

maritime museum
of Townsville



FORWARD PLAN 2019-2022



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Introduction

The Board of Directors of Townsville Maritime Museum Limited, which operates the Maritime Museum of Townsville, hereby presents the Museum's three-year Forward Plan for the period 2019-2022.

Since its establishment in 1986, the Museum has grown from being located in a small heritage building tucked away at the Port of Townsville to a complex of buildings and structures situated in Palmer Street on the south bank of Ross Creek, with views of the creek and the surrounding urban and industrial landscape, arguably one of the picturesque settings of any museum in Townsville.

Whereas previously the Museum was almost purely run volunteers, the past fifteen years have seen a transition towards a more professional management approach compliant with Australian museum standards. This has enabled the continued expansion of the collections, the creation of quality museum displays and the establishment of partnerships with various levels of government, local industry and local community organisations. Amongst these, the long-term partnerships with the Port of Townsville (going back to 1986) and the Townsville City Council are the most significant. Recently, the role of the Museum as the custodian of North Queensland's maritime heritage has been acknowledged by the Museum being represented on the Board of Directors of the Australian Maritime Museums Council.

Undoubtedly, the most significant change in management took place in 2015, when the Townsville Maritime Museum Historical Society Incorporated that had operated the Museum since 1997 was replaced by a not-for-profit company, Townsville Maritime Museum Limited, governed by a Board of Directors and managed on a day-by-day basis by a Managing Director (since May 2018 a Managing Curator).

The transition from a society to a company has implied that the operations of the Museum have become more business-based, posing special challenges but also opportunities to the Museum's staff and volunteers.

This Forward Plan, which responds to these challenges and opportunities, taking into account strengths and weaknesses, demonstrates the Museum's ongoing commitment to retain its audiences, build and grow new audiences, establishing and maintaining partnerships with government, industry and the community, for purposes of maintaining its relevance as the custodian of North Queensland's maritime heritage, growing and diversifying revenue streams and operating more efficiently.

The Forward Plan is based on the Corporate Plan of the Australian National Maritime Museum as a guideline and in addition incorporates as a benchmark the national standards for Australian museums and galleries, where applicable.

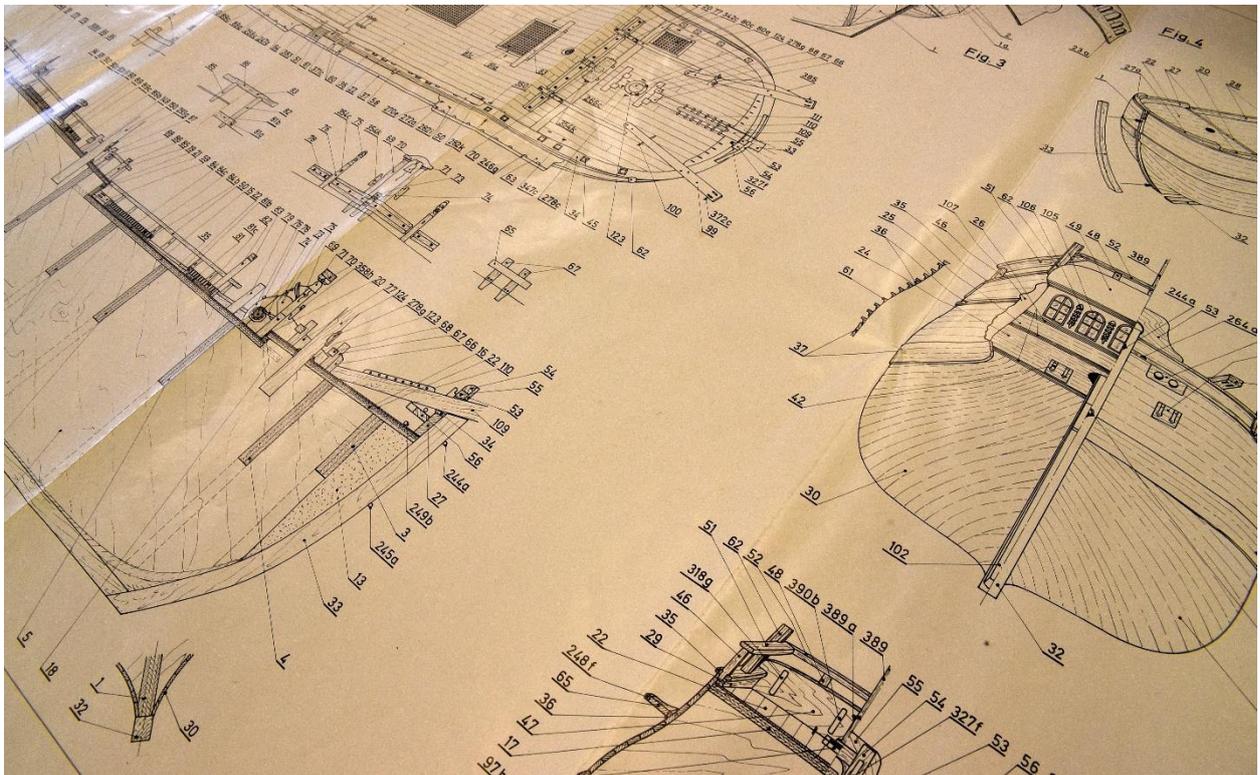
With regard to the future, the Museum requires significant investment in providing larger and more suitable buildings with galleries and storage spaces that comply with museum standards, developing high-quality exhibitions relevant to the needs of the Townsville community and

creating engaging and interactive education resources and programs. All this is necessary for the Museum to remain relevant, meet visitor and stakeholder expectations and achieve financial sustainability.

The Board of Directors of Townsville Maritime Museum Limited, the Managing Curator and the volunteers will use this plan to continue and improve the delivery of services in the fields of education, heritage conservation and tourism through collecting, conserving and interpreting objects and information associated with North Queensland's maritime heritage.



Dr Robert de Jong
Managing Curator



History of the Museum

The Museum was established in 1986, when the Secretary of the Townsville Harbour Board proposed to the Seafarers Association to set up a nautical display on the upper floor of the 55-year old former Pier Master's office building, which had been newly refurbished. The Seafarers Association had a membership of former and serving Navy and Merchant Navy men and women and was established in 1969.

The Pier Master's office building was situated between Berths 4 and 5 at the port. It was a double-story timber building and from this the pier master controlled all vessel movements in the port.

The Seafarers Association agreed in consultation with the Harbour Board to establish a maritime museum, named the *Maritime Museum of Townsville*. A Board of Directors was appointed and Neville George (after whom the park adjacent to the Museum is named) became the first Curator.

The Seafarers Association appealed to the public to loan or donate objects, which received a good response, and, together with the items provided by Seafarers members, it was possible to open the Museum to the public on 1 July 1986. The official opening took place on 15 July 1986 by the then mayor of Townsville, Alderman Mike Reynolds. The new Museum was located on the upper floor of the former Pier Master's Office, whilst the lower floor was converted into a Port Information Centre. The Harbour Board and the State and Federal Governments ensured the sustainability of the Museum through grants and subsidies.

Due to the steadily expanding collection the Museum soon outgrew itself. The Townsville Port Authority (replacing the Harbour Board in 1989) made available a portion of reclaimed land between Ross Creek and Palmer Street for the relocation of the Museum, where it would have larger and better facilities and also would be more accessible for visitors. The Pier Master's building (known by that time as the *Port Building*) and also the defunct Bay Rock lighthouse were relocated to this site and the Museum was reopened in April 1992. This was made possible through funding by the Port Authority and the Townsville City Council, who had become the major sponsors, as well as financial donations and donations in kind from business and individuals.

Because of its association with the early years of the Port of Townsville, the Port Building is listed on the Local Heritage Register.

Two years later a new exhibition gallery space was built, known as the *Seafarers' Gallery*.

The running of the Museum had become too large for the Seafarers Association to run on a purely voluntary basis and in 1997 the Townsville Maritime Historical Society Incorporated was formed to take over the Museum.

Funded by a Federal grant for capital works, the Museum complex was architecturally redesigned with a footprint in the shape of a ship to include a viewing deck, a new gallery adjacent to the Seafarers Gallery (the *Federation Gallery*), an annex to the Port Building to

house the *Hayles Maritime Memorial Library*, a memorial garden, BBQ area, model ship gallery, boat shed and workshop. This project was completed in 2001.

In 2007 the HMAS *Townsville*, a Fremantle Class Patrol Boat, was gifted to the Museum by the Commonwealth Department of Defence.

In 2015 a new not-for-profit company, known as Townsville Maritime Museum Limited with a board of directors, came into being. Established for the purpose of ensuring the ongoing viability and financial sustainability of the Museum, this company took over the management of the Museum from the Townsville Maritime Historical Society on 1 July that year.



Our vision

To be an excellent, vibrant and innovative museum that benefits the Townsville community and that extends knowledge and awareness of the need to conserve and interpret the region's maritime heritage.

Our mission

To conserve Townsville's and North Queensland's maritime heritage and to present and interpret collections of historic objects and information for the enjoyment of and appreciation by all patrons, sponsors and visitors.



Our purpose

Guided by our constitution, our purpose is:

- (a) to benefit the Townsville region in terms of education, and culture conservation and tourism by operating a public museum that collects, preserves, and maintains and interprets collections of maritime artefacts and information associated with the Port of Townsville and the North Queensland area, and in particular the Townsville region,
- (b) to advance promote education and culture the appreciation of North Queensland's maritime heritage through:
 - (i) the storage, preservation, interpretation and displaying of maritime artefacts, whether donated, purchased or collected;
 - (ii) the preservation, interpretation and displaying of maritime artefacts, donated, purchased or collected from the local area; conducting or promoting historical research into the region's maritime history;
 - (iii) engendering interest from the public in the preservation and study of maritime history of Townsville and surrounding areas;
 - (iv) maintaining a library of books, photographs, press clippings and other materials associated with Townsville and surrounding areas;
 - (v) the provision of educational facilities through displays, lectures, video shows, interactive offerings, social media, programs, guided tours, publications and other means;
- (c) to carry out any other purpose or activity normally carried out in the operation of a maritime museum; and
- (d) to manage the land, structures and buildings vested in, owned by or placed under the control of the company; and
- (e) to do all other things necessary and incidental to best attain the objects of the company.



Our values

- Customer care:** Putting our visitors and customers at the centre of everything we do, we will make the Museum an accessible and welcome place to visit and will provide visitors with experiences that are rewarding, interactive, thought-provoking and fun
- Financial Sustainability:** We will work towards attaining financial sustainability through innovative fundraising approaches, strategic partnerships and strategies to attract and retain a range of audiences
- Respect and equity:** Through our relationships with local communities, programs and partnerships, we will demonstrate that we respect and value all people, their rights, their opinions and their heritage
- Professionalism:** We strive to comply with Australian museum standards and exhibit the highest level of professionalism possible in attaining these standards, in particular with regard to the way we collect, conserve, maintain, display and interpret our artefacts
- Learning:** We will use creative, innovative and technologically advanced ways to manage, interpret and share our collections with audiences, communities, partner organisations and educational institutions and we will inspire ongoing learning through exhibitions and programs that are relevant to the needs of the community and interactive



Our assets

- Our staff and volunteers** Our staff and volunteers are creative in their approach to implementing the vision and mission of the Museum. They are loyal, dedicated and enthusiastic. Our volunteers fulfill a range of important roles such as reception, cleaning, maintenance, collections management, creation of displays, administration, curatorial support and education. More than 20 volunteers contribute over 4,000 volunteer hours per year.
- Our collections** We are custodians of over 4,000 objects, including a maritime library, that represent important themes in North Queensland's maritime history and heritage. This collection is growing steadily through the support of the Townsville community, which continues donating objects and information in the interest of conserving the region's maritime heritage.
- Our vessels** We our custodians of a small fleet of vessels that are displayed on dry land for educational and memorial purposes, such as a single outrigger canoe from the Torres Strait, two rowing sculls, a lifeboat from a wooden coastal cargo ship, a mooring boat used at the Port of Townsville, a home-built fishing boat and the Fremantle class patrol boat HMAS *Townsville*.
- Our site and buildings** Strategically located in Palmer Street, South Townsville, overlooking Ross Creek, our site is a unique mix of relocated historic heritage structures (the Port's former Pier Master's office and the Bay Rock lighthouse) and modern purpose-designed museum buildings that house galleries, maintenance and function spaces. Our site includes a parking area for staff and museum visitors and an open parkland with unsurpassed views of Ross Creek.
- Our profile and reputation** By focusing on the delivery of collections management, conservation and public services as our three key museum functions and by engaging with local heritage organisations and maritime museums across Australia, we have been establishing our profile and reputation as North Queensland's maritime museum and are continuing to enhance this.



Priority 1: Raise the profile of the Museum

We strive to be North Queensland's premier maritime museum that shares the region's maritime heritage with communities, other interested parties and tourists across the region and beyond. We will be able to achieve this by raising the Museum's profile in order to become more visible, accessible and relevant. We also aim to retain our current audiences and grow new ones.

Outcomes	Strategies	Australian Museum Standards ¹	
		Principle	Standard
A Retain audiences and attract new ones	Identify needs, interests, aspirations etc. of audiences and stakeholder groups	B3	B3.1
	Use this information to develop and implement appropriate exhibitions, programs, events and other offerings		B3.6
	Promote collections, key attractions etc.		B3.2
B Participate in local, regional and national programs and exhibitions (off-site)	Continue membership of Australian Maritime Museums Council, Australian Museums and Galleries Association, TCC Museums and History Working Group and others	B1	B1.2
	Collaborate and partner in local and regional museum and heritage initiatives		B1.2
C Develop and maintain a strong local and regional presence and outreach through programs and exhibitions	Develop and present curriculum-based school programs	B1	B1.2
	Develop and implement an annual events calendar		B1.2
D Enhance local community engagement	Create opportunities for communities to engage with programs, exhibitions and events	B1	B1.1
	Participate in local urban development and regeneration initiatives		B1.1
	Participate in local tourism and heritage initiatives		B1.1



¹ See Appendix A for details

Priority 2: Enhance financial sustainability

Although few museums can be 100% financially self-sufficient, we strive towards a situation whereby we will be able to maintain a high degree of financial self-sufficiency. We will do this by developing mutually beneficent partnerships with stakeholders and supporters. We will also promote our location as a unique venue for events, exhibitions and programs, grow our audiences and attract new ones through a range of exhibitions and other offerings, for which we will seek sponsorships and grant funding.

Outcomes	Strategies	Australian Museum Standards ²	
		Principle	Standard
A Develop profitable business and commercial activities and partnerships	Capitalise on location, collections, retail, exhibitions and facilities to achieve strong financial returns	A2	A2.5
	Partner and collaborate with government, media and industry to market and promote the Museum	B1	B1.2
B Develop strong alternative and new revenue sources	Develop effective sponsorship strategies	A2.5	A2
	Pursue grant funding opportunities and other revenue sources to support Museum operations and activities	A2.5	A2
	Develop a museum brand	A2.3	
	Partner with government, industry and non-governmental organisations to create programs, events, activities etc. that are co-funded	B1.2	B1

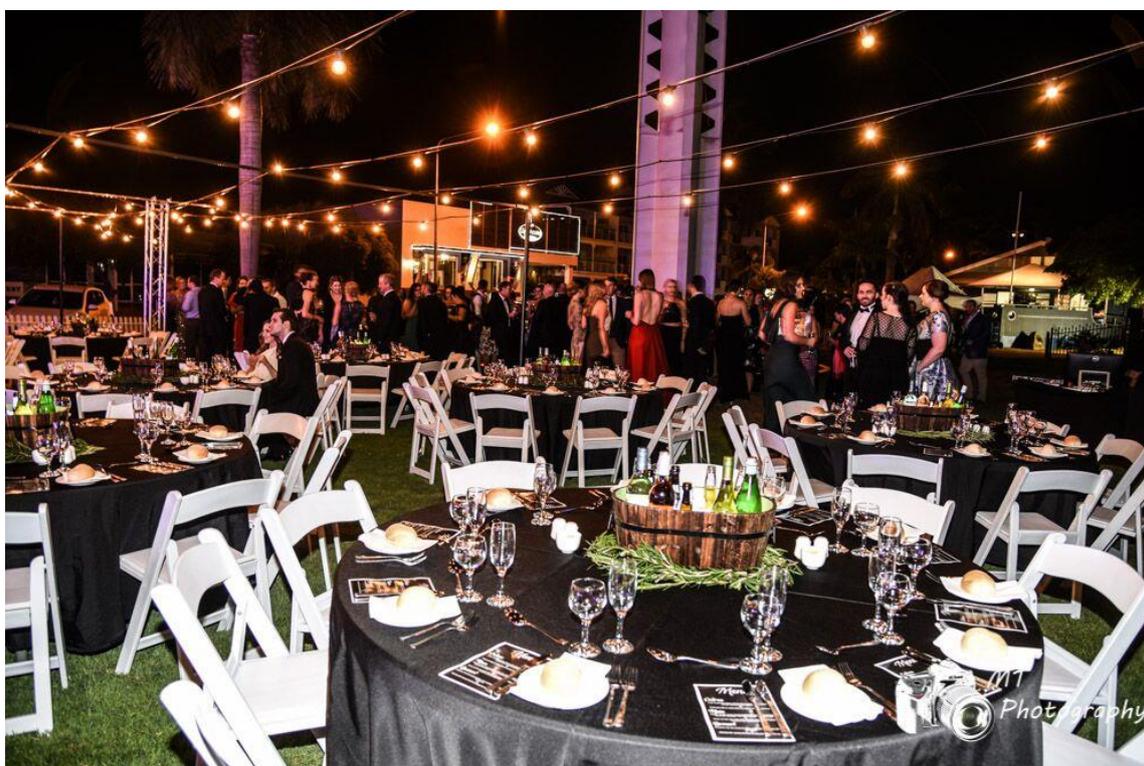


Image courtesy of Townsville Weddings and Events 2017

² See Appendix A for details

Priority 3: Develop new compelling and must-visit exhibitions, events, programs and other customer-oriented offerings

We will continue our effort to improve existing star exhibitions on an ongoing basis. At the same time, we will create new high-quality permanent and temporary attractions and exhibitions and solicit touring exhibitions. We will develop formal and non-formal education programs and activities, which will if possible be interactive in terms of audio-visual content. All this will be based on a sound understanding of the needs and expectations of our customers.

Outcomes	Strategies	Australian Museum Standards ³	
		Principle	Standard
A Create engaging and relevant exhibitions, programs, activities and events in line with our Vision, Mission and Visitor Services Plan	Enhance and renew star permanent exhibitions	B2	B2.1
	Develop and deliver engaging new exhibitions for our audiences focused on relevant maritime narratives		B2.1
	Organise interesting events with other museum and heritage organisations that will attract customers to the Museum		B2.3
	Develop and deliver education resources and programs for schools that are aligned with the Australian curriculum		B2.3
	Develop and deliver digital products that improve access to the collections		B2.3
	Attract high-quality temporary exhibitions and programs from outside the Museum		B2.3
B Promote local, domestic and international tourism	Understand the needs and expectations of customers	B3	B3.2
	Develop and deliver exhibitions relevant to these needs and expectations		B3.2
C Prepare and operate HMAS Townsville as a museum ship	Relocate the vessel at a new location as a dry exhibit	B2	B2.2
	Develop Vessel Management Plan in line with Australian standards		B2.2
	Develop and operate regular guided visits		B2.2



³ See Appendix A for details

Priority 4: Grow, conserve, interpret and share relevant and representative collections of objects and information

We strive to implement our policies for the management and conservation of our collections in order to lay the foundation for effective and efficient customer services in the form of exhibitions, events, programs and other activities. Management, conservation and interpretation of our collections will be based on sound research. We will use eHive as an internationally-recognised cloud-based Collections Management System to create exhibition narratives and to promote the Museum on the World Wide Web and create a new revenue stream.

Outcomes	Strategies	Australian Museum Standards ⁴	
		Principle	Standard
A Achieve and maintain best practices in collections management and conservation	Develop digital and other technologies to manage collections and increase access	C1	C1.2
	Implement eHive as a collections management system		C1.1
	Implement collection acquisition policies in line with Collections Management Plan		C1.3
	Implement conservation management policies in line with Conservation Management Plan	C2	C2.1 C2.2 C2.4
	Develop Conservation Management Plan aligned with QLD Heritage Act 1992, as revised 2015, for immovable heritage assets, i.e. Port Building, Bay Rock lighthouse and Wharton Reef light		C2.1 C2.2 C2.4
B Conduct relevant research to interpret the collections for exhibitions, programs, events and other activities	Enable individuals and organisations to utilize the library	B2	B2.2
	Conduct research about the history and significance of collections and objects		B2.2
C Share knowledge about collections and objects with museums and heritage organisations, individuals and stakeholders	Share knowledge through eHive platform, publications and public programs	B2	B2.3

The screenshot shows the eHive interface for a digital collection record. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'eHive Explore Search What is eHive?' and a search bar. The main content area displays the record for 'US Navy Mark V Model I diving helmet; DESCO; After 1942; 993.051'. On the left, there is a photograph of the diving helmet. Below the photo, the record details are shown: 'From Townsville Maritime Museum Ltd', 'Name/Title US Navy Mark V Model I diving helmet', and 'About this object US Navy Mark V Model I diving helmet, consisting of the corselet (attached to the diving suit) and the bonnet (removable)'. On the right, there is a section for 'This object is from' (Townsville Maritime Museum Ltd) and a 'Tags' section with a list of tags: 'Bonnet [x]', 'Corselet [x]', 'DESCO [x]', 'Diving helmet [x]', 'US Navy [x]', and 'US Navy Mark V Mod 1 [x]'. There is also an 'Add Tag' button and a 'Share' section at the bottom.

⁴ See Appendix A for details

Priority 5: Promote indigenous maritime heritage

The Maritime Museum of Townsville respectfully acknowledges the Bindal and Wulgurukaba People as the Traditional Owners of the land and the sea of the area in which the Museum operates. We also acknowledge that ATSI cultures share in North Queensland's maritime heritage and we will create opportunities to engage with ATSI peoples in order to share their knowledge with and outside their communities.

Outcomes	Strategies	Australian Museum Standards ⁵	
		Principle	Standard
A Reflect and acknowledge ATSI culture and maritime heritage in Museum collections, programs and activities	Include ATSI cultures in the acquisition of objects and the development of exhibitions, programs and activities where relevant	B2	B2.1
	Ensure that staff and volunteers are culturally aware of this requirement		B2.2
B Support maritime education, training and other initiatives for indigenous peoples	Explore meaningful partnership opportunities	B1	B1.1
	Engage with schools with a high indigenous student complement		B1.2



⁵ See Appendix A for details

Priority 6: Improve organisational excellence

A skilled and motivated staff component forms the cornerstone of any effective and efficient organisation. We will continue to recruit and retain staff and volunteers to fulfil the multiple positions and roles that will enable us to function as a museum and we will recognise their contributions. We will comply with legal and regulatory conditions and carefully manage our financial and other assets and resources in order to attain a high level of self-sufficiency.

Outcomes	Strategies	Australian Museum Standards ⁶	
		Principle	Standard
A Recruit and retain skilled and inspired staff and volunteers	Attract, recruit, train and retain staff and volunteers with skills to strengthen staff and volunteer programs and opportunities.	A3	A3.1
	Engage volunteers in decision-making		A3.2 A3.3
B Develop and implement effective governance policies and procedures	Create Annual Business Plan based on Forward Plan	A2	A2.1
	Improve performance management systems		A2.2
	Improve management policies and procedures		A2.3
C Maintain high safety standards for staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors	Maintain best-practice WHS policies and procedures	A4	A4.3



⁶ See Appendix A for details

Appendix A: National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries: Overview of Principles and Standards

Version 1.5 dated September 2016 was used, http://www.magsq.com.au/dbase_upl/NSFAMG_v1.5_2016.pdf
 Accessed 6 June 2019.

PART A: Management	
Principle	Standard
A1: The museum has a sound legal and management framework that follows recognised museum ethics and protocols	A1.1 The museum is properly constituted
	A1.2 The museum has a governing or managing body that takes overall responsibility for the museum
	A1.3 The museum maintains contact with relevant peak bodies and networks
	A1.4 The museum operates in accordance with a recognised code of museum ethics
	A1.5 The museum abides by international, national and state protocols relating to museum practice, moveable heritage and built heritage
	A1.6 The museum complies with Australian federal, state/territory and local laws, by-laws and regulations
A2: The museum is effectively managed, sustainable and publicly accountable	A2.1 The museum has a written statement of purpose
	A2.2 The museum works to formal, written policies and procedures that cover its management, responsibilities, programs and services
	A2.3 The museum has a viable, current forward plan that covers all aspects of museum operations
	A2.4 The museum uses an effective information and records system
	A2.5 The museum uses sound financial management and reporting practices and procedures and is financially viable
	A2.6 The museum identifies and assess risks and has strategies in place to manage them
A3: The museum manages its workers to make the best use of their skills and to achieve the museum's purpose	A3.1 The museum defines its key roles and tasks and recruits and appoints suitable people for specific roles
	A3.2 The museum defines and communicates the duties, rights and responsibilities of the museum and its workers
	A3.3 The museum acknowledges that museum work involves special skills, and gives workers opportunities to acquire and enhance them
A4: The museum is a secure, well-managed facility that presents a positive public image	A4.1 The museum has security of tenure for its premises
	A4.2 The museum dedicates appropriate spaces to all activities
	A4.3 The museum conserves, maintains, protects and documents its assets

PART B: Involving people	
Principle	Standard
B1: The museum is used, supported and valued by diverse communities and organisations as a worthwhile place where people can express, share and discover significant information, ideas and objects	B1.1 The museum includes a range of people in its operations and programs
	B1.2 The museum carries out its activities as part of a broader community and contributes to community events
B2: The museum presents its most significant collection items, stories and themes through engaging exhibitions and programs	B2.1 The museum selects significant collection areas, stories or themes to highlight relevant to its purpose and audiences
	B2.2 The museum's exhibitions, activities and events are based on sound research and current museum and heritage practices
	B2.3 The museum's exhibitions, activities and events actively encourage lifelong learning
B3: The museum is committed to its current and potential audiences and caters for their needs and interests through its communications, programs and services	B3.1 The museum knows who its current and potential audiences are and has strategies to attract and retain them
	B3.2 The museum promotes its collection, key attractions, programs and services
	B3.3 The museum provides information to help visitors locate the museum and find their way around while they are there
	B3.4 The museum has regular opening hours
	B3.5 The museum offers a welcoming experience and its workers respond appropriately to visitor enquiries and feedback
	B3.6 The museum's public programs are as accessible as possible to people of all ages and abilities



PART C: Developing a significant collection	
Principle	Standard
C1: The museum's collection represents the significant stories and interests of its diverse and changing communities	C1.1 The museum develops its collection to reflect its unique purpose and the significant stories from its diverse and changing communities
	C1.2 The museum knows the significance of its collection
	C1.3 The museum aims to have unconditional legal ownership of its collection
	C1.4 The museum has an effective system to record and retrieve information about the collection
	C1.5 The museum makes its collection accessible in digital formats and in online environments as resources permit
C2: The museum preserves its significant collections for future generations	C2.1 The museum makes decisions on preventive conservation based on current conservation advice and practice
	C2.2 The museum actively strives to create and maintain an appropriate and stable environment for its collection
	C2.3 The museum's display, storage and handling methods minimise risk to the collection
	C2.4 The museum makes decisions about conservation treatments based on current conservation advice and practice
	C2.5 The museum has identified and is able to respond to all potential threats to the collection

