



## **PATA Council Communiqué May 2013**

The **Performing Arts Touring Alliance** (PATA) is a sector-driven strategy focused on the continued building of strong, sustainable and accountable touring and presenting mechanisms across Australia that support our creative artists and companies and the diversity of their work, and facilitate meaningful engagement with audiences and communities in metropolitan, regional and remote Australia.

As part of the ***Fear No Art* 27th Annual APACA Performing Arts Conference**, PATA was invited to present an update on its recent work, which has been primarily focused on drafting the framework for a **National Performing Arts Touring Action Plan**.

The Action Plan was developed following the **Touring Programming Futures Forum**, convened by PATA on 25-26 February, with support from the Australia Council for the Arts.

Drawing on the ***Are We There Yet? National Touring Framework report*** (commissioned by the Australia Council for the Arts, authored by Rick Heath and Harley Stumm and published in July 2012), the Action Plan addresses the sector's concerns around touring processes that are impinging on its collective capacity to foster a more dynamic, sustainable, targeted and diverse touring environment.

The Plan outlines industry priorities and provides a framework for collaborative stewardship over the next two years. As such, its implementation relies on the commitment and effort of the producers, presenters, programmers, tour coordinators, industry bodies and governments who play an active role in touring performing arts nationally.

An overview of the outcomes of the Forum and the core components of the Action Plan is attached for information.

PATA also commends the Australia Council for taking a lead role in addressing funding harmonisation and simplification following the transfer, in September 2012, of the Federal government's regional touring programs, including Playing Australia, to the Australia Council.

The Australia Council has convened meetings with State and Territory arts funding agencies to review their respective roles and touring policies and develop a coordinated approach to facilitating touring, resulting in the recently launched **Tours without Borders Action Plan**. The Council has also initiated preliminary work on national touring data

collection and analysis, as well as new audience and market development initiatives associated with touring.

PATA was pleased to contribute to a meeting convened in April by ArtsPeak with the Australia Council and the Office for the Arts to discuss recommended changes to the proposed **Australia Council Act**.

Given their significance in relation to underpinning diversity and engagement in national touring, PATA is pleased that four major changes recommended by ArtsPeak have been included by the Senate Committee in the proposed legislative changes to the Australia Council Act:

- to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts practice
- to support Australian arts practice that reflects the diversity of Australia
- to uphold and promote freedom of expression in the arts
- to promote community participation in the arts

### **Forthcoming activities**

The next critical and challenging step is implementation of the National Performing Arts Touring Action Plan by the national touring sector. Over the coming months, our priority will be to work with key stakeholders on the development of their workplans and timelines for addressing the objectives and recommended actions for each strategy, and the setting up working groups and consultation with key stakeholders.

A **PATA Council meeting** will be held in Melbourne on 22-23 July, at which time we will review progress on the implementation of the Action Plan, as well as consider options for PATA's future strategic role. A further communiqué will be distributed following that meeting.

We look forward to providing further updates on the implementation of the Action Plan and welcome comments and feedback from the sector on matters related to national touring.

For further information, please contact:

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PATA website: [www.pata.com.au](http://www.pata.com.au)

The list of current PATA Council members can be found at:

[www.pata.com.au/contact/contact.html](http://www.pata.com.au/contact/contact.html)



## Overview of the National Performing Arts Touring Action Plan 2013-15

### Introduction

The **National Performing Arts Touring Action Plan** responds to recommendations from two key sector initiatives:

- (i) The *Are We There Yet? National Touring Framework* report commissioned by the Australia Council for the Arts, authored by Rick Heath and Harley Stumm, and published in July 2012; and
- (ii) The Tour Programming Futures Forum, convened by PATA<sup>1</sup> in late February 2013<sup>2</sup> with support from the Australia Council.

PATA has taken a lead role in addressing the production selection key reform outlined in the National Touring Framework by convening the Tour Programming Futures Forum and preparing a plan of action for implementation by the national touring sector.

The Action Plan addresses the sector's concerns around touring processes that are impinging on its collective capacity to foster a more dynamic, sustainable, targeted and diverse touring environment. In particular, the sector has called for significantly improved and more dynamic mechanisms (including showcases, markets and booking conferences, online booking systems, networking and co-commissioning) to support access to and selection of works for touring.

The Plan outlines industry priorities and provides a framework for collaborative stewardship over the next 18 months to two years. As such, its implementation relies on the commitment and effort of the producers, presenters, programmers, tour coordinators, industry bodies and governments who play an active role in touring performing arts nationally.

In a dynamic and constantly evolving sector, PATA is a sector-driven strategy focused on continuing to build strong, sustainable and accountable touring and presenting mechanisms across Australia that support our creative artists and companies and the diversity of their work, and facilitate meaningful engagement with audiences and communities in metropolitan, regional and remote Australia.

The work to be undertaken over the coming 1-2 years by the Australia Council, PATA and all touring sector stakeholders will result in a more effective and more cohesive national framework for touring.

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<sup>1</sup> Further information on PATA can be found at [www.pata.com.au](http://www.pata.com.au)

<sup>2</sup> The Forum was facilitated by Sandra Fields (Fieldworx, [www.fieldworx.com.au](http://www.fieldworx.com.au)) who also prepared an initial draft of this action plan.

## Tour Programming Futures Forum - Background

The Tour Programming Futures Forum involved 25 presenters, programmers, producers and tour coordinators from the national touring sector (see list of participants attached).

The Forum used as its basis, the National Touring Framework (NTF) report commissioned by the Australia Council, which provides the performing arts sector and relevant government agencies with the research, rationale and recommendations to initiate and drive significant changes in the national touring landscape.

The NTF report highlighted three key areas in need of reform and development:

- A national plan
- Funding harmonisation and simplification
- Production selection

The Australia Council has taken a lead role in addressing the funding harmonisation and simplification key reform following the transfer, in September 2012, of the Federal government's regional touring programs, including Playing Australia, to the Australia Council. In recent months, the Australia Council has convened meetings with State and Territory arts funding agencies to review their respective roles and touring policies and to develop a coordinated approach to facilitating touring. The Council has also initiated preliminary work on national touring data collection and analysis, as well as new audience and market development initiatives associated with touring.

Forum participants noted that the environment for touring is constantly changing and the past twelve months has been no exception, noting that other recent developments include:

- The increasingly significant role of local government in facilitating the presentation and touring of work;
- The changing priorities, and political and economic environments, of the Federal, State and Territory governments;
- The heightened awareness of the need for more and better quality audience development and community engagement strategies;
- A more strategic, industry-wide approach to tour management and emerging collaborative relationships;
- The increasing diversification of showcases and performing arts markets, and more active curatorial practices;
- Significant changes in the producing sector, including the demise of key companies;
- More opportunities for the production and touring of Indigenous works; and
- More diversified financing avenues.

In addressing new strategies for the sourcing and selection processes related to touring, it is also necessary to address issues related to national planning, and to funding harmonisation and simplification at the same time. In this context, the Forum focused on ten critical areas for improved national touring:

- Data collection, analysis and sharing
- Community engagement and 'slow touring'
- Marketing and knowing your audience
- Programming policy and planning
- Professional development for producers
- Professional development for presenters/programmers
- Selection mechanisms
- Finance and funding programs
- Relationships between producers and presenters
- Relationships with local government

## National Performing Arts Touring Action Plan 2013-2014 and 2014-15

### Aim

Forum participants agreed that the overarching aim of the action plan is:

*To work together in fostering a more dynamic, sustainable and diverse touring environment that actively engages audiences.*

### Priorities

In achieving this aim, the ten critical areas for improved national touring listed above have been clustered under five priorities, all of equal importance:

Priority One:	Selection mechanisms
Priority Two:	Communities and audiences
Priority Three:	Policy, planning and professional development
Priority Four:	Relationships
Priority Five:	Finance and evaluation

Forum participants agreed on the importance of ensuring that strategies for action should be few in number, relevant and implementable, and highly effective in being able to bring about change. It was also agreed that actions would have clearly identified agencies responsible for driving their implementation.

### Implementation

The Action Plan provides a framework for significant reform and development and, as such, it will require an investment of time and commitment by all stakeholders to create the capacity and focus to implement and deliver on recommended actions. The five strategies (summarised below) are underpinned by recommended actions which will require more detailed development in their implementation.

In order to ensure clear commitments and responsibilities, it is proposed that, ideally, there should be only one or two drivers for each strategy. PATA will work with these entities in the development of their workplans and timelines for addressing the objectives and recommended actions for each strategy, including the setting up of working groups and consultation with key stakeholders (which may include through their participation in a working group).

**Over the coming months, PATA will maintain momentum and focus on the delivery of all aspects of the Action Plan, work with key stakeholders regarding their progress on implementation, broker and negotiate with stakeholders if and when required, and maintain communications with the sector.**

PATA acknowledges with appreciation the funding contribution provided by the Australia Council



This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

**PRIORITY ONE: SELECTION MECHANISMS**  
**Strategy:** Develop a National Booking Conference/Market Place Action Plan  
**Co-Drivers:** RAA and APACA

The primary focus will be on mechanisms for better coordination and promotion of current and proposed national, state and regional showcases and enhanced collaboration and planning, and structural reforms to Long Paddock, improved functionality of Cyberpaddock and new initiatives for programming development

**PRIORITY TWO: COMMUNITIES AND AUDIENCES**  
**Strategy:** Facilitate more effective engagement with communities and more effective audience development and marketing strategies  
**Co-Drivers:** PATA and the Australia Council

The primary focus will be on mechanisms, information and resources to facilitate the building of locally-specific knowledge and capacity to foster more in-depth approaches to community engagement, 'slow' touring, audience development and marketing

**PRIORITY THREE: POLICY, PLANNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Strategy:** Improve policy and planning in programming  
**Co-Drivers:** APACA, TNA and AMPAG

The primary focus will be on mechanisms, information and resources to facilitate the building of relationships between, and providing professional development opportunities for, producers and presenters/programmers

**PRIORITY FOUR: RELATIONSHIPS**  
**Strategy:** Build strategic relationships with the local government sector  
**Drivers:** APACA and RAA

The primary focus will be on advocating and promoting increased engagement in touring by the local government sector

**PRIORITY FIVE: FINANCE AND EVALUATION**  
**Strategy:** Review current funding programs for national touring and undertake comprehensive evaluation and analysis of the touring sector  
**Driver:** Australia Council

The primary focus will be on harmonising and aligning funding programs to support a dynamically changing market place, and developing a sector-wide framework for gathering, analysing and sharing data on national touring

## Tour Programming Futures Forum – Participants

### **Australian Performing Arts Centres Associations (APACA)**

Rick Heath Executive Director, APACA  
Anne-Marie Heath General Manager, Angel Place City Recital Hall, Sydney (NSW)

### **Regional Arts Australia (RAA)**

Jane Scott Executive Director, RAA  
Steve Saffell Chief Executive Officer, Country Arts SA  
Kane Forbes Manager, Performing Arts Touring, Regional Arts Victoria

### **Australian Major Performing Arts Group (AMPAG)**

Bethwyn Serow Executive Director, AMPAG  
Sandra Willis General Manager, Oz Opera, Opera Australia

### **Live Performance Australia (LPA)**

Suzanne Daley Director, Policy and Programmes, LPA

### **Performing Lines (PL)**

Fenn Gordon Chief Executive Officer, PL

### **Arts on Tour (AOT)**

Heather Dransfield General Manager, AOT

### **Critical Stages (CS)**

Luke Cowling Artistic Director and Chief Executive Officer, CS

### **Independent Producers**

Lee-Anne Donnelly Executive Producer, Arts Projects Australia  
Nicole Beyer Director, Theatre Network Victoria/Theatre Network Australia

### **State Performing Arts Centre Associations**

Rob Robson Chair, VAPAC (Manager, West Gippsland Arts Centre)  
Tim Long Member, INAPAC (Head, Performing Arts, Willoughby Council)  
Guy Boyce Chair, Circuitwest (Manager, Manjura Performing Arts Centre)  
Destry Puia President, NARPACA (General Manager, The Arts Centre Gold Coast)

### **Performing Arts Touring Alliance (PATA)**

Karilyn Brown Chair, PATA  
Greg Randall outgoing Executive Officer, PATA  
Merryn Carter incoming Manager, PATA  
Annette Downs Producer, Tasmania Performs  
Angela O'Donnell Performing Arts Touring Manager, ArtBack NT  
Peter Owens Manager Arts and Heritage, Rockhampton Regional Council

### **Australia Council for the Arts**

Rose Hiscock Executive Director, Arts Development  
Collette Brennan Director, Market Development  
Penny Miles Program Manager, National Programs