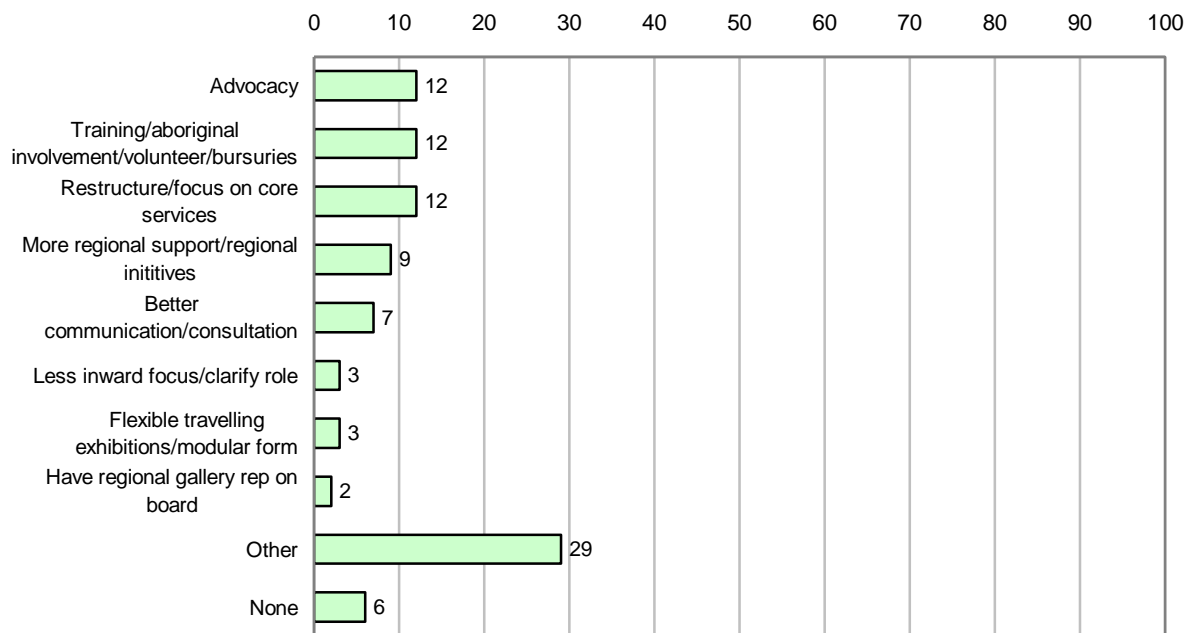
### 8.12.1 Ideas for Future Development

The future of M&G NSW services is seen to lie in a range of areas, the main ones being advocacy, training in aboriginal areas and a restructure or focus on core services.

#### Ideas for future development

Base: Of those with ideas n=65

Figures in %'s



## 8.13 Relevance of Communication

### 8.13.1 Alert Newsletter

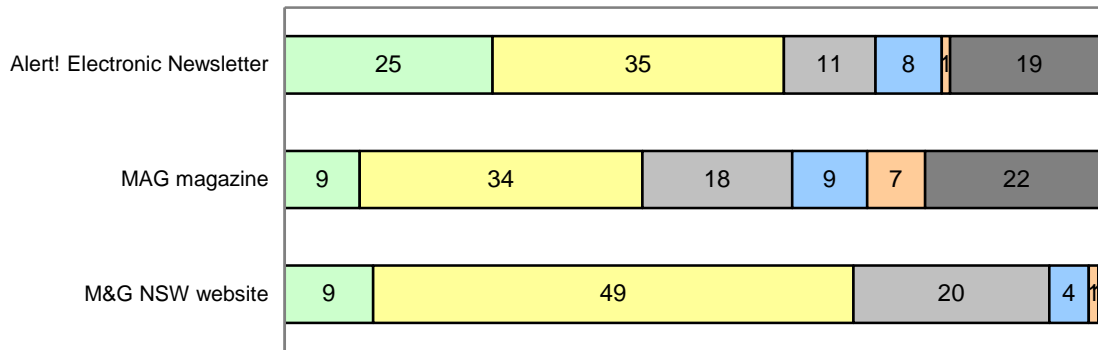
The Alert newsletter is considered relevant and informative by the majority of users of M & G services. 60% considered it relevant and informative, a small percentage, 11% were neutral and 9% were negative about the newsletter.

Just under 20% had not received the newsletter or had not looked at it at all.

#### Relevance of M&G NSW communication mediums

Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



- Very relevant and informative
- Relevant and Informative
- Neutral
- Not especially relevant or informative
- Irrelevant
- Don't receive/ not looked at

### 8.13.2 Website

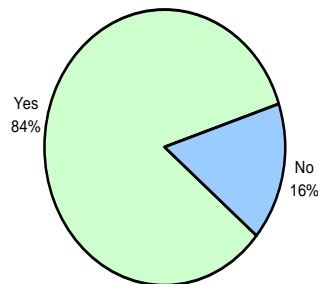
The website is considered relevant and informative by 58% of those associated with M&G NSW.

A high percentage of visitors have visited the M&G NSW website.

#### Ever visited the M&G NSW website

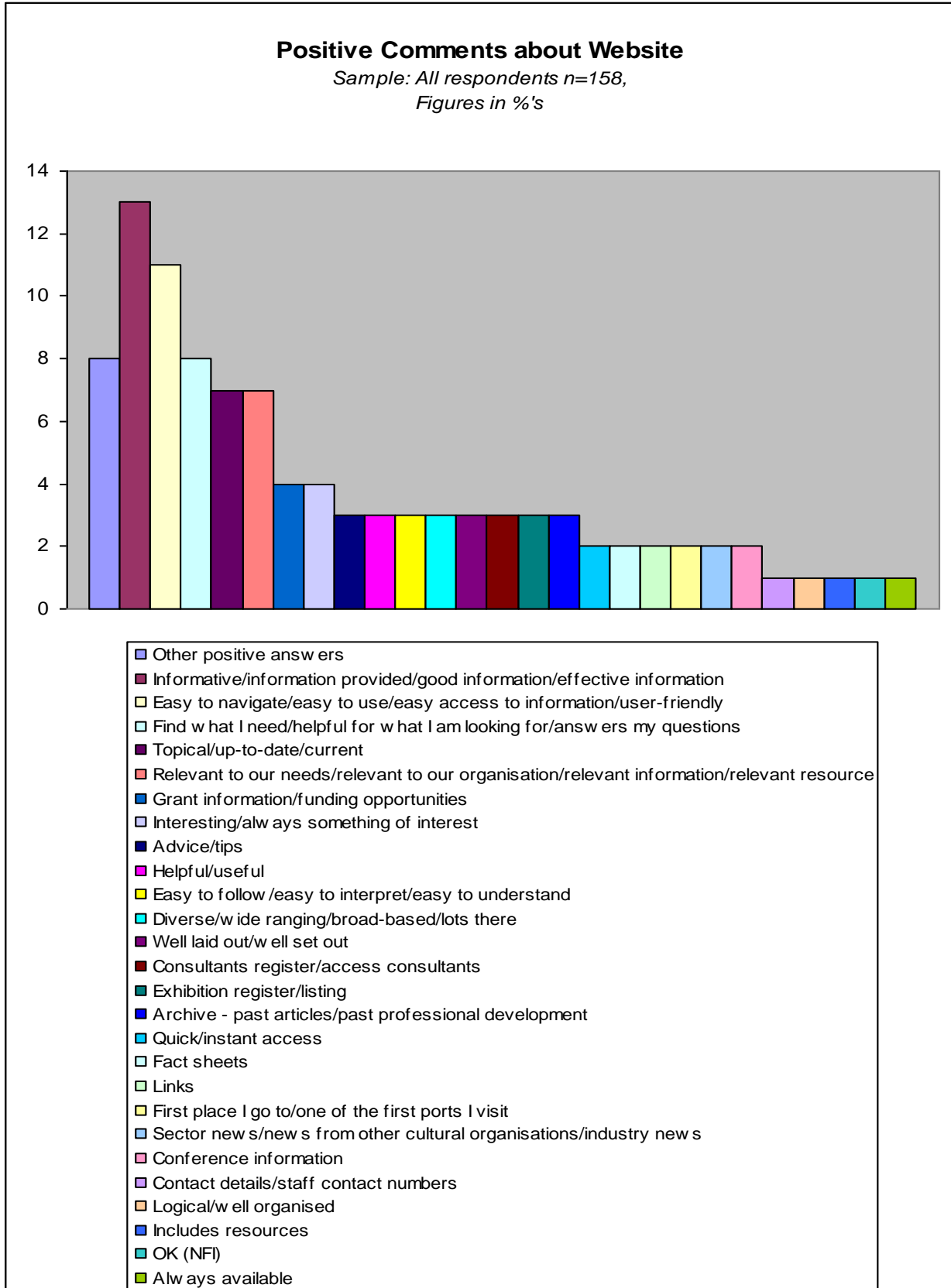
Base: All respondents n=158

Figures in %'s



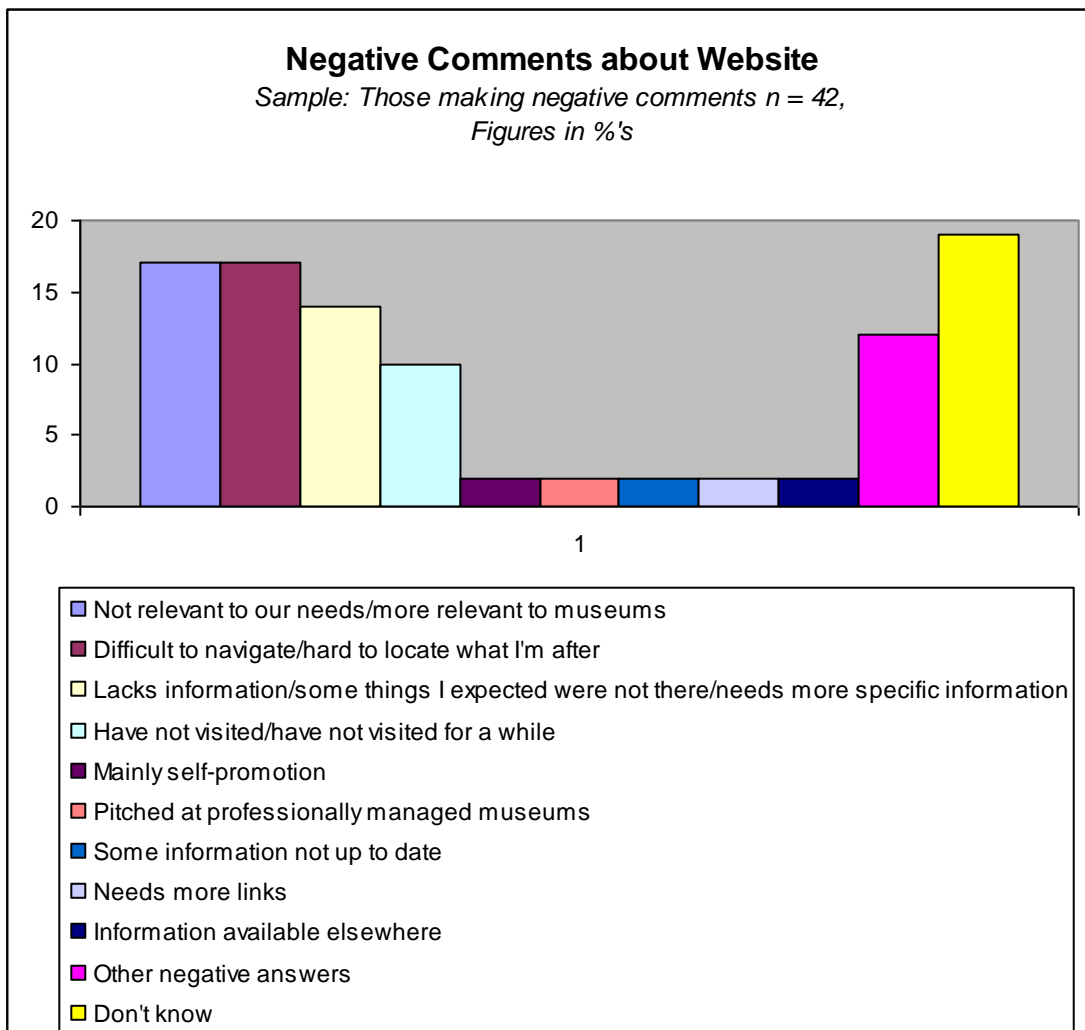
### 8.13.2 Positive Comments about Website

The M&G NSW website is seen as informative with good information and easy to navigate and user friendly. It is viewed as helpful and topical with relevant information to the organisation.



### 8.13.3 Negative Comments about Website

A small proportion of visitors see the website as difficult to manage and lacking in information. For others the website is irrelevant or the information is available elsewhere.





## 9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

### STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1. That M&G NSW be invited to work with Arts NSW to prepare a long term *Strategic Plan for Development of the Regional Museum and Gallery Sector in NSW* and that the development of the plan be highly consultative with the sector.
2. That the above plan defines the role of M&G NSW in the development of the sector with particular reference to:
  - agreeing a balance between its dual role of service delivery and advancing high level advocacy and strategic issues but with a clear intention that advocacy should be a prime objective of M&G NSW.
  - defining mechanisms to form strong strategic relationships with local government.
  - defining its role with galleries and its role with museums.
  - the best model for M&G NSW to play its part in the delivery of the Strategic Plan.
3. That, regardless of the above, M&G NSW should give greater emphasis to high level strategic programs that are likely to result in long term sector development and that if necessary this be at the expense of some service delivery programs which may be able to be delivered by others or abandoned. These might include:
  - Exhibition development
  - Awards (consider combining with Local Government Cultural Awards)
  - Some areas of professional and sector development
4. That a Steering Committee of both sectors be formed to guide the development of the *Strategic Plan* and that it be lead by M&G NSW and Arts NSW in partnership.

### ARTS NSW

5. That Arts NSW consider ways in which it can engage the CI's in a more critical and effective dialogue with M&G NSW to ensure their respective programs are complementary.
6. That Arts NSW should devolve any grants to individual museums and galleries that are less than \$7,000 to M&G NSW and this amount should be reviewed and increased on a regular basis.
7. That Arts NSW should have a more active and critical dialogue with M&G NSW when assessing the annual and triennial reports which M&G NSW is required to present to it to ensure that government priorities are being appropriately addressed in M&G NSW's work.

### GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

8. That M&G NSW consider amending its constitution to allow for the appointment of nine board members as follows:
  - two nominees of MA NSW as determined by it;

- **two nominees of R&PGA NSW as determined by it;**
- **five further members who must have skills in one or more of the following:**
  - **government, including local government**
  - **marketing and/or media**
  - **information technology**
  - **cultural planning**
  - **collection management**
  - **philanthropy**

**9. That following agreement of the core activities of M&G NSW there be a review of the staff structure, salaries and existing personnel to ensure that individuals with experience and talent in identified priority areas are attracted to work at M&G NSW.**

**10. That, regardless of the above, M&G NSW appoint a senior and respected person from the gallery segment to the staff of M&G NSW.**

**11. That M&G NSW should support MA NSW to develop strong regional groupings, including in the Sydney Basin, and this support should not exclude modest financial assistance.**

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

**12. That M&G NSW actively engages very broadly with government as part of its advocacy role.**

**13. That M&G NSW should go out of its way to avoid the perception that it is Sydney centric by maintaining a very visible presence in regional NSW.**

## **REGIONAL GALLERIES**

**14. That, apart from its more strategic roles, M&G NSW generally limit its service delivery to regional galleries to one of facilitating networking, professional development opportunities and exhibition touring.**

**15. That M&G NSW facilitates a Tri-annual NSW meeting of NSW Gallery Directors (including Regional Gallery Directors) for at least the next two years and that this be combined with a staff development opportunity as determined by the previous meeting.**

## **PROGRAMS**

### **Exhibitions**

**16. That M&G NSW does not produce its own exhibitions but focuses on facilitating and/or coordinating travelling exhibitions including liaising with the CI's to ensure appropriate opportunities are promoted on the M&G NSW Exhibitions Register.**

**17. That M&G NSW review its policy of only allowing any exhibition a single six month entry on its Exhibitions Register.**

**18. That M&G NSW investigates the feasibility of taking a more commercial approach to exhibition touring with a view to achieving improved cost recovery (through NETS, fees and sponsorship).**

**Professional Development**

**19. That more of the professional development programs be presented in the regions and respond to constituents desire for hands-on practical information/demonstration sessions.**

## **10.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Carol Mills, Director General, Communities NSW

Mary Darwell, Executive Director, Arts NSW

Martyn Killion, Principal Policy Officer, Arts NSW

Maisy Stapleton, CEO M&G NSW

Michael Huxley, Amanda Muscat and other staff at M&G NSW

The many people who shared their knowledge, information and opinions with us during many hours of face to face interviews and who took the time to show us their museums and galleries and who frequently provided welcome hospitality.

The 158 individuals who took the time to complete the on-line questionnaire.