Management culture of cultural management in Australia

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The Management Culture of Cultural Management in Australia

Thesis submitted by

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Applied Science
in the Faculty of Resource Science and Management
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Unless otherwise stated, the material recorded in this thesis is the original work of the author and has not been previously submitted for any other degree at a university.

_______________________
Roslyn Derrett
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It was tempting to allow only personal anecdotal evidence, gleaned through blood sweat and tears over 20 or so years to inform this exploration of that dynamic human environment known as arts administration. There are important creative and management challenges in the national culture industry with which I am familiar and I was excited by the prospect of investigating four significant organisations and learning of their aspirations, development and contribution to the nation’s cultural life.

I am indebted to a number of colleagues from my work experience in the arts, education and community development fields for their encouragement of my curiosity of how we may better serve the arts through exploring what makes organisations tick. The insights, ideas and enthusiasms they have shared have contributed to the development of this project. My particular thanks to Robyn Kershaw, Richard Perram and Robin Bryant for their participation in this project.

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I am grateful for the company of Peter Derrett whose passionate advocacy and practice of theatre arts has offered stimulating challenges for me and many others. His dedication to and concern for access to quality arts practice has been a constant source of inspiration. His encouragement of this project has been appreciated.
Abstract

The management culture of cultural management

This study seeks to set out through case studies the factors which influence the management practices of four cultural organisations in Australia. It explores the scope, characteristics and consequences of the links between the distinctive constituency of each organisation and its management culture. Each organisation’s strategic planning, human resource management, financial concerns, annual programme, cultural and tourism networks are examined and practices directly responsive to the environments in which each operates are documented.

The study seeks to establish what constitutes the management of cultural organisations as well as the management culture which develops to carry out the day to day operations of such organisations. The values, beliefs, attitudes, practices and structures demonstrated by each organisation are distinctive responses to the expressed needs of their constituency, the organisation’s founders and leaders, the culture industry, as well as to the wider, mainstream Australian culture. The management practices and experiences of each demonstrate a concern to clearly identify themselves as providers of appropriate arts and culture services of the best standard, and to contribute distinctively to the national cultural heritage.

*Belvoir Street Theatre/Company B* was established as a response to a need to develop a strong indigenous theatre, with professional practitioners as initiators and nurturers. *Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia* is committed to providing dance work opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island artists. The *Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd* conducts an annual programme of community celebrations as a political and educative tool for homosexuals. *Theatre North Inc*, a community based regional theatre company in Lismore, provides services to residents of and visitors to rural New South Wales. The study has implications for other cultural organisations and the development of effective cultural policy and planning.
Table of Contents

Certification ........................................................................................................................................ i
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................................... ii
Abstract .......................................................................................................................................... iii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................ iv
List of Figures .................................................................................................................................. vii
Glossary of terms .............................................................................................................................. viii

Chapter One: Introduction to the Research ............................................................................1
  1.1 Introduction .........................................................................................................................2
  1.2 Background to the Research ..............................................................................................4
  1.3 Significance of the Research ..............................................................................................18
  1.4 Research Problem .............................................................................................................18
      1.4.1 Principal Research Propositions ...........................................................................19
  1.5 Four Case Studies .............................................................................................................21
      1.5.1 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd ..............................................................21
      1.5.2 Belvoir Street Theatre, Company B Ltd ...............................................................23
      1.5.3 Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia Ltd .................................................................24
      1.5.4 Theatre North Inc .................................................................................................26
  1.6 Overview of the Study ......................................................................................................28

Chapter Two: Review of Literature ..........................................................................................30
  2.1 Introduction ..........................................................................................................................31
  2.2 Summary of Prior Research ...............................................................................................32
      Cultural business environments .......................................................................................33
      Organisational Culture .......................................................................................................35
      Management options ..........................................................................................................43
      Cultural Tourism ................................................................................................................55
  2.3 Characteristics of Management Culture ........................................................................59
  2.4 Characteristics of Cultural Management ........................................................................62
  2.5 Conclusion ............................................................................................................................65
Chapter Three: Research Methods ................................................................. 66

3.1 Introduction – Case Research ................................................................. 67
3.2 Data Sources .......................................................................................... 70
3.3 Participant Interviews ......................................................................... 74
3.4 Interview Questions .............................................................................. 75
3.5 Reporting the Findings ......................................................................... 78
3.6 Limitations of the Study ...................................................................... 79
3.7 Conclusion ............................................................................................ 80

Chapter Four: Four Case Studies ............................................................... 82

4.1 Introduction ........................................................................................... 83
4.2 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd .............................................. 83
   4.2.1 Cultural Context ........................................................................ 83
   4.2.2 Aims and Objectives ................................................................. 86
   4.2.3 Arts Programming ................................................................ 87
   4.2.4 Staff ...................................................................................... 90
   4.2.5 Finance .................................................................................. 90
   4.2.6 Marketing .............................................................................. 91
   4.2.7 Tourism ................................................................................. 93
   4.2.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership .......... 94
   4.2.9 Research Propositions ............................................................... 95
4.3 Belvoir Street Theatre, Company B Ltd, Sydney .................................... 97
   4.3.1 Cultural Context ................................................................... 97
   4.3.2 Aims and Objectives ................................................................. 99
   4.3.3 Arts Programming ................................................................ 100
   4.3.4 Staff ...................................................................................... 102
   4.3.5 Finance .................................................................................. 104
   4.3.6 Marketing .............................................................................. 105
   4.3.7 Tourism ................................................................................. 106
   4.3.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership .......... 107
   4.3.9 Research Propositions ............................................................... 107
4.4 Bangarra Dance Theatre Ltd ................................................................. 109
   4.4.1 Cultural Context ................................................................... 109
   4.4.2 Aims and Objectives ................................................................. 110
   4.4.3 Arts Programming ................................................................ 112
   4.4.4 Staff ...................................................................................... 114
4.4.5 Finance ...........................................................................................115
4.4.6 Marketing .......................................................................................117
4.4.7 Tourism ..........................................................................................117
4.4.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and
Leadership .....................................................................................118
4.4.9 Research Propositions ..................................................................119

4.5 Theatre North Inc ..........................................................................................121
4.5.1 Cultural context ............................................................................121
4.5.2 Aims and Objectives .....................................................................124
4.5.3 Arts Programming and Community Contact .............................127
4.5.4 Staff .................................................................................................132
4.5.5 Finance ...........................................................................................134
4.5.6 Marketing .......................................................................................136
4.5.7 Tourism ..........................................................................................139
4.5.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and
Leadership .....................................................................................140
4.5.9 Research Propositions ..................................................................142

4.6 Conclusion .....................................................................................................144

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Implications ..............................................................146

5.1 Introduction ...................................................................................................146
5.2 The Study Summarised ................................................................................150
5.3 Review of Research Propositions ...............................................................151
  5.3.1 151
  5.3.2 155
  5.3.3 157
  5.3.4 162
  5.3.5 164
5.4 Implications of the Study .............................................................................166
5.5 Recommendations for Future Research .....................................................166
  5.5.1 The business of the cultural industry ............................................167
  5.5.2 Government arts policy and service delivery ..............................167
  5.5.3 The impact of tourism on arts practice ......................................168
5.6 Conclusion .....................................................................................................169

Bibliography ............................................................................................................173
List of Figures

Figure 1: Schien’s Three Levels of Organisational Culture and their Interaction .................................................................12

Figure 2: Sources or Origins of Organisational Culture .................................................................13

Figure 3: Principal Environments Influencing Cultural Organisations ............................................34

Figure 4: Factors influencing organisational culture from historical development .................................................................148

Figure 5: Cultural Organisation Stakeholders ..................................................................................152
Glossary

Administrator
The manager of the business of the organisation. A person who has been delegated a certain number of the powers and functions of the Board and can exercise these powers individually.

Arts
Creative processes and production contributing to culture.

Board
The directors of an organisation considered as a group; sometimes known as a Committee of Management. It is responsible for the management of the organisation e.g. entering contracts, deciding what to do with profit, formulating plans and policy.

Community
People who identify themselves as a group because of their shared cultural heritage, spirituality, geographic location, language or gender.

Constitution
The fundamental defining document of the organisation; may include the articles or memorandum of association.

Culture
Culture is an integrated pattern of human behaviour which includes thought, speech, action and artifacts and is dependent on a capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.

Cultural Tourism
Cultural tourism is the sector of the tourism industry which provides the content for visitors wishing to experience lifestyle in the landscape. It is concerned with the ways of life of a place and its residents. It is doing what the locals do. It forms partnerships with a range of creativity, heritage and community development.

Festival
A festival is a themed, public celebration incorporating ritual, belonging and sharing, spectacle and entertainment, and cultural authenticity.
Goals
Goals state what is to be achieved and when results are to be accomplished, but they do not state how the results are to be achieved. Goals establish the intended nature of the enterprise and the directions in which it should move.

Industry
The totality of production, distribution, cultural and economic exchange.

Management
Management is concerned with examining the future and drawing up a plan of action; building the structure, material and human of an undertaking; maintaining activity among personnel; binding together, unifying and harmonising all activity and effort; and seeing that everything occurs in conformity with established rule and expressed command (Fayol, cited in Pugh, 1990).

Objectives
Objectives for an organisation set out how results will be achieved.

Organisational Culture
Organisational culture is a way of looking at and thinking about behaviour of people, individually and in groups in organisations. Bower, M., 1966. “The way we do things around here”, The Will to Manage.

Policies
Policies are rules or guidelines that express the limits within which action should occur.

Programmes
Programmes specify the step by step sequence of actions necessary to achieve major objectives. They express how objectives will be achieved within the limits set by policy.

Strategy
A strategy is a pattern or plan that integrates an organisation’s major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole (Quinn, 1991).

Volunteer
A volunteer is an individual who gives freely of time and resources to a cause or organisation with which they have a particular interest.
Chapter One

Introduction to the Research
Introduction to the Research

1.1 Introduction

This study investigates the management of cultural organisations in Australia as well as the management culture which affects the day to day operation of such organisations. This research has been undertaken to document current management practices in four Australian cultural organisations. This study may contribute to the development of appropriate and effective policy and planning for individual groups and the wider cultural sector.

Such research will deal with the broad issues associated with arts administration, human resource management, artform programming, cultural tourism, the connection with a specific constituency within the wider community and interaction with government. It seeks to clarify what organisational culture is, what it comprises and what function it performs in the management of cultural organisations in Australia. It notes the influence of the national political, social, cultural, economic and physical environments on the management of cultural organisations. The study makes some observations of the distinctive communities within which each of four case study organisations had its origins and in which these organisations now operate. The impact and importance of founders and early leaders in the organisation’s development is investigated.

The model provided by Schein’s (1985) research allows for a case study approach to determine a systematic measurement and assessment of the management practices of cultural organisations and the culture which has developed within each. The not for profit sector of the cultural industry in Australia is under scrutiny in the study. The data collected examine current management practices and plot the evolution of the organisation’s management choices.

Existing data on the development and management of cultural organisations in Australia and their contribution to the economy, quality of life for individuals, community profile and tourism partnerships are limited. With few academic studies documenting the experience of Australian cultural organisations, this study addresses the needs and aspirations of the constituency and management of four cultural organisations. The efforts of each to acknowledge their contexts, historical, societal and industry are under scrutiny in this study.
This research has been undertaken against a backdrop of external forces which impinge on the four case study organisations. These forces include the economic and technological environments, the social norms, legal, corporate and ethical roles, and political, artistic and cultural practices which operate in the wider community. An explanation of an organisation’s management choices and practices needs to be taken against these bigger systems in which the organisations operate. The structures, regulations, resources, processes, physical work settings, personal characteristics and abilities of personnel involved within the organisation also impinge on the organisation’s development and ultimately its culture.

A strong culture is a system of informal rules that spells out how people are to behave most of the time ... it enables people to feel better about what they do, so they are more likely to work harder.

(Deal and Kennedy, 1982:16)

The study focuses attention on the real experiences of individual arts administrators through their relationship with Boards of Management, membership, staff, volunteers, the wider community, the public and corporate sectors. A variety of data have been collected from each of these stakeholders to build the picture of each case study organisation.

The four organisations chosen for this study are: Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia, the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd, Belvoir Street Theatre (Company B) and Theatre North Inc.

Firstly, the background to the study is explained. Definitions of culture are discussed and the environments in which the organisations operate explained. Two specific cultures are investigated in this study. One is that which is represented by the national identity which provides a wide context; the other, the applied culture of organisations developed over time which affects the day to day operation of an organisation. While each of the organisations are involved with the delivery of arts practice, that is not the focus of the work.

The challenges which face the management of cultural organisations are raised. The significant relationship all four case study organisations have with government and the wider community are put into policy and planning contexts. The emergence of a cultural industry sector and professional associations is documented.

The growth of interest in what constitutes organisational culture is explored. The concept which is the starting point for this study into organisational culture has three sources. These are the broader societal culture, the nature of the business undertaken by each organisation and thirdly the beliefs and attitudes of founders or early leaders.
Understanding the theory and the application of management culture and organisational culture can facilitate strategic thinking and provide models for other organisations. One hypothesis which is explored is that the culture of the founders and early leaders shapes that of the whole organisation. This may influence different approaches to the operational decisions made by the management of cultural organisations as well. It is observed that the management strategies implemented in cultural organisations are often similar to practices in the wider business community.

The research propositions at the base of the study concern how the organisational culture developed in each organisation. Elements discussed include the human resource management choices, the administration of the specific artform practised in each organisation and finally the connection each organisation makes with the growing cultural tourism sector. These elements comprise organisational culture and have informed the shape of the research and documentation of the data collected. The historical saga approach reveals the distinctive features of the development of each case study organisation.

Finally, in this chapter, an overview offers some of the national frameworks which have recently been generated by government, the public and industry sectors within which each case study organisation operates, especially the increasing demand for links between the arts and tourism.

1.2 Background to the Research

Culture is a manifestation of the accumulated experiences of humans as they interact with one another and with their environments. It is a composite of the creative, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, technological, and organisational responses groups of people make over time. Culture is an integrated pattern of human behaviour which includes thought, speech, action and artifacts and is dependent on a capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. It is concerned with the whole dynamic human environment. It embraces what humans create, their customs and heritage and their daily activity.

The stored memory, processes and practices become part of the heritage passed on to successive generations. There are characteristic forms of decision making; techniques for acknowledging what is acceptable and unacceptable. Culture provides the medium for transferring customs through education, refining beliefs and attitudes, interpreting and expressing the ways the group behaves. It is what distinguishes one group of people from another.
“A culture cannot be precisely defined, for it is something that is perceived, something felt” (Handy, 1985:196). The principal factors which influence the choice of culture, the structure of an organisation and the management choices made as a result of the culture have to do with history and ownership, size, technology, goals and objectives, the environments in which the organisation operates and the people involved.

The nature of two cultures is explored and the connections between them explained. One is the culture in the business of providing a service responsive to the expressed needs of a particular constituency. The other culture represents a body of knowledge which is generally accepted as representing an artform response; hence, the title of this work, the management culture of cultural management.

In this study the contexts in which ‘culture’ operates will be seen to be both broad and applied to specific circumstances. The Australian national identity is a context documented in the literature; its diversity, heritage and geographical aspects are represented in this study but are not a major thrust of the investigation. The sector which nurtures and maintains the provision of arts and community cultural services is represented through its connection with government and the wider business cultures, but is not central to the discussion presented in the study.

The culture which incorporates arts’ practice is one model for investigation.

Culture is the way we pass on, experience and explore our values and views. The way we communicate with each other; interact with our environment and organise ourselves are all part of our culture.

(Community Arts Board Booklet, Australia Council, August 1986, cited in Butler, 1988:175)

There is a body of knowledge, representing artform practice, which is not dealt with in this study but does influence the management decisions made within organisations. Other major influences which are not dealt with in any depth, but affect cultural organisations include managerial decision making represented by its own body of literature. The mixed economy within which cultural organisations operate raises issues of government intervention in policy, planning and financial support. The increasing links between the arts, heritage, community activity and the expressed needs of tourists are examined in the data.

“A lot of Australians still see culture as something other people have. They don’t consider themselves as ‘cultured’” (Burgmann and Lee, 1988:xi). The ways in which we relate to one another are reflected in the popular cultures which currently inhabit Australia. The development of all facets of Australian culture has a political dimension (ibid.). This study highlights the vast body of presently unrecorded experience that has
gone into the evolution of the administration of Australian culture. The influence of the mix of various races and ethnic groups is just one dimension of the complexity of that culture which is dynamic, which is constantly being challenged, re-defined and re-shaped by changes from within and without and is represented in the development of the case study organisations. The evolution of political theory and practice associated with sexual orientation; the debate on regional development needs and a commitment to a specific artform are all raised in the stories told about the four organisations.

There are a number of stakeholders in the development of a societal culture. The individuals who generate action and reaction, expression and interpretation, reflection and commentary; the community entities within which they reside; and the commercial and public sector institutions which seek to manage, manipulate, stimulate, educate and guide. The criterion used to assess the value to society of say, arts practice, can include: whether it enriches lives; is excellent (and who judges this?); enhances the cultural identity of the group, community, nation; is a mode of expression; is an employment provider; has market viability and represents pluralism/diversity of society.

Former Australia Council Chairman Donald Horne (cited in Butler, 1988:177) writes that “It is slowly beginning to occur to Australians that the future of their society lies, above all else, in the development of Australian creativity”. In his introduction to a discussion paper for Future Directions Project, Gib Wettenhall (1987) reported on issues raised in creating a context for arts and cultural development in Australia. While there is a dominant culture which affects most Australians, the diversity of cultures through differences in locality, environment, customs and beliefs, in social and economic background, employment and recreation patterns, in age, gender and class, combine to produce distinctive but equally valid cultures. Wettenhall’s (cited in Butler, 1988:172) study documented trends, opportunities and challenges facing the arts at that time:

(i) in the economic structure through:
   • the integration of the arts and industry design;
   • arts and information technology;
   • cultural tourism as an export earner,

(ii) building an innovative and diverse Australian culture through:
   • nurturing creativity;
   • exploring new modes of expression;
• encouraging mass media to promote cultural diversity;
• encouraging new paths for information provision;
• better marketing of the arts,

(iii) making the arts central rather than peripheral to Australian society through:
• integrating arts into daily lives;
• greater accessibility to participation in the arts;
• broadly based, arts oriented education system;
• employment generation potential;
• identification of an arts industry;
• linking arts with conservation and built environment;
• increasing the voice of the arts sector, and

(iv) funding and resources for the arts through:
• governments at all levels;
• corporate sector involvement;
• high art at the expense of other practice.

The issues raised here have provided the day to day challenges for each of the case study organisations. The notion of partnerships; between arts organisations, governments, and other special interest sectors like business and environmental groups is a recurring theme in the literature. The fragmentation of government policy and financial assistance mitigated against any cohesive approach to the issues raised. Public debate, the involvement of three levels of government in the provision of cultural services and the determination of individual arts organisations to be part of the national identity has ultimately shaped the political will and emergent Creative Nation (1994).

Robert Perrier (cited in Brokensha and Tonkin, 1982) highlighted the dilemma of all arts organisations, large and small, in their attempts to develop an audience from the wider community. He drew attention to the dilemma of cultural organisations working to develop the national cultural identity, when public administrators frame policies without a clear understanding of the situation on the ground. Deborah Mills, in her foreword to Community and the Arts (1991), mentions that “often cultural theory is in the hands of the theorists – not necessarily a bad thing, but that theory can sometimes suffer from the lack of both practical insight and the politics of experience” (Mills, cited in Binns, 1991:8).
More recently, Donald Horne (1994:23) reflected on five reasons for the need for diverse cultural engagement. During his time as Chairman of the Australia Council he often spoke of the value of the arts to Australians, and saw the need to broaden the perspective to embrace community cultural organisations and public intellectual life. He now suggests ‘imagination, creativity, capability and knowledge’ as the essential elements of a productive culture. He stresses the need for research and development and the benefits of the arts to Australians “as members of a liberal society, a democratic society, as a tolerant society and as members of an independent sovereign State” to be central to a national cultural policy, as distinct from an arts policy. In addition he identifies these national concerns:

- a diverse market place of values, knowledge and ideas in a liberal society, to which government can contribute;
- the provision of opportunities in a democratic society, not just access, but the chance to do something themselves, and encouragement to see and hear and read others;
- as a tolerant society, provide understanding of the diverse cultural resources of ethnicity, faiths, region and ways of life; and
- as an independent sovereign State the citizens should have the chance to take an intelligent interest in their own distinctive culture (Horne, 1994:18).

Horne’s list of ‘cultural rights’, offers another framework for the current study. The notion of co-operative enterprise, where all levels of government work together impinges on the efforts of the four case study organisations. Horne believes all Australians have the right:

- to a knowledge of their own country and a right to fulfilment in their own music, movement and verse, in their own visual images, critiques and stories;
- of cultural engagement with the human heritage;
- to new work of all kinds in the world of arts, entertainment, intellectual and scholarly life; and
- to engage within a diversity of cultural experience.

The latter is of particular interest to the part of the organisation’s programming which contributes to the emerging cultural tourism sector.

The former Federal government’s Creative Nation cultural policy released in October 1994 helped raise the political profile of the arts, which was formerly low, and began
to recognise the needs of contemporary practice, the institutions and industry base for the arts, education, tourism and organisational, entrepreneurial and community participation and development areas which have long needed attention. It attracted criticism as a market-oriented corporatisation of the arts (McGuiness, 1994:38) with centralised institutions absorbing large sums of public money. Horne, too, suggested that the Creative Nation “didn’t get the standing ovation” expected because it lacked “a more human scale” (Horne, 1994:18). The cases in the present study provide the “human scale” for an investigation of contemporary arts administration.

The preamble to Creative Nation (1994) prepared by a panel of eminent Australians in 1992 suggests that:

Culture arises from the community, even when the community may not be fully aware of it. It encompasses our entire mode of life, our ethics, our institutions, our manners and our routines, not only interpreting our world but shaping it.

No comprehensive academic studies concentrate on the management choices made by the diverse arts service providers in the national cultural sector. This gap provides an opportunity to document the experience of Australian cultural organisations in addressing the needs of their constituents. The choices made by the management of each of the four case study organisations provides a snapshot for perusal by other cultural organisations and will acknowledge their present operations in a global context. The contribution these groups make to the richness and diversity of the Australian artistic product; the provision of opportunities for access and equity in employment and entertainment; the sharing of skills; the enrichment of society and international profile raising is substantial and significant. The employment of artists in unique enterprises, interpreting and celebrating the nation’s heritage in an imaginative manner is under scrutiny. These sub-cultures feature elements of the main societal culture and influence management choices made by organisations originating in them. The commonality is that each organisation provides arts and cultural services to their constituency and to the wider society.

The preamble of Creative Nation (1994:1) provides another backdrop for this study:

Australia, like the rest of the world, is at a critical moment in its history. Here, as elsewhere, traditional value and ideologies are in flux and the speed of global economic and technological change has created doubt and cynicism about the ability of national governments to confront the future. What is distinctively Australian about our culture is under assault from homogenised international mass culture.
Our notion of national identity and the expression of our culture through the arts has seen the development of various public, private and community based institutions to deal with what is now described as an industry. It is estimated that it is worth over $13 billion a year (Westwood, 1994:10) and is a major growth sector for the national economy. Government support for the arts has been a significant issue for arts organisations in recent years. Macdonnell’s (1992) comprehensive critical analysis of the role played by government is documented in *Arts, Minister? Government and the Arts*. If culture “can be said to be those aspects of society that in some way mirror who we are and causes us to think about ourselves” (Westwood, 1994:10), then arts organisations are no different in their attempts to make contact with government and insist that they operate on ‘a level playing field’.

This industry is made up of distinctive units, many small enterprises whose contact with the government infrastructure essentially devolves on entreaties for financial support. This study clearly demonstrates that the administration of individual units in this industry reflect the challenges and opportunities facing other parts of the nation’s economic development. The provision of cultural services is a national concern, for arts in the rural and remote areas as well at the metropolitan sector. Helen Colman, General Manager of the Arts Council of NSW, (1994:1) points out that “people of all ages ... need to work with living artists to develop skills and projects which nourish their creative life; and to develop programs relevant to the particular identities of their communities”. Governments at all levels have a contribution to make in tandem with the practitioners.

The organisational lifecycle, initiative, growth, prosperity, decline and demise have been as apparent in the arts industry as elsewhere in the economy. An explanation of the traditions, expectations and forms of organisation which prevail within arts industries is explored by Windschuttle in *Working in the Arts* (1987). He suggests that the arts “have been characterised by a high degree of individual responsibility on the job and a corresponding level of job satisfaction and occupational status”. He mentions greater interest by practitioners in their specific artistic endeavour than worry for improved working conditions (1987:4). He suggests that the establishment of arts organisations helps satisfy the need to provide employment security while pursuing creative, cultural and humanistic concerns.

The emergence of professional associations dedicated to the pursuit of information sharing, professional support and training for practitioners in arts management has allowed for increased opportunities for the documentation of current arts management practice. The growing number of national academic/professional training providers has facilitated clearer guidelines for practitioners and allowed students to undertake
internship options which more clearly demonstrate current practice. Work experience opportunities for secondary students has increased awareness in needs for arts management.

Ott (1989) suggests that organisational culture “provides meaning for organisation members, serves as a source of energy and focus, easily identifies members and non-members and functions as an organisational control mechanism”. Ott’s organisational perspective studies have contributed the framework for this study.

Ott (1989) suggests that the culture of an organisation can be shaped by many factors including the societal culture in which it resides; its technologies, markets and competition; and the personalities of its founders or most dominant early leaders. The strength, unity and pervasiveness of an organisation’s culture may be distinctive, weak or strong. Research into organisational culture is particularly descriptive. Hence the application of the case study approach in this study. Schien (1985) utilised this alternative approach to examining organisations. His Organisational Culture and Leadership (1985) significantly contributed to the debate on how best to come to terms with such variables as the values, myths and unspoken beliefs of organisations.

Schein (1985:271) deals with the staged process of an organisation’s development and the influences as an organisation evolves. In the early stages the culture provides the source of identity and holds the group together as the group strives to integrate its ideals and clarify its direction. As the organisation expands its outputs and reaches greater markets, a crisis of identity and initial values may be challenged. The contribution made by access to human resources to solve the problems on the operational side of the organisation need to be dealt with by management. How the culture is preserved through times of tension and transformation will be of interest in this study.
The concept of organisational culture has three general sources or determinants (Ott, 1989:75). These are the fundamental starting points for this study. These determinants are: the broader societal culture in which the organisation resides; the nature of an organisation’s business or business environment, and thirdly the beliefs, values and basic assumptions held by the founders or other early dominant leaders as well as the workers.
The formation and development of organisational culture is explored by Sathe. His theoretical framework for analysing the maintenance or change of organisational culture includes:

- pre-selection and hiring of members;
- socialisation of members;
- removal of members who deviate from the culture;
- behaviour;
- justifications of Behaviour: Beliefs and Values; and
- cultural Communications.

The questions raised by the six steps in this framework have found their way into this present study. When addressing the identification, management, stability and development of an organisation’s culture, the question of the relative uniqueness of each organisation’s culture is raised, even though organisations have many similarities.

Four organisations have been examined through an holistic approach both structurally and functionally to unravel the puzzle which is organisational culture. An analysis was sought to better understand how an organisation’s culture develops, is
perpetuated, is changed and is transmitted to new members through management strategies employed within each organisation.

The major source of information for this study was the senior administrator of each organisation. Arts organisations in Australia have frequent staff changes. Blonski (1994:192) comments that the sense of continuities and discontinuities disappear when staff leave with insights and knowledge. This became part of the concern for documenting the experience of these four organisations. If a corporate culture, including the management culture, relies only on written records, the valuable memory and observation of participants may be lost. The personal and power relationships are only one manifestation of the organisation’s culture; so this study sought to canvas a variety of means to trace and record the development of four organisations.

An organisation’s culture originates in the general culture. It is influenced by the nature of the business. It is significantly shaped by the personalities of leaders. This study sought to note whether cultures differ between organisations engaged in the same line of work, e.g. the provision of community and arts services. Most managers and students of management and organisations know they must pay attention to trends in and understanding of culture in the wider community, along with other contemporary management issues including strategic planning and human resource management, marketing which emerge in conventional enterprises.

There appears to be little that is absolute about organisational culture (Ott, 1989:197), let alone management culture which constitutes a major element of it, however “organisational cultures themselves are and will remain permanent parts of organisation’s realities” (Ott, 1989:198). If people in organisations require “culture for identity, purpose, feelings of ‘belongingness’, communication, stability and cognitive efficiency” (Ott, 1989:198), this study seeks to establish ‘how’ and ‘why’ four case study organisations have taken on the challenge.

The organisational culture perspective is useful in describing, explaining and understanding a variety of phenomena which confront cultural organisations in Australia daily. It is helpful in understanding employee commitment and loyalty, leadership effectiveness, leadership succession, creativity, innovation and organisational survival (Ott, 1989:5). Language is not the only medium through which the concept of organisational culture is communicated. The symbols, artifacts, jargon, myths and behavioural patterns are all manifestations of an organisation’s culture, sometimes more evident to an outside observer than to others.

“Every organisation develops a culture of its own” (Mullens et al, 1993:15). Even if all members of the organisation are not consciously aware of it; it still has a pervasive
influence over their attitudes, behaviour and actions. Culture helps to account for variations among organisations and managers; and why different groups of people perceive things in their own way and perform things differently from other groups (Potter, 1987, cited in Mullens et al, 1993:15). Culture can help reduce complexity and uncertainty. It can provide a consistency in outlook and values and make possible the processes of decision making, co-ordination and control (Gorman, 1987, cited in Mullens et al, 1993:15).

The common characteristics of the study organisations included:

- a collective identity;
- a roster of members, friends, antagonists;
- a programme of activity and timetable to go with it;
- a table of organisation;
- a set of formal rules partly undermined by informal rules;
- procedures for adding and removing members;
- utilitarian objects used in the organisational programme;
- symbolic objects used in the organisational programme;
- symbolic objects used in ceremonies and rituals;
- a history;
- a special vocabulary;
- some elements of folklore;
- a territory; and
- a method of placing members within that territory according to their relative importance (Caplow, 1976:5).

During any interval in an organisation’s history, it will be growing, stable or declining. During each stage of an organisation’s development the culture is influenced by the forces which cause management adjustments. Goals are not always met, for reasons beyond their control. How the individual organisation deals with the crises which arise from time to time – the skill, the luck, the planning, the leadership and corporate experience into play – clearly reflects the culture. The corporate culture is better observed through the beliefs and values expressed by the people who make the business work; they have “stories to tell, not just profits to make” (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:15).
This study identifies the culture of each organisation from historical saga – stories of the development of each organisation through its goals, resources, structure, behaviours including leadership, outputs and outcomes and the environments which surround it. The descriptive nature of the significant issues raised in this study will be of interest to colleagues involved with the arts, management and tourism; by policy makers, practitioners, community leaders and other professionals involved with arts and community organisations. The case study approach allows readers of the report an opportunity to reflect on the emphases, detail, composition and ‘culture’ of each organisation through the description and analysis. It is important to understand the values and beliefs passed along in organisations and not just the products or services which they deliver. Each organisation has stories to tell. A strong culture enables people to feel better about what they do and is the framework which is shared by members of an organisation. Standards within an organisation are set through language, interpersonal behaviours, explicit instructions, public presentations – often through rituals borrowed as deemed appropriate from the mainstream culture.

The study has been undertaken against a background of increased attention to the arts and arts practice in the public and private sector through education, employment and training programmes, community development, the media, and international tourism interests in heritage and culture. This investigation identifies the factors which determine how the arts services demanded are currently delivered; what organisational structures exist; how these came about and what can be offered to new organisations.

The present writer has over 20 years experience in community and arts administration and the propositions which are pursued by this study have been developed from patterns evident from this experience. Several elements of information from this experience are now linked to establish a proposition that an organisation’s management culture is inextricably linked to the organisation’s constituency.

In her book, To Be or Not To Be?, Natasha Serventy (1990:11) suggests that before engaging in an enterprise, a decision on an appropriate business structure is required. The nature of the organisation must be determined; all the tasks taken into account, administration and finance, as well as the creative roles (1990:130). She writes,

“the pressures of working together, especially in underfunded organisations, can make trust disappear and initial idealism turn to cynicism. To avoid misunderstandings, divisions and injustice, a group may find it useful to work within a formal structure and to be able to refer from time to time to a considered constitution or incorporation document” (1990:9).
Her comments highlight the trend for companies to be an integral part of the Australian arts scene, reflecting both the requirements of funding bodies and the increasing desire
of artists to form groups and incorporate for mutual benefit (1990:49). The operations of arts organisations generally focus on three areas:

(i) bringing the artist to their audience;
(ii) enabling the artist to work within a particular community; and
(iii) encouraging the community to develop its own potential – to encourage participation, the education of audiences and the discovery and training of the potential artist (Pick, 1980:7).

The four organisations in this study have each determined specific parameters for carrying out their company’s business. They have identified the business they are in by asking the questions related to markets for the product they have, assessing their human and capital resources, choosing a structure which will best advantage their contact with the public and the delivery of that product on an appropriate scale which will allow for the fulfilment of long term goals. Each has expressed a desire to make the arts more generally accessible; to foster and preserve the growth of local and minority arts practice.

Each of the four case study organisations identified numerous common characteristics in their management culture. Operating as they do in the diverse national cultural context, the management of community cultural organisations is not unlike the metaphor used by Morgan (1986:17) when describing cultural organisations, “generally complex, ambiguous and paradoxical”. Each has demonstrated idiosyncratic processes and practices, while dealing with common concerns for effective management, leadership, financial control, marketing, staff and training, artistic programming, community contact and tourism.

While there are organisational variables, the beliefs, behaviours, attitudes, commitment to excellence, communication patterns, shared expectations, language, physical arrangements, rituals, symbols, values, vision, stories, the ideologies demonstrated by each clearly indicate some shared origins consistent with their constituency, and the influence of the wider community, the conventions of arts form practice, their partnerships with peers and the business community and the legacy of their founders and leaders.
1.3 **Significance of the Research**

It is especially important that emerging cultural organisations look to models of established organisations, observe patterns of management culture developed and attempt to create the most appropriate responses to their own environment and constituency. With little published documentary evidence of current practice, experience and strategic planning undertaken in existing organisations, those preparing to embark on cultural management have limited opportunities to avoid the trial and error method of establishment. This study may go some way to provide evidence of options which have at least been tried and at best been successful in circumventing the obvious pitfalls.

It is anticipated that this investigation into four organisations will better inform and document the management approaches utilised to establish a viable, healthy and where possible self reliant cultural industry in Australia. Practising managers need to be alert to the culture of their organisation so that they can better predict culture related production or quality of delivery or spot any functional or dysfunctional sub-cultures.

For the arts sector to better present itself, a united approach to education, training, research, advocacy, promotion and resourcing infrastructure is required. Arts workers and employers need to collaborate on specific job descriptions so that the complexities of cultural management are better documented and accessible to those entering the industry. Conclusions from this research should be of historical and practical interest and value to those working in the arts, community development and tourism. There is an increase worldwide in the acknowledgement of the contribution the cultural industry makes to the community’s self image, vision for its future, economic and environmental development. The link between arts practice and tourism activity is increasingly discussed as policy and planning at all levels of government is generated.

1.4 **Research Problem**

This study seeks to investigate the factors which contribute to the management culture of cultural management in Australia. The influences on the development of an organisation’s management culture are explored. An understanding of organisational culture more reliably informs predictions for the development of new organisations. From the literature the factors which are deemed significant include the importance of the goals of the constituency; the role of individuals in the activity carried out by the organisation; the position of the organisation in the national cultural tapestry and the link between the arts and tourism.
1.4.1 Principal Research Propositions

Contact with the four case study organisations allowed for the exploration of the following propositions which currently impact on many cultural organisations in Australia in some way. Research was undertaken to establish the relevance and importance of the issues connected with these propositions.

The following five principal propositions provided the thread for interview questioning undertaken by each organisation’s administrator. These research propositions allowed for a thorough exploration of the organisation’s current management practices and provided opportunities to document the evolution of each organisation’s business.

The operational and strategic management choices cultural organisations make are determined by their constituency and reflect the distinctive features of that constituency.

Evidence is presented from the literature and current cultural management practice to support the view that decisions affecting the day to day operation of organisations are influenced by the constituency within which the operation is based. This may be formally represented by administrative structures put in place, management choices, individuals and their contributions as volunteers or staff and the political and economic framework in which the wider constituency dwells. Such influences could be of a racial, geographic, philosophical nature or grounded in some artform practice. Organisations put in place mechanisms to maintain contact with their constituency. These reference points allow for monitoring and feedback which will ensure the delivery of appropriate services. Particular communication practices in each constituency allows for the development of distinctive feedback strategies.

The original goals and expressed needs of the membership shape the culture of an organisation.

The needs expressed at the point an initiative is taken, either by a specific group of people, or by individuals instrumental in setting up an organisation can be taken through the operational stream of the organisation’s life, as well as manifesting themselves as the organisation’s culture. Aims and objectives set initially are found to sustain the organisation for a considerable number of years and any modifications are made against the original plans and aspirations of individuals and groups within the constituency.
All contributors to the organisation’s programme affect effective and successful cultural management and management culture.

There is considerable interest in the cultural industry sector to better deal with the staff and volunteer component of the organisation’s human resources. Management needs to come to terms with engaging skilled and committed personnel to serve the interests of the organisation at all levels. The organisation which utilises a Board, staff and volunteers needs to ensure that a culture consistent with the corporate aims is functional and effective in delivering the services to the host constituency.

The contribution individual organisations make to the nation’s cultural diversity can occur independently of government policy and practice.

Individual organisations can focus attention on representing artform practice, meeting constituency needs and interacting with peers independently of government. Growing government interest and intervention in cultural policy and planning has generated another environment with which individual cultural organisations need to deal. The not for profit cultural sector has long contributed to the provision of a variety of quality services without major interaction with government. The development of partnerships for more effective delivery of services has encouraged a change in attitude and practice. A significant element of the change is the shift in commitment by government to financial partnerships with arts organisations from direct subsidy.

Cultural management is readily making the connection between the arts and tourism.

In delivering cultural services greater attention is being focused on marketing products which best represent artform practice and cultural identity. Audiences can be residents or visitors. There is a growing attention being directed to the partnerships which can be effected to share cultural activity with wider audiences through tourism. Greater understanding of the benefits for promotion and packaging, which directs attention to what the host community has to offer in terms of cultural activity, is being embraced by cultural organisations. In the past, arts organisations were pre-occupied with preparing a product with little reference to the consumer beyond their immediate constituency, whether geographical or subscription base.

The contribution each of the case study organisations makes to the ‘arts industry’ and the ‘tourism industry’ is investigated in this study to establish its involvement in what is currently being labelled ‘cultural tourism’. Cultural tourism plans are being prepared at all levels of government. Individual organisations have been working closely with government agencies to have their work better represented as part of the content of tourism.
At the national meeting, Creating Cultures, convened in Canberra (August 11–12, 1994) for the major stakeholders in Australia’s cultural industries discussion focused on the future. The connection between arts and business was emphasised with the potential for the industry to exploit current opportunities on the open market for cultural products (Bagnall, 1994:82). Linking arts business with tourism was another issue raised. Cultural events added value (commercial jargon) to the tourist experience and provided a route to competitive advantage.

The Commonwealth Department of Tourism (1994) published A Talent for Tourism to explain the experience of tourism enterprises through success stories in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Bangarra Dance Theatre is featured there and in this study.

1.5 Four Case Studies

The following background information has been derived from print documentation, organisational archives, print documentation of projects, programmes, promotional material, media files, annual reports and arts literature. This material revealed the link between the principal research propositions used as a framework for this study and the experience each organisation had in developing its management culture and demonstrated in its operations. Below, each of the four organisations is briefly described. The field work, including extensive face to face interviews and work place observations are described in an expanded format in Chapter Four.

This basic introduction to the four case study organisations draws together most of the themes to be represented in the research. The current business practice of the organisation is outlined against a backdrop of some significant developments in the organisation’s history. The public perception of the organisation is gained from such documentation as is used for this snapshot of these providers of cultural services.

1.5.1 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd

Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd is a community owned, non-profit company. The major features of its annual programme are the Mardi Gras Festival, Parade and Party. The Festival is a month long cultural, sporting and community event culminating in a large night time outdoor parade followed by an all night party.

The organisation emerged as a result of a series of events commencing with a street parade to commemorate International Gay Solidarity Day in 1978. The first February parade was held in 1981; the first post parade party in 1982; the first arts programme

Funding for Mardi Gras comes largely from ticket sales for the Festival party and from an equally famous party held in September/October called the ‘Sleaze Ball’. The organisation’s annual reports document earned and corporate income; as well as indicating that a government financial contribution was only once received in 1983. Attempts to broaden the organisation’s income base have been much debated and a balance needs to be struck between community interest and community concerns. The commissioning of an Economic Impact Study in 1993 provided data for the organisation to more cogently argue for corporate and government support and to signal the wider community of the economic value of the Festival.

After a comprehensive review and staffing restructure, the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) was created in 1993 to be responsible for providing effective overall management of Mardi Gras, including policy development, strategic planning, government and corporate liaison and promotions and marketing under the direction of the Board. The current CEO is Richard Perram. The second tier includes other administrators and co-ordinators along with full time, part time and casual staff and volunteer workers.

Currently, membership of the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is more than 4,500. At an annual general meeting, a 14 member Board is elected by the membership to plan and implement policy for the following year. In addition, there are five committees – Parade, Party, Festival, Community Liaison and Fair Day – each with a Board member co-ordinator and a committee comprised of community members. Mardi Gras operates its own workshop and has a full time staff of six and three part time people, who along with countless volunteers maintain the annual programme.

The organisation is committed to a celebration of, by, and for the gay and lesbian community. The diversity of that community is regularly reflected in the organisation’s annual programme. Management draws heavily on grassroots support for energy, enthusiasm and physical effort. Debriefings are held after each Mardi Gras to assist in preparation for subsequent events. Mardi Gras has policy to provide opportunities to foster lesbian and gay culture and creativity; to find effective means to encourage artistic expression and develop appreciative audiences.

Mardi Gras has attracted considerable media interest, here and overseas. The 1994 delayed telecasting of the Parade by the ABC provided substantial public debate. Visitors to Mardi Gras events are increasingly from overseas. The Economic Impact
Study documents the impact, spending, reach and influence these visitors have on the host community and particularly on the national economy.

1.5.2 Belvoir Street Theatre, Company B Ltd

In 1984 the building used by former Nimrod Theatre, in Belvoir Street Surry Hills was threatened with demolition. It had been the home of the Nimrod Theatre company since its conversion from a salt and tomato sauce factory in 1973–4. The theatre company was in a desperate financial situation in 1984. The sale of the theatre was proposed prior to Nimrod moving on to the Seymour Centre.

A solution was sought to save the building and retain it as a venue for the performing arts in Sydney. Two practitioners, Chris Westwood and Sue Hill, mobilised the entertainment community to create a syndicate to save the theatre. Over one weekend, they contacted 50 colleagues who donated $1,000 each as a deposit on the premises. Then, a syndicate of shareholders was developed; primarily entertainment practitioners – people with an interest in theatre and media professionals.

Solicitor Maureen Barron organised a specific legal structure which allowed the syndicate to be a public company (Company A), yet remain a private company in a sense. Shares can only be bought and sold or exchanged through the company itself, ensuring that the building will be owned in perpetuity by the performing arts industry.

A resident production company was seen as an imperative, so a separate company was structured and named Company B Ltd. It is the subject of this study. Membership of Company B is only open to shareholders (of Company A). They are eligible to vote for directors or become a director by a payment of an annual $25 membership fee. Company B, which is resident in Belvoir Street, manages the venue and produces the annual subscription season and is therefore eligible for government subsidies and tax deductibility.

Decision making is based on a similar flat structure. There is no Artistic Director. An artistic council is appointed on a quarterly basis to facilitate submitted projects and work as a conduit to the Board. Four different artistic councils each year are directly answerable to the Board and work in conjunction with the General Manager. Effectively, an artistic directorate operates, with the full Board determining the programme rather than one person. The selection of directors is open to the industry, so 75% of the Board are performing arts practitioners while the various other professionals on the Board are there because of their specialist skills and interest in theatre. Robyn Kershaw is the General Manager.
The company engages Australia’s most prominent and promising directors, actors and designers to present a programme that is politically sharp-edged, popular and stimulating. The work Belvoir produces ranges from radical interpretations of classics to newly commissioned plays, the work and expression of ideas by women, Aboriginal theatre and new forms of theatre. One or two productions a year either tour nationally or are produced as part of the State companies’ repertoire.

In addition to the main 320 seat theatre, Belvoir Street houses a second, smaller experimental space. It was originally a workshop/rehearsal space. Now, Downstairs Theatre is offered to visiting artists. It is used constantly throughout the year by co-operative companies, companies on special projects grants in preparation to moving a body of work to the upstairs theatre. It is generally seen as a flexible space for new form work and the expression of ideas for new artists.

There is a strong emphasis on the work of women in the theatre. A conscious shift toward female sensibility and aesthetic and special strategies have been engaged. Board membership and a work culture 75% dominated by women is evidence of this emphasis. Determination to foster women directors has been particularly evident in annual programmes. Writer commissions have placed an emphasis on women’s writing with scripts hopefully filtering through as main house productions.

In addition to the Company B subscription season, a regular core of outside hirers use the theatre. The theatre has priorities, in terms of its charter, with a strong multicultural and gay sensibility and work with an Aboriginal aesthetic. The Board operates with an artistic policy over the whole building, as such the hire of the theatre by the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre is a priority of the Board. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, Sydney Festival and Carnivale have been regular hirers, acknowledging close links with the communities of which the theatre is part. Aboriginal actors and productions have also become part of the theatre’s culture.

1.5.3 Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia Ltd

The word ‘Bangarra’ is from the Wiradjuri people – the largest Aboriginal language group in NSW, and means ‘to make fire’. The company was established in 1989 to provide modern and traditional dance opportunities for professional dancers. In its first year, it blended Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance with modern dance and staged performances nationally and internationally. The office of the organisation is situated in Chalmers Street, Redfern.

A Board of six directors employs over 25 full time staff and 8–10 part time staff. The General Manager is Robin Bryant. He chaired the original management committee until taking up the newly created administrative post. Initial management of the
incorporated organisation included personnel from the corporate sector. The stimulation of the Bangarra Friends, a volunteer support group, is seen to provide a valuable asset in building box office, expanding word of mouth information networks and building knowledge and interest in the organisation’s activities.

The company’s mission statement expresses its vision to:

\[
\text{translate understanding of and commitment to the continuation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through dance expression of the spiritual heritage and determination to survive.}
\]

The annual programme builds on this with the provision of opportunities for the appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and creativity through dance; to be one of the leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional dance companies that perform a creative and distinctive combination of traditional and contemporary dance and provide management that is involved and responsive in leadership and co-ordination of the resources to maintain a viable dance theatre company.

A commitment to development, excellence and ongoing training necessary for Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, technical and arts administration personnel has meant a close relationship since the establishment of the organisation with appropriate government departments. Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) have contributed to the employment opportunities taken up artistically, technically and administratively by the organisation. The organisation has received support from the NSW Ministry for the Arts, Queensland Arts Division, the Australia Council through the Aboriginal Arts Unit and the Performing Arts Board, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Each year the company prepares work which is staged in Sydney, toured to schools and communities outside the metropolitan area and overseas. The company performs for corporate and charity functions, awards presentations, and media, community and sporting events. Specialists have been employed as consultants to assist in the preparation of very successful seasons of work. The company sees as another part of its national role the formation of a traditional group to satisfy demands from the tourism industry. Acknowledging that foreign tourists visit Australia with a strong interest in, and an expectation to experience, indigenous culture. This has led the company to increased lobbying for the establishment of a permanent ‘home’ space.

The company produces an annual report outlining the activities undertaken each year.
1.5.4 Theatre North Inc

Theatre North was established as a partnership in September, 1981 between Ros and Peter Derrett, in Lismore, NSW. Each had worked with local community based performing arts groups till that point. After negotiations with experienced theatre workers resident in the region, they believed the time was right to offer performance opportunities on a professional basis.

Lismore is a regional city of 45,000 on the North Coast of NSW. Historically, agriculture formed the industry base, but in recent times, a service centre has developed with education, health and government focus along with a substantial commercial sector. The urban population mix now accommodates retirees, professionals, a traditional rural community, a regional university and conventional business sectors along with a significant counter cultural movement within a 50km radius. The 1973 Aquarius Festival in neighbouring Nimbin pulled into focus the contribution the arts could make in the future cultural life of the region, consolidating long standing community based practice.

Theatre North’s initial annual programme was devised for 1982. Actors were auditioned for the whole year’s programme. This enabled them to plan their work commitments. A core of actors was seen to be the effective basis to fulfil the aims and objectives outlined. From the outset, participants had a shared vision. The ensemble model was one seen to be successfully employed by groups elsewhere in the world. There was a belief that the rural/regional lifestyle choice should not be a barrier to the provision of high quality arts services. There was a commitment to the employment of regionally based theatre workers (actors, technicians, musicians, designers, composers, choreographers, directors) on work which was artistically challenging and rarely seen by audiences in a rural context. A strong emphasis was placed on the provision of services for young people in the region.

From the beginning, Theatre North offered annual Theatre In Education (TIE) programmes to regional schools; assisted schools in the preparation of original or school based theatrical productions; provided in-service programmes for regional school staff; conducted annual regional youth arts skills development camps for secondary school students and shared theatre resources with other practitioners; as well as hosting workshops by internationally acclaimed arts practitioners at a time when there was little arts infrastructure in the region.

The annual programme was divided up on a project basis and involved a group of people working in a conventional theatrical mode to prepare a production with a director, production manager, actors, technicians, designers, and other specialists as
required. Each project’s rehearsal schedule was devised in consultation with participants. An eight to twelve night season of a play was staged in the mainstage programme. The length of touring programmes was governed by school terms.

Theatre North negotiated an arrangement with the management of Trinity Catholic College, Lismore, to rent the school’s Drama Studio as the company’s home base for performances. The administration of the company was undertaken by Ros Derrett in a voluntary capacity. Artistic Direction was voluntarily undertaken by Peter Derrett. Finances were handled by the partnership and payments to artists were based either on a share of profits per project or an agreed travel allowance up front.

As a result of constant rebuffs to requests for government funding for its programmes, the organisation restructured as a community based non-profit incorporated association in 1986. Theatre North Inc has conducted itself in accordance with the (NSW) Incorporation Act (1984). Its Management Committee (the Board) meets monthly at the Drama Studio to discuss the business of the organisation. Reports from the Artistic Director, Administrator, and Treasurer document company business along with the artistic side of its operation. The Committee is annually elected and consists of a Chairperson and Deputy, a Minute Secretary, a Treasurer, the Administrator and Artistic Director and four to six Committee Members. The day to day running of the organisation is conducted by the Administrator in consultation with the Chair/Deputy and Artistic Director.

The annual programme of the company is broken into three distinctive areas:

(i) mainstage productions;
(ii) youth theatre and Theatre In Education; and
(iii) specific community based performance projects, including festivals.

Youth theatre projects are either devised with the young people participating or developed from established scripts as seen appropriate by the director. There is a strong skills development element, as well as an emphasis on performance opportunities. Participants are drawn from schools and communities around the region. Material included in each programme satisfies school curricula and raises issues of interest to youth and community groups. Theatre North is an accredited Department of School Education performance provider.

Theatre North has contributed to numerous regional and interstate festivals. The company staged the first performance in the Cultural Centre on Brisbane’s South Bank as part of the 1984 Warana Festival. It was commissioned to prepare two new pieces of
theatre for staging in the Amphitheatre at World Expo ‘88 in Brisbane. It has devised and convened programmes for Aboriginal communities and rurally isolated communities. The company has been a strong advocate for regional arts development.

Personnel is engaged on a project by project basis, though many people are involved with a series of activities. Multi-skilling is encouraged and participants may work on or off stage in any number of productions. Participants in the company’s activities are regarded as ‘members’ of the company for the duration of their involvement and many return regularly to contribute to the annual programme. If a wage/fee is not being offered on a particular project, then a travelling allowance is paid.

Bringing in personnel from outside the region to projects has placed strains on the organisation and challenged established practices. As a production company working out of shared accommodation, it became evident that space for rehearsals, set construction and meetings needed to be sought elsewhere from the performance space to which company had access only out of school hours. Patterns which have been established over the years by the company were at odds with the more venue based practice of some of the imported personnel.

The company has comprehensive documentation of all its work. The Artistic Director is a skilled photographer, so the process and the production of each project is well documented visually, while reports of each project are kept for company records, and forwarded to various arts agencies. Productions are also video taped or filmed. Records of the company’s work are stored with the local media, with the museum, national archives and regularly distributed to arts agencies. The photographic element is used in the promotion of each project. Press kits are presented to launch each project and photographs are used extensively in programmes and publicity.

1.6 Overview of the Study

The emphasis of the research undertaken in this study is on the distinguishing features of each of the case study organisations – from its establishment, through its development to its current operation. These features include expressed needs of specific constituencies from which they grew, the management structures, operations and marketing practices they have in place, the policy and planning approach each has adopted, the relationship each has with government, the tourism industry and the wider community. The Schien (1985) and Ott (1989) models afford this study a framework to observe management cultures which emerged over the time of each case’s development.
Chapter One introduces the framework for the present study. It identifies the major themes of the investigation into the management culture of cultural management of four case study organisations. The literature review detailed in Chapter Two explores current writing on the major elements of the propositions outlined in Section 1.4. The methodology used in this study is explained in Chapter Three. The data upon which the thesis is based are presented in Chapter Four. The investigation of existing printed material published by each organisation or about them in the media provided material to substantiate the information gleaned from interviews with personnel from each organisation. This material was critical in assessing the organisation’s management culture. Chapter Five outlines implications raised by the data collected and indicates some areas for further research.
Chapter Two

Review of Literature
Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of Chapter Two is to review literature relevant to the propositions outlined in Chapter One. While some issues canvassed in the literature are tangential to the main task of investigating the management culture of cultural management, they do assist in providing a context for the research objectives. Literature on the culture of organisations and management culture is growing. The literature reviewed in this Chapter explores the relevant factors which influence management choices in cultural organisations and the resultant management culture.

The literature under review has been drawn from a variety of disciplines, as literature dealing specifically with the management culture in cultural organisations is limited. Reference is made to perspectives as diverse as volunteer community based management, recreation management research, private sector management practices, tourism and trends and the emerging writing on arts administration.

Research of non-profit organisations and contemporary business practice has relevance to the four case study organisations. Management literature which deals with structure, operations, philosophy and leadership issues are identified as contributing factors to management culture. Research data on the link between arts practice and the growing interest of tourists to it is reflected in the annual programmes of the case study organisations. The political environment operating in the wider society significantly influences the activity and choices of cultural organisations in Australia and material indicating government interest in making appropriate connections with arts and community based cultural organisations is examined.

Literature searches were undertaken in the Library of Southern Cross University, through CD-ROM reference data base at Lismore TAFE and the Library of the Australia Council in Redfern, Sydney. Records of each of the case study organisations provided references to other sources. The general media, daily papers, specialist magazines and professional journals provided material for the research. Colleagues in the Centre for Tourism, Southern Cross University offered additional references and readings.

Searches were made in and through the libraries at Southern Cross University, TAFE College in Lismore and the Australia Council in Sydney. Keywords were used to identify literature from a worldwide network of publications. These included:
The writer’s personal library of books published in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States provided this present study with an international perspective. Printed material collected during study tours in the United Kingdom and the United States documented practical applications of arts management in theatre, dance, community arts and festivals. It became evident that public arts policy, arts management practices and the development of organisational culture is better documented in the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. The growing discourse in Australia on best practice, training, national identity through the arts, public subsidy and cultural tourism is still only available in the popular media or industry newsletters. The release of a national cultural policy, *Creative Nation*, in October 1994 by the Australian Prime Minister, Paul Keating, engaged considerable discussion. The government investment in profile raising national arts institutions leaves some of the present case study organisations searching for their place in the larger scheme of things.

### 2.2 Summary of Prior Research

Very little research exists on management culture in cultural organisations in Australia although Palmer’s work (1994) indicates increasing interest in the field of arts management. What follows draws on the elements of management culture which focus attention on the culture of the society in which the organisation has its origins; the literature which has documented studies into organisational culture, management practices, arts administration, cultural tourism and human resource management.

The research propositions outlined in Chapter One are addressed in the wider literature. In this Chapter the issues raised by the propositions are dealt with under the following headings:

- cultural business environments
- organisational culture
- management options
The economic, social, physical, political or creative environments in which organisations operate, source their culture. The behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and values demonstrated through management choices in organisations have attracted little attention in cultural management literature. The material presented in this chapter better informs the conclusions and implications drawn in Chapter Five after reference to the four case study organisations.

Organisations do not operate in a vacuum. Diverse writers (Drucker, 1993; Windschuttle, 1987; Reiss, 1993; Gray, 1994) suggest they operate in economic, social, physical, political and cultural contexts which determine what they can do and the costs associated with doing it. This is especially true of cultural organisations in Australia, where a great deal of activity is contingent on government funding. Cultural funding accounted for 1.7% of total public sector expenditure in 1988–89 (Guldberg, 1991:3). The composition of cultural funding differs widely from level to level of government; for example, of the $990m of Commonwealth funds, broadcasting and film production accounted for 74% ($734m), while cultural facilities and services made up most of State and Local government cultural funding (65% and 87% respectively) (Guldberg, 1991:3).

Arts organisations are usually set up and operated on a non-profit basis. The typical organisation is an incorporated body with its own constitution, its own elected board of management and its own members. Often, although not always, arts organisations are publicly funded by such bodies as the Australia Council and State arts ministries and departments.

(Australia Council, 1993:4)

The distinguishing characteristics of arts organisations outlined in the 1993 Australia Council publication entitled *The Arts in the Corporate Environment*, include the notion of social benefit to membership and community rather than commercial benefit. As well, cultural organisations are usually (p. 6):

- labour intensive;
- capacity constrained;
- production driven;
- technology constrained; and
- financially constrained.
Despite these factors, non-profit arts organisations have to operate in a commercial environment, “or what is humorously referred to as the real world” (p.6) and are subject to corporate and trade practice legislation, employ staff under industrial awards while maintaining a principal focus on the art form upon which they established themselves.

Figure 3: Principal Environments Influencing Cultural Organisations

Source: original for this study

Cultural organisations in Australia need to daily deal with influences with the environments identified in Figure 3. The legal obligations, political influences, government intervention are daily matched to the capital invested in the organisation,
the use of the physical resources at their disposal, the labour market conditions and the needs of their artform practice. Partnerships which have been forged within the cultural sector and through sponsorship with the wider business community deals with the economic conditions at any given time. Material prepared by the Australia Council (1993) outlines responsibilities for arts organisations in the corporate environment. To better market the efforts of the organisation, external entities like the media, competitors and technology come into play. As well, each organisation needs to deal with its history, its geographical location, its racial and political contexts.

Businesses have a series of key relationships with employees, customers and owners. Non-profit organisations have a multitude of constituencies more diverse than those of big business. In dealing with these elements they have as much to share with business as to learn from current business practice (Parker, 1992). One significant relationship for non-profit arts organisations is that of Boards and the day to day operation of the organisation. Boards can be keenly committed people who want to participate in the day to day functioning/managing of the organisation. Drucker (1993:123) outlines what is Board’s work, it “not only helps think through the institution’s mission, it is the guardian of that mission and makes sure the organisation lives up to its basic commitment”. The Board has the responsibility to ensure the organisation has competent and right management. The board appraises the performance of the organisation, and may have to salvage and fundraise. It has to lead. Drucker suggests a motto, “Membership on this Board is not power, it is responsibility” (Drucker, 1993:124).

Organisational Culture

Each organisation gradually develops its own unique sense of history. Its identity emerges as members of the organisation share the decision making and actions to be taken to deliver the product or service set as goals by the organisation. The present reconstitutes the past as the stories develop around the important events of the organisation.

The common traditions which exist in an organisation are encountered as a new member joins. The behaviours expected, the myths generated, the beliefs and values practised within the organisation are seen by the recruit as a medium for identification with and loyalty to the organisation. Mintzberg (1991) describes the reinforcement of the ideology of an organisation occurring naturally as the new member is attracted to the organisation’s system of beliefs; selectively as new members are chosen to ‘fit in’ with existing beliefs; or can be evoked when an organisation uses informal processes of socialisation and more formal programmes of indoctrination “to reinforce natural or selected commitment to its system of beliefs”.
Deal and Kennedy (1982) in *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*, in common with contemporary writers, describe the values, heroes, rites and rituals along with the communication networks central to putting culture into practice in organisations. The case study organisations recognise that values “define the fundamental character of the organisation and become the essence of the organisation’s philosophy” (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:23).

Organisational culture is a way of looking at and thinking about behaviour of and in organisations (Ott, 1989:1). People in organisations act in different ways under different circumstances. To acquire information of an organisation’s aims and objectives, its vision for itself, its structure, its policy and strategic planning processes, its markets, its capital and finance base can be straightforward and quantitative. What appears more difficult to determine is accurate or reliable clues about organisational culture.

The elements of organisational culture demonstrated by participants in this study include the following (in alphabetical order) (after Ott, 1989:51):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of Organisational Culture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anecdotes, organisational</td>
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<tr>
<td>art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumptions that people live by</td>
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<tr>
<td>assumptions, patterns of basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumptions, shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>behavioural regularities</td>
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<tr>
<td>beliefs</td>
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<tr>
<td>beliefs, patterns of shared</td>
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<tr>
<td>celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>climate, organisational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment to excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consensus level of (about a myriad organisational variable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>core</td>
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<tr>
<td>customs</td>
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<tr>
<td>doing things, way of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethic, organisational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations, shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glue that holds an organisation together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>habits</td>
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<td>heroes</td>
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<td>historical vestiges</td>
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<td>identity</td>
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<td>ideologies</td>
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<td>management practices</td>
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<td>manner</td>
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<td>material objects</td>
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<tr>
<td>meaning, patterns of</td>
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<tr>
<td>meanings</td>
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<td>mind-set</td>
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<td>myths</td>
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<td>norms</td>
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<td>philosophy</td>
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<td>physical arrangements</td>
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<td>purpose</td>
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<td>rites</td>
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<tr>
<td>ritualised practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rituals</td>
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<tr>
<td>roots</td>
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<tr>
<td>rules, informal system of</td>
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<tr>
<td>scripts, organisational</td>
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<tr>
<td>sentiments</td>
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<tr>
<td>source of norms, rules, attitudes, customs and roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialness, quality of perceived organisational</td>
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<tr>
<td>spirit</td>
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<tr>
<td>stories, organisational</td>
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<tr>
<td>style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>symbols</td>
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<tr>
<td>thinking, ways of</td>
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<tr>
<td>traditions</td>
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The core of an organisation’s culture is the shared value system and its success can be measured through the clear, explicit philosophy which is articulated. These values are known and shared by all who work for the company and attention is paid to shaping and fine tuning them, generally by management. Deal and Kennedy (1982:13) suggest other elements of the culture include the heroes, rites and rituals and networks which influence the organisation’s philosophy and operation. The leadership component provides for the intuitive, visionary, experimental and ceremonial functions (1982:37) and whether motivator, magician or symbol, the leader has a lasting influence within the organisation. They can provide role models, preserve what makes the company special, set a standard of performance, motivate employees and make success attainable and human.

The rites and rituals employed by an organisation are the culture in action (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:59). The impact of the symbolic actions of play, ritual, communication, work and management rituals is substantial. There is nothing mysterious or trivial about the achievements of a company when the rituals are recognised. Standards are set through (1982:76) language, public decorum, interpersonal behaviour, homework, presentation and format and explicit instructions used in the company. The internal cultural network of an organisation demands sensitive communication strategies. The "hidden hierarchy" (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:85) demands an orientation which acknowledges various roles of individuals and groups within an organisation.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) identify signs indicating when an organisation’s culture may be in trouble. Characteristics include an inward focus by management, a short term focus for planning, morale problems amongst staff, emotional outbursts from participants in the organisation’s programme (employees and volunteers), emergence and strengthening of sub-cultures and clashes between groups all of which are manifested in the inconsistent and fragmented delivery of the products and services seen to be the basis of the organisation’s mission. How organisations re-shape their culture through change is another strong element of this research. Culture can be developed in short life organisations or projects (Mullins, Meudell and Scott, 1993).

Tuckman (1965) identified at the rituals through which organisations pass as “forming, storming, norming and performing”. Here the stages of the organisation’s culture are characterised as initial uncertainty while determining acceptable behaviour, ‘testing
the waters’; then accepting the group, working through conflicts and resistance to control and establish hierarchies; thirdly establishing a sense of identity and camaraderie, assimilating a set of expectations of what defines correct member behaviour; and the final stage indicates a fully functional and understood group (Tuckman, cited in Robbins, 1989:230).

The case study work done by Katz (1981) in identifying the stages of an organisation’s ‘natural history’ has been built on by Lusky and Ingman (1979). The tensions between formalisation, professionalisation, bureaucratisation on the one hand, and the maintenance of self help impulses and vitality on the other are tested in this current study.

Katz (1981) proposed that organisational growth follows five successive stages:

(i) origin;
(ii) informal organisation;
(iii) emergence of leadership;
(iv) formal organisation; and
(v) professionalisation.

This pattern is evident in the development of many community based cultural organisations when goals are clear, enthusiasm is high but resources are few. The amateur arts sector in Australia is comprised of many organisations which have experienced the cycle suggested by Katz. Like any organisation they are influenced by the various environments mentioned earlier. The success of early projects, productions, festivals and so on, encourages a desire to formalise a structure for ongoing operations to better deal with these environments.

Frisby and Getz (1989) found that managerial sophistication did not always increase as a festival’s history lengthened; that festivals (cultural activities) were seen as recreational pursuits to be managed on a somewhat loose and informal basis; that there was resistance to the trend toward professionalism because there was a fear that community involvement and control may diminish if a business like approach develops. Concern was expressed that an event/activity would become a ‘tourist trap’ in which authenticity diminishes or disappears and problems of overcrowding and commercialism take over. The tension between arts/community events and tourism is raised in this study. These issues are pursued in the investigation of the four case studies against the background of the environments in which cultural organisations operate.
Definitions of the nature of groups formulated in the 1970s were used by Katz and Bender (1976, cited in Katz, 1981:135) who suggest,

self help groups are voluntary, small group structures for mutual aid and the accomplishment of a special purpose. They are usually formed by peers ... the initiators and members of such groups perceive that their needs are not, or cannot be, met by or through existing social institutions ... they often provide material assistance ... are frequently ‘cause’ oriented and promulgate an ideology or values ... 

Katz lists other defining attributes (1981:136):

- self help groups always involve face to face interactions;
- the origin of self help groups is spontaneous (they are not usually set up by an outside group);
- personal participation is an extremely important ingredient; bureaucratisation is antithetical to the self help organisation;
- the members agree on and engage in some actions;
- typically, the groups start from a position of powerlessness; and
- the group fill needs for a reference group, a point of connection and identification with others, a base for activity and a source of ego-reinforcement.

Studies of self help groups have generally been descriptive case studies and based on anecdotal evidence (Katz, 1981:140). There is an absence of a codified body of work which has made bibliographical research difficult. Scholars have reached a broad consensus that the organisational and structural nature of groups is determined primarily by shared problems and experiences of members (Katz, 1981:141).

Lusky and Ingman (1979, cited in Katz, 1981:130) found that:

Leadership conflicts, resource and problems ... membership disaffection stemmed from the group’s having become formally incorporated, from receiving public funding and from the core staff’s viewing themselves as professionals rather than peers of the members.

Handy suggests “there are four basic styles from which organisations choose some mix depending on their history, the kind of work they do and the kind of people who do it” (1988:85). While the semantics in the literature vary, e.g. Handy uses power, role,
task and person (after Harrison, cited in Handy 1985:188), others use organic and mechanistic (1988:446). Handy’s work in the 1980s follows work explored in this chapter by Peters and Waterman (1982), and Deal and Kennedy (1982). Handy explores organisational culture through the Club Culture, the Role Culture, the Task Culture and the Person Culture. He depicts the Club Culture as a spider’s web, because the key to the whole organisation sits in the centre, surrounded by ever widening circles of intimates and influences. The closer you are to the spider, the more influence you have. The organisational idea in the club culture is that the organisation is there to extend the person of the head or, often, of the founder. If they could do everything personally they would. This may sound like a dictatorship, but it is based on trust and a personal culture.

These cultures have a great strength in their ability to respond immediately and intuitively to opportunities or crises because of short lines of communication and because of centralised power.

(Handy, 1988:87)

Danger lies in the dominance of the character of a central figure. On the other hand, they are a convenient way of running things when the core organisation is small and closely gathered together so that personal communication is easy.

In a Role Culture Handy describes an organisational chart with boxes containing a job title and in the boxes is a name of an incumbent. The position continues even when the individual departs.

The underlying organisational idea is that organisations are sets of roles or job boxes, joined together in a logical, orderly fashion, so that together they discharge the work of the organisation.

(Handy, 1988:89)

Communication in this culture is formalised, as are the systems and procedures in place. It is all managed rather than led. Organisations with a role culture thrive when doing routine, stable and unchanging tasks, but find it hard to cope with change. People are a less critical factor because these cultures can always train the person for the role, not the other way around.

The organisational idea in the Task Culture is that a group or team of talents and resources should be applied to a project, problem or task.
The task culture evolved in response to the need for an organisational form that could respond to change in a less individualistic way than a club culture, and more speedily than a role culture. (Handy, 1988:90)

The task culture is the preferred culture of many competent people because they work in groups, sharing both skills and responsibilities. The culture is usually built around a co-operative group of colleagues without much overt hierarchy. The professional people involved can be expensive.

The Person Culture model is different from the other three. It harnesses the individual for the organisation’s purposes, whereas, the person culture puts the individual first and makes the “organisation the resource for the individual’s talent” (Handy 1988:92). With management of lower status and with fewer controls over the professionals involved, this type of organisation is utilised by specialist individuals, like doctors and lawyers, who do not use the word ‘organisation’ but prefer to use ‘practice, or chambers or faculty’, instead.

No organisation is culturally pure according to Handy (1988). The structure which is employed by an organisation can be seen as its skeletal response to its membership. Organisations are full of diversity and uniformity and do not operate in a predictable world. The structure chosen by an organisation refers to the division of work that needs to be done.

Without a division of work, a system of accountability and a coherent shape to the organisation, there are bits of work that don’t get done, messages that don’t get heard, decisions made by accident, with irritation and confusion in abundance. (Handy, 1988:103)

He suggests there are three ways to hold an organisation together (1988:110) through:

- the hierarchy of command;
- rules and procedures; and
- co-ordinating groups.

Handy suggests that most organisations tend to use all three, as the hierarchy of command turns out to be too cumbersome and rules and procedures too rigid. Organisations wish to remain small enough to maintain a common identity, while coping with a whole range of activities. So, if “the structure of an organisation is its skeleton, then the systems are its nerves” (Handy, 1988:121). Handy identifies three
mechanisms which can facilitate effective communications within an organisation (Handy, 1988:124):
• use more than one medium and more than one net;
• encourage two way communication; and
• avoid links in the chain, i.e. when possible avoid layers and do it directly.

Pilisuk and Parks (1980, cited in Katz, 1981) undertook an exploratory study of 28 varying groups. They investigated, among other things, membership characteristics (e.g. degree of openness, homogeneity), institutional relationships, patterns of origin, leadership, ideology, formalisation of structure and group focus. Other studies have sought to relate ideological to structural factors (Katz and Bender, 1976, cited in Katz, 1981). They tested such hypotheses as “the greater the degree of ideological conformity demanded of membership, the greater the group cohesiveness, but the lower the level of active participation by members” (1981:144).

Katz identifies the possible, proper and desirable relationship of the group to the role of professionals as one of the most often discussed, crucial and vexing (1981:145). He comments that from the existing commentaries on professional-lay relationships, a ‘collaborative’ model predominates (1981:146). Katz’s work has been with self help groups, but outcomes of the research upon which he comments are relevant to the discussion taking place amongst the organisations of this study.

Pearce and Robinson (1989, cited in Hall, 1990:105) define organising as “the process of defining the essential relationships among people, tasks and activities in such a way that all the organisation’s resources are integrated and co-ordinated to accomplish its objectives”. Hall (1990:105) suggests that the organising function:

(i) improves the efficiency and quality of the event management process;
(ii) establishes acceptability for decisions and resources; and
(iii) facilitates communication between the various personnel involved in event (project) management and the organisation.

Mintzberg (1991) traces the development of an organisation’s ideology through three stages. These, he suggests, are:

• the rooting of ideology in a sense of mission;
• development of ideology through traditions and sagas; and
• the reinforcement of the ideology through identifications.
He suggests the roots of the ideology “are planted when a group of individuals band together around a leader, through a sense of mission and found a vigorous organisation”. There are obviously other ways for organisations to emerge, e.g. new agencies come into being through government intervention or as a subsidiary of another organisation. Each of the four case studies demonstrate the notion that a small group wished to accomplish a shared vision. The ‘sense of mission’ is a common feeling in new organisations and assists the development of unique opportunities to construct procedures and traditions readily identified with this particular group’s establishment of personal and professional relationships.

Strong charismatic leadership can invigorate the mission and dedication of the followers. Charisma, as Weber (1969:12, cited in Mintzberg, 1991) used the term, means a sense of ‘personal devotion’ to the leader for the sake of his or her personal qualities, rather than formal position. Mintzberg (1991) suggests people can join and remain with the organisation because of dedication to the leader and his or her mission.

Mintzberg (1994:397) builds on his earlier work and outlines the framework of five basic forms of organisation. He expressed concern about the absence of a widely accepted framework within which to discuss different forms of organisation. He describes the machine organisation; entrepreneurial organisational; the professional organisation; the adhocracy organisation and the diversified organisation. He suggests that organisations differ in their needs and in the context of planning, particularly, require a combination of skills in their planning and management (1994:397).

**Management options**

Literature on management choices in cultural organisations indicates it borrows extensively from general business practice (Parker, 1992; Palmer, 1994; Drucker, 1993; Handy, 1988). Contemporary arts administration is undergoing a revitalisation. This has its origins in the wider community where there is an increasing understanding, appreciation and awareness of the contribution arts/culture make to the quality of daily life; in the general business community which is more amenable to partnerships for mutual benefit; and from increased concern for access, employment opportunities and acknowledgement of sub-cultural needs.

*There is a limit to the number of original ideas in any field of human activity, and management is no exception.*

(Kennedy, 1991:ix)
Each organisation identifies different forms of organisational structures and explores their implications as applied to their particular circumstance. It is useful for some organisations to learn from the experiences of others.

The management structures adopted by arts organisations are not unlike the practices being adopted in mainstream business today. The separation of the artistic and administrative work is likened to production oriented enterprises. Titles for staff and task orientation indicate a clear understanding of contemporary business framework. However, the conventional business model is modified. In fact, Parker (1992:6) suggests the leaner non-profit arts sector has much to teach modern business with a ‘more with less’ approach to contemporary business practice. He raises issues of how organisations deal with the recession, increasing public scrutiny of administrative budgets and artistic programmes, motivation of staff, the role of volunteers, multi-skilling, the contracting out of work functions, returns on investments and relationship with sponsors. His work covers similar territory to that of the United Kingdom’s etc. limited (sic.) study Developing Management in the Arts (1993).

Drucker (1990) reinforces Parker’s point when he suggests that non-profit organisations are becoming America’s management leaders. “In two broad areas, strategy and the effectiveness of the Board, they are practising what most American businesses only preach” (1990:ix). Writing in What Business can Learn from Non-Pros, he believes the corporate sector could learn something from what he calls the “third sector”. He suggests that well managed non-profit organisations have become expert in three crucial elements of running an organisation. Firstly, they define their mission and stick doggedly to it. They know what business they are in. Secondly, non-profits have worked out how to make the Board of Directors a resource, not just a high profile rubber stamp. In the best non-profits he suggests Board Members are recruited for their specific expertise, and finally exemplary non-profit organisations have become clever at managing people. Specifically he identifies the capacity to manage and motivate volunteers.

Management options in the arts are now as well informed as anywhere else in business. Mintzberg’s (1991:331) explanation of the six parts of an organisation can be utilised by arts organisations. His concepts and case studies are readily accessible. They include the basic operating core formed by people who perform the basic work; the strategic apex occupied by a manager; middle line management created as the organisation grows; techno-structure for analysts outside the hierarchy of line authority and support staff. He claims that all active organisations possess an ideology which inflicts its culture and encompasses the traditions and beliefs which distinguish it from other organisations (Mintzberg, 1991:331).
The impact of strategic planning on management choices is explored in work by Nelson (1990:24). Nelson’s studies suggest that co-operative investment of time and labour by staff and Boards in developing a strategic plan will increase the likelihood that the organisation will accomplish its mission more effectively. He believes that all organisations engage in some kind of planning, even if they do it badly. “Chief Executive Officers may be talented and energetic, but they often approach a strategic plan as yet another project to get out of the way” (1990:25). Solid planning is a signal of management competence and deals with the increasing complexity confronting cultural organisations including the keener competition for funding, the need to attract appropriate volunteers and the increased emphasis on a market orientation. The strategic plan provides direction, outlines goals and defines responsibilities of both staff and volunteers in the organisation.

Many managers fail to take advantage of the knowledge that is available to them. Mistakes could and should be prevented by the sharing of experience. Common problems can include those which arise from improper planning, unclear relationships, imbalance in the delegation of authority, information channels confused with lines of authority, responsibility without authority, careless use of staff and inappropriate programming and marketing. Organisational structure is planned for the ideal and then modified for the human factors which constitute the organisation’s culture.

Carroll (cited in Hage, 1988) discusses the knowledge categories the complete manager should have, which include knowledge of their own organisation and the industry in which they operate (generally more than one and overlapping); the market(s) served; a number of managerial theories and techniques and technical issues beyond managing; ability to learn from other industries; general knowledge and self knowledge. Leadership ability is a critical element and makes a significant contribution to management choices.

Non-profit institutions are central to society (Drucker, 1993:ix), having been marginalised in times when society was dominated by government and big business. They can do something which is different from either government or business. They still require attention to the details of management in the conventional business sense, particularly now, so that they can concentrate on their mission (Drucker, 1993:x) which is their primary motive for existence.

“Non-profit institutions themselves know that they need management all the more because they do not have a conventional bottom line” (Drucker, 1993:x). In the past ‘management’ meant ‘business’, and arts organisations did not see themselves as being ‘in business’. Their bottom line was the art, and not that function sought by
conventional business practice. Today, there appears to be a ‘management boom’ (Drucker, 1993:x) amongst community and arts organisations as they come to terms with their management needs to better serve their mission. There are distinctive characteristics which drive management to deliver services relevant to their constituency, obtain money to get their work done and effectively marketed, and specific strategies to consolidate the human resources committed to annual programmes.

Beyond the pervasive lack of an open sharing of known ways to advance non-profit organisations, a great deal of basic research and development of little known but potentially widely applicable operating concepts and approaches are needed. These communications, research and development problems must be addressed and solved if important information, ideas and approaches are to be brought to the attention of and implemented by leaders of these organisations.

“The pressures of running an effective and efficient non profit organisation in recent years have intensified dramatically” claims Connors (1988:xix). In Connors’ book, The Non-Profit Organisation Handbook, the American organisational experiences are expressed in terms of the complexities of leadership, management, resource maintenance, productivity and accountability. No quick or easy solutions are offered, but the initiatives of some organisations serve to demonstrate appropriate strategies for others. Three approaches are suggested to assist organisations in meeting the challenges and issues:

(i) become an opportunistic, entrepreneurial, competing organisation;
(ii) become a constrained, defensive, conserving organisation; and
(iii) become an open, co-operating and collaborating organisation, one that actively seeks to develop working relationships and partnerships with other organisations (Connors, 1988:xxi). These options face arts organisations in Australia at the end of the twentieth century. They are not exclusive, and may actually be complementary.

Committees, for example, when handled well, offer the advantage of shared group deliberation and judgement. They can be used to limit the fear of delegating too much authority to a single individual. Committees are useful in obtaining representation of interested groups in co-ordinating plans and policies and matters requiring transmission of information and motivation through group participation (Halff, 1988:72). There is a high cost in executive time and money and the tendency to water down decisions to the least common denominator of agreement. Other characteristics are indecision on the one hand and domination on the other which can result in self
destruction. There is a need to identify the successful employment of committees, as many cultural organisations utilise this strategy for operational management.

Industry associations, like the Australian Institute of Arts Administration, the Arts Law Centre of Australia, and the Arts, Media and Entertainment Association provide opportunities for information sharing, but generally there is a lack of clearinghouses for information for smaller organisations. It is common for one organisation to be grappling with a situation; working through a problem without contacting other organisations to establish whether they may have coped with a similar problem. There are continuous ‘re-inventions of the wheel’. Horne suggests that there is no such thing as “an arts community” (Horne, 1994:18). For him, most people “who worked in the fields assisted by the Australia Council didn’t have anything to do with people working in fields other than their own nor, often, with most of the people working in their own field” (Horne, 1994:18). Leadership, management and organisational resources and choices identified by the four case study organisations should be of interest to other arts administrators.

Research undertaken into management of theatres, music and dance companies, community arts and opera companies by etc. limited (sic.) in the United Kingdom, is reported in Developing Management in the Arts (1993). It indicated a general antipathy towards “Business Culture” amongst arts administrators and a deep seated conviction that good management practice is of secondary importance to the artistic imperative. The core of the report concerned management issues, management training and attitudes to business culture. “Things are different in the Arts”, responded managers. One manager is recorded in The Stage newspaper (1993:9) as saying, “staff in senior positions are often highly skilled and qualified in their area of specialism, but lack management skills such as planning or staff management.”

The report urged the arts sector to take a look at itself and how it is managed. The changing environment in which arts organisations are obliged to operate appears not to be matched by internal development of an appropriate business culture. So, what are the elements of appropriate management? There are unique elements to the industry. It contributes substantially to the nation’s balance of payments. It is made up of a variety of organisations. The skills and attitudes represented by these organisations can differ from the wider business community. The authors report a consistency in responses to the need for better management training to particularly address the issues of managing change, planning and strategy and increasing revenue.

Preliminary survey findings on arts management practices conducted in Australia by Palmer (1994) indicate significant data for this study. Two hundred and thirty seven arts managers responded, 24% came from the non-profit sector; 17% worked in theatre
and 56% were females. Members of the case study organisations contributed to the data collected. Using a scale derived from Quinn, et al (1988) *Beyond Rational Management*, managers were asked to rate themselves in relation to 32 different managerial behaviours. The ten most frequently used, according to Palmer’s survey, are:

(i) keep track of what goes on inside the organisation;
(ii) treat each individual in a sensitive, caring way;
(iii) show empathy and concern in dealing with subordinates;
(iv) encourage subordinates to share ideas in the organisation;
(v) protect continuity in day to day operations;
(vi) show concern for needs of subordinates;
(vii) search for innovations and potential improvements;
(viii) sees that the organisation delivers on stated goals;
(ix) bring sense of order into the organisation; and
(x) build team work among organisation members.

Palmer’s survey offers an explanation for the ‘gaps’ between the behaviours managers currently employ, and the behaviours which they believe they should be using. The top ten behaviours he notes (Palmer, 1994:2) were:

(i) get access to people who can make decisions which affect your organisation;
(ii) persuasively sell new ideas to higher-ups (e.g. Board, funding bodies, government departments, professional bodies);
(iii) carefully review detailed reports;
(iv) do problem solving in a creative, clever way;
(v) influence decisions made at higher levels (e.g. Board, funding bodies, government departments and professional bodies);
(vi) exert upward influence (e.g. to the Board, funding bodies, government departments and professional bodies);
(vii) clarify priorities and direction;
(viii) maintain a ‘results’ orientation in the organisation;
(ix) analyse written plans and schedules; and
(x) compare records, reports and so on to detect discrepancies.
Palmer found that 60% of organisations employed six or less people, with only 5% of organisations employing 100 or more people. Fifty percent of organisations had an operating budget of less than $200,000 in the previous financial year (Palmer, 1994:3). Forty nine percent of the arts manager respondents had been with their organisation for more than ten years, with 77% having an annual salary of less than $45,000.

Further, it is noted by Palmer that 47% of arts managers had been a manager outside the arts industry, with 16% coming from the wholesale/retail sector and 12% from community services. Sixty one percent of arts managers have been involved in the arts on either a paid or unpaid basis as an artist, performer or specialist in the artistic field they now work in. Responses (Palmer, 1994:4) to why these individuals moved into arts management include:

(i) combining business skills with artistic interest;
(ii) contributing to public awareness of the arts;
(iii) developing new skills;
(iv) influencing an organisation’s artistic strategy;
(v) always envisaged a career in arts management;
(vi) management is a natural progression from a career as an artist/performer/specialist; and
(vii) dissatisfaction with role as artist/performer/specialist.

Palmer (1994:5) found the following criteria significant for employment as an arts manager:

(i) good human relations skills;
(ii) good organiser;
(iii) creative thinker;
(iv) good networking skills;
(v) good strategic skills;
(vi) good financial skills;
(vii) specialist knowledge relevant to the organisation’s activities;
(viii) general management experience;
(ix) arts management experience;
(x) variety of experience in the arts industry; and
(xi) length of time in the arts industry.
The Australian Institute of Arts Administration (AIAA) (1994) newsletter articulates a desire to “enhance the quality and effectiveness of arts management in Australia”. One of the major areas of concern is the training of arts managers, as arts and cultural management becomes increasingly accepted as a viable career option. In their submission to the Senate Inquiry into Arts Education (July 1994), the AIAA (1994:3) recommended:

- that all degree and postgraduate courses in arts management be reviewed to assess their suitability for the industry;
- that an assessment of employment prospects in the industry be undertaken to clarify whether training offered reflects demand from prospective employees and needs of prospective employers;
- that some form of assessment or accreditation be considered to enable the quality of courses to be monitored;
- that prior learning be recognised in the granting of qualifications in arts management; and
- that industry bodies such as the AIAA be involved as much as possible in assessing and determining arts management education content and delivery.

“Leaders play a key role in maintaining and transmitting the culture” (Schien, cited in Pugh and Hickson, 1989:174). The mechanisms leaders use to manage cultural change are a key to organisational culture. The nature of this leadership, its impact on the corporate culture and the value shaping of the organisation have been identified Barnard (cited in Kennedy, 1991:20) as the responsibility of management.

More work is being done on assessing the effectiveness of management and leadership in arts organisations. Dundon (1992:64) acknowledges management is concerned with people.

> It is through its human resources that an organisation accomplishes its goals. The degree to which the individuals within the organisation identify with these goals and are personally motivated towards achieving them will have a significant bearing on the ease with which organisational success is achieved.

Administration of arts organisations is becoming increasingly formalised with the employment of non-artistic personnel with, for example, business or legal work experience. Robert Breckman, writing in The Stage (August 5, 1993), suggests “the administrator is becoming more financially oriented than ever ... the administrator’s
brief is to survive”. He claims that “in an ideal hierarchy an administrator should rise from within the ranks, but job specialisation has to prevail and this is just not possible and is why arts administration courses seem to proliferate”. He questions the lack of opportunities to “sit back and think and plan” because administrators are “too busy going from one crisis to another”.

The management culture adopted by an arts organisation is generally achieved through a process of shared understanding of aims and objectives. The belief system which sustains modern organisations emphasises rationality (Morgan, 1986:134). An organisation’s “legitimacy in the public eye often depends on its ability to demonstrate rationality and objectivity in action”. Morgan’s cultural metaphor opens the way for alternative approaches to management concepts and practices. The behavioural styles of management undergoes a great deal of scrutiny in modern literature.

Chester Barnard (1934, cited in Kennedy, 1991:20) distinguished management effectiveness and management efficiency, and argued that to be effective, an organisation’s purpose or goals must be accepted by all the contributors to its system of effort. The willingness of all concerned to co-operate in a common purpose was essential to an organisation’s survival. He emphasised the value of communications and suggested three basic principles:

- everyone should know what channels of communication are;
- everyone should have access to a formal channel of communication; and
- lines of communication should be as short and direct as possible.

Warren Bennis’ work on leadership in *The Unconscious Conspiracy – Why Leaders can’t Lead* (1976) defines leadership as “the capacity to create a compelling vision and translate it into action and sustain it” (cited in Kennedy, 1991:24).

Hands-on, value driven management is seen as the single most important key to excellence (Peters and Waterman, 1982, cited in Pugh and Hickson, 1989:105). Peters and Waterman suggest that the shared values of all participants has far more to do with the organisation’s achievements than economic resources, technological developments, organisational structure or control systems.

The 1990s was predicted to be “the decade of women in leadership” (Naisbitt and Aburdene, 1990, cited in Henderson and Bialeschki, 1991:281). In their feminist analysis of trends in women in recreation leadership Henderson and Bialeschki explore the notion that leadership is not necessarily associated with a single person’s traits but with the “functions of leadership” (Jordan, 1989, cited Henderson and
Bialeschki, 1991:283). These typical functions are: (i) those which deal with tasks, and (ii) those that address human relations (Stogdill, 1974, cited in Henderson and Bialeschki, 1991:283). Questions of how the traditional male model of leadership deals with the different meanings of leadership related to practice, process and power as demonstrated by female style is under investigation. Different is often associated with deficiency (Case, 1988, cited in Henderson and Bialeschki, 1991:284) and the discussion of power within organisation has raised the structure of organisation (Kanter, 1983) and the examination of new models of leadership within them. Kanter (1977) raises a number of questions about how gender relates to leadership. There continues to be needs for exploration of co-operative structures and shared leadership, points which have emerged from studies concern the differences in values held by males and females which produce differences in perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours particularly in leadership situations. Females are more concerned with the decision making process (i.e. human relations) while males would tend to be more concerned with the outcomes of the decision (i.e. task behaviour) (Eagly, 1987, cited in Henderson and Bialeschki, 1991:286). The new leadership requires an examination of the role of power; where power-to differs from power-over.

While there is conflicting evidence as to whether the management styles of women differ from men (Hearn and Parkin, 1988, cited in Frisby and Brown, 1991:309), the study undertaken by Case (1988) suggests that men and women display different modes of communication, different leadership styles and different ways of presenting themselves because they have different cultural histories. Case studied managers found that women tended to use a facilitative/personal style which was relational and integrative in nature, while men tended to use an authoritative style that was directive, depersonalising and commanding (Frisby and Brown, 1991:309). The issue of women in management has been pursued, as two of the case study CEOs are women and interest in the influence of an organisation’s leadership is seen as a fundamental factor in the determination of an organisation’s culture.

“Conventional assumptions about women’s marginal relationship to particular modes of cultural production have tended to go unchallenged” (Dever, 1994:ix). Her observations, and those of others, on the ways in which women were positioned or positioned themselves historically to the leading cultural institutions of the day are developed in Wallflowers and Witches, where traditional paradigms are re-valuated. The traditional status construct in terms of “muse, mistresses, models and scribes” (Dever, 1994:xi) can be juxtaposed with the experience and contribution of contemporary women in the case study organisations.

Australian and international research on community based management was addressed at a 1993 conference arranged by the Centre for Australian Community Organisations and Management (CACOM) in Sydney. The Australian Third Sector
Research publications are compiling useful material for a framework for investigation of the strategies most effective in dealing with volunteers in organisations.

Handy (1985) applied his research of management to the non-profit sector. His evaluation of the role of volunteers, the culture of volunteer organisations and emergence of distinctive styles in each organisation has implications for this present study. His work draws attention to the participant’s fundamental equality within the organisation and how management deals with this. Boards of directors are the lifeblood of the non-profit organisation according to Quinn (1991:50). His research in the United States on non-profit organisations identified a need for volunteers “to assume many operational responsibilities of the organisation, including programme creation, marketing, fundraising and eventually hiring staff”. Boards have to mature with the rest of their organisations.

Tonge (1993:65) identified a number of keys to the success of organisations which maintain a respectful relationship with their host community. While his work was essentially about managing tourism associations, it substantially parallels the need for members of community based organisations to be mindful of community expectations and perceptions.

He suggests that associations should recognise the importance for their internal operations and the perceptions held externally of reliability by providing a consistent standard of performance and dependability; responsiveness by demonstrating a positive attitude to its supporters and displaying a spirit of co-operation and willingness to provide the highest standard of service; competence by indicating the clearly requisite skills and knowledge; professionalism; innovation through developing and marketing their product or service and stimulating community support; credibility; efficiency with special emphasis on financial management; access through approachability and ease of contact for advice or assistance; courtesy through sincere, friendly attention from staff and members (Tonge, 1993:65).

Financial contributions from the public sector to arts organisations create a particular environment within which some managements must operate. The McLeay report (1986) generated a dynamic (anecdotal) response from artists and administrators. The practicalities of government patronage has implications for the planning and sound administration of arts organisations. It affects the contribution box office makes to the overall revenue base, the search for sponsorship and has implications for the artistic context in which the organisation operates. Criticism of the role of the Australia Council is voiced in reports from Diana Simmonds and Maria Prerauer in The Bulletin (December 14, 1993:79), where the control of creativity is deemed now to be vested in the bureaucracy, rather than with the artists. There are claims that the policy changes
are reflecting ideological stances of ‘political correctness’ and slogans like ‘pursuit of excellence’, ‘peer group assessment’ and ‘arms length policy’ provide little satisfaction to arts organisations. British cultural activist, Owen Kelly has contributed to the critique of community and community arts expectations and practice. His Manifesto for Cultural Democracy (1986) discussed the approaches to practice and funding.

Robyn Kershaw, the General Manager of Belvoir Street Theatre, questioned the lack of artistic merit of project based funding and suggests, “it is not a good thing, it is a de facto artistic directorship. It negates the role of management and of infrastructure in providing the environment for performers” (Simmonds, 1993:80) the development of a National Cultural Strategy continues to be on the political agenda.

Anderson (1992:90) suggests:

There still seems to be a clear need for more subtle use of the current arts research base, and a far broader critical engagement with the research and policy field.

The McLeay report (cited in Parsons, 1987:37) noted “there is almost universal agreement that the arts provide public benefits” and “it would be foolish to forego the additional public benefits from the arts that government support can provide merely because we cannot agree on their precise nature or on the best way to maximise them.”

McDonnell (1992) chronicled the development of the national arts industry, and he continues to research trends. His work on festivals (1993) has implications for artists and organisations wishing to provide innovative, challenging programmes to suit specific criteria demanded by festival administrators. He expresses concern for the diminution of the development of unique product which appears to be replaced by a universal package offering patrons of festivals little opportunity to differentiate place of origin.

Associated with the increased attention to fundraising by arts organisations, is a clearer line on the need for research for more effective marketing plans. Pressure is brought to bear by the corporate sector when seeking to invest in arts product. The drop by 18% (Australia Council, 1994) of investment by the corporate sector in arts activity suggests the need for increased commitment to research the opportunities and partnerships sponsorship has to offer both parties. Reports of studies by McCall (1991:12) on events audiences clearly document the implications for planning and marketing programmes.
“Consortia marketing”, a favoured administrator’s buzzword in the early 1990s, had demonstrable success recorded in the United States and with Arts Marketing Consortia (Wales) in the United Kingdom. Wright (1991:6) reports on the experience of the 14 Greater Attractions of Sydney (GAS) which collaborated in targeting markets and promoting product. He raises the difficulties experienced with co-ordination and leadership, levels of authority, sharing information, funding, and potential conflicts of diverse interests. This all has implications for the interaction of arts organisations with external agencies like local government, the tourism sector as well as other arts bodies.

**Cultural Tourism**

Statistical information documents the rising participation rates in Australian cultural activities. From 1971–1991, there was a 400% increase to 894 in the number of listings in Ozarts, the leading guide to arts organisations in Australia (Martin, 1992:4). The growth in the arts industry over two decades is recorded in *Artburst* compiled by Gary Martin (Australia Council, 1992). The present four case study organisations were all established during this period of unprecedented growth.

International visitors have expressed strong interest in increasing their contact with Australia’s cultural heritage. *Arts participation by international visitors to Australia*, (Spring, 1991) documents the growing interaction. Key findings supplement the International Visitor Survey (IVS) conducted by the Bureau of Tourism Research (BTR) about the frequency and reasons for attendance at cultural places and events. For example, significant percentages, 32% (33,065) of 15–24 year olds and 22% (22,379) of 25–29 year olds, are substantial contributors to the total international visitors to live performances. Sixteen percent and 14% respectively are accommodated in Sydney’s inner suburbs (in backpacker hostels) in close proximity to venues utilised by case study organisations and have impacted on planning and marketing.

According to Spring (1993:8), key factors relating to cultural tourism from international visitors’ studies include the peak period for attendance is October to December; those markets consistently showing higher interest in the arts are from the United Kingdom/Ireland, Europe and United States/Canadian markets. These ‘long haul’ tourist spend longer periods in Australia, are generally independent travellers, visit friends and relatives and generally have a high interest in arts and history.

The former Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories (DASETT) commissioned a study, in 1991, designed to:

*contribute to the growing interest in cultural tourism and provide a firm basis for its future consideration by both the arts/heritage and tourism industries.*

(Brokensha and Guldberg, 1992)
That study documents the agencies considered potentially significant players in the national cultural tourism debate. By naming the elements which could contribute to active promotion of the nation’s cultural heritage, it provokes concern for effective connection to be made between the arts and tourism.

In the foreword, Brokensha and Guldberg (1992) suggested that:

*While most recommendations focus on Commonwealth Government responsibilities and to a lesser extent those States and Territories, many of the discussions and findings of the study are relevant to those tourism and cultural organisations interested in expanding their involvement in this field.*

The changing emphasis in tourism policy, planning and practice in Australia has implications in marketing, programming and management practice for arts organisations. The three main elements of the consultant’s approach to research for the DASETT document, *Cultural Tourism in Australia* (Brokensha and Guldberg), personal interviews, and review of Australian sources material and review of overseas literature, is a process similar to that undertaken by this writer. The programmes of the four case study organisations serve as a response to the major thrusts of government tourist research. The significant cultural resources identified include sub-cultural diversity, festivals, live performances, Aboriginal heritage and regionally specific development. Participants in this ‘new’, ‘alternative’ and ‘cultural’ tourism are seeking “*authentic, informed, quality experiences*” (Brokensha and Guldberg, 1992:30). The development of cultural tourism policies at regional, State and Federal level is supported by declarations in the *Creative Nation* (1994) policy document encouraging the heightened awareness of the collaborative nature of packaging the arts for tourism consumption.

The Commonwealth Department of Tourism’s (1992) National Tourism Strategy and the Cultural Tourism Project (1993) indicate that a “significant and increasing proportion of both domestic and international visitors are looking for cultural experiences as a major component of their holidays” (1994:99). The Australian Tourism Commission nominated 1995 as the year of Celebration of Australian Art and Culture and 1996 as the year of Festivals. Forty eight percent of international tourists to Australia were interested in seeing and learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture (Australia Council, 1993). If tourists are a significant client group for the full spectrum of our cultural industry, then it is useful to explore the response to this proposition by the four organisations in this study.
The quality of the arts–tourism relationship is raised in current literature. Hughes (1989) suggests that this relationship may not be altogether beneficial and that long term undesirable effects on the arts may result. There is concern expressed for the commercialisation and trivialisation of the arts and the need to satisfy the market rather than the artistic aspiration. British research indicates that arts organisations will search for audiences among tourists (Vaughan, 1977 and Myerscough, 1988, cited in Hughes, 1989:89) and these organisations may flourish and wider economies may benefit.

Communities may invest tax dollars or various types of in-kind public assistance into festivals and events for the economic benefits accrued (Crompton and McKay, 1994:33). It is anticipated the event will attract visitors from outside the area and that their expenditures while they are there will inject new wealth into the community. The scarcity of public money has led to increased scrutiny of its allocation. As a result, producing an economic impact study to demonstrate that economic returns will exceed its investment has become almost a de rigeur requirement for event organisers (Crompton and McKay, 1994:33). They define economic impact as the net economic change in a host community, excluding non-market values, which results from spending attributable to the event. He suggests that sometimes these studies are generated as advocacy documents to legitimise the event’s public support as much to demonstrate the economic benefits.

The literature concerning special events, hallmark events and festivals is growing. Hall (1990:18) suggests the events are the new image builders and the increased interest in events comes about because:

- there is a desire by regions, cities and communities to put themselves on the tourist map through positive imaging;
- there operates a keep-up-with-the-Jones’ or follow-the-leader effect by which one community or city seeks to emulate the success of another’s event or festival;
- tourism is used by governments as a means of economic development;
- there is greater segmentation and specialisation within the tourism context;
- there is a greater availability of government grants for sports, arts and culture;
- the use of the profile and image created by events attract investment;
- there is a desire by communities to celebrate themselves, promote civic pride and/or overcome adverse circumstances; and
- there is a change in the nature of leisure in western society.
There are examples of the partnership between the arts and tourism providing the justification for heightened debate on what constitutes ‘cultural tourism’. "Celebration is a glue which can bind a community" writes Graeme Dunstan when discussing the contribution community festivals can make to cultural tourism. Community based celebrations can be a powerful attractor and provide the competitive advantage as a tourism destination. Dunstan’s Laws of Celebration suggest that “to celebrate is to be human, if not divine; that celebration creates community; and the more profound the sharing of meaning in the celebration and the more beautiful the art, the more intimately bonded is that community” (Dunstan, 1994). A recent Coastwise project on the Northern Rivers of NSW indicated interest in the area as a tourism destination because of the cultural diversity (Dutton et al, 1994). With visitors wanting more opportunities to do what the locals do, as part of their interest in participating in an authentic, participatory experience, festivals are providing the arts–tourism link. Festivals which provide individuals with an opportunity to reach out from their routines and participate in the production of a celebration showcase that community’s creativity. The resultant spectacle and associated rituals act as powerful attractors according to Getz (1988).

Mayfield and Crompton (1995) have recently identified eight generic community reasons for staging festivals. Festivals are one of the fastest growing types of tourist attraction. Their festival study indicates recreation/socialisation, culture/education, tourism, internal revenue generation, natural resources, agriculture, external revenue generation and community pride/spirit (1995:37). A case study analysis of festival management by Frisby and Getz (1989:7) sought to determine how the tourism potential of festivals can be reached. They suggest, “the ability of festivals to become successful tourist attractions depends in part on their goals and the way in which they are managed”. They cite Katz (1981) on the “natural history of organisations”, the challenges for managers of the product life cycle (Lovelock and Weinberg, 1984) and the balances required from the perspective of tourism, organisational and community development.

Behaviours adopted result from reactions to tourist numbers and behaviour rather than any cultural gap (Ap and Compton, 1993:43). A community’s involvement in tourism development is akin to the ideology of participation in urban and regional planning (Prentice, 1993:218) and Murphy suggests that an involvement must be demonstrated before commitments to tourism development are made. He used terms like community approach (1985) and community driven (1985) to indicate a legitimisation of tourism development through a partnership.
The relevance of the arts to contemporary Australian life has been investigated by recent Australia Council surveys and has generated considerable public debate. McDonnell (1993) reported on surveys of public opinion which asked adult Australians to establish the value they place on their cultural life. It found that there was increasing interest in participation in cultural events.

2.3 Characteristics of Management Culture

The Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia, the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd, Theatre North Inc and Belvoir Street Theatre/Company B have come into the arts or culture industry during the last 20 years. The strategic management structures of each used to best deliver the service they wished to provide share the common characteristics.

While Porter (1991) does not specifically discuss the arts industry, he suggests that new industries can be created by, amongst other things, “other economic and sociological changes that elevate a new product or service to the level of a potentially viable business opportunity” (1991:613). The growth of an arts industry in Australia is dependent on operators identifying what sort of business they are in, in the first place, distinguishing what Mintzberg calls “the core business” (Mintzberg, 1991:70). Each organisation needs to establish a position where they are least vulnerable to the variables outlined by Porter.

As the arts and culture industry emerges, a proliferation of newly formed companies seek to establish themselves. They compete for custom to attract the discretionary income of the wider community. When the structure of an industry is not well established or defined it is a risky business for new organisations to collect resources and be creative. Each of the study organisations committed themselves to a philosophical stance initially, so their entry into the arts industry was not always determined by conventional business decisions. Timing has been identified as a significant strategic issue in determining how an organisation will enhance its image and reputation as its establishes itself as a pioneer. It will enter the industry at a time when they can attract customer loyalty through the provision of a unique service.

Porter (1991:653) suggests that as an industry matures its products become more of the same. His model of industry competitiveness and analysis offers arts managers cause for reflection. The arts industry will deliberate over responses to changes in practices as transitions are experienced. He cites “resentment and irrational reaction to price competition (‘we will not be beaten on price’)” and “resentment and irrational reaction to changes in industry practices (‘they are hurting the industry’)” as features of
organisations clinging to higher quality as an excuse for not meeting aggressive pricing and marketing moves of competitors.

Morgan’s (1986) work builds on the theories and explanations of organisational life. He suggests that metaphors can be used in better understanding organisations. He explores organisations as cultures with shared meaning, understanding and sense making (1986:111).

The formal analysis and diagnosis of organisations by Morgan is explained by developing images from a number of different metaphors. Any one metaphor can be misleading though exploring how cultures are created and sustained in machines and games, may be useful in making sense of organisational culture. In Images of Organisation (1986) he suggests,

> research in a wide variety of fields has demonstrated that metaphor exerts a formative influence on science, on our language and on how we think, as well as on how we express ourselves on a day to day basis

(Morgan, 1986:12)

additionally,

> many of our taken-for-granted ideas about organisations are metaphorical, even when we don’t recognise them as such ... we frequently talk of organisations as if they were machines designed to achieve predetermined goals and objectives, and which should operate smoothly and efficiently ... as a result ... we often attempt to organise and manage them in a mechanistic way, forcing their human qualities into a background role.

(Morgan, 1986:12)

There is a great deal of popular literature (Drucker, 1993; Handy, 1985; Handy, 1988; Kanter, 1983) which indicates to executives the qualities required for their efforts to be judged successful. These include integrity, self confidence, tenacity, patience, determination, high energy, above average organisational and administrative skills – including the ability to delegate and envision – along with fiscal knowledge. These people are to be strong communicators with a deep commitment to the organisation, its mission, members and employees. Other key attributes, qualities or abilities which are seen as critical involve the capacity to be participative, or at least consultative in approach to problem solving and decision making; to attract and retain superb staff; to demonstrate an appreciation of the needs of volunteers, staff and the wider community; to demonstrate a respect for others wishing to fulfil their potential. These characteristics are as applicable for cultural management, as any other enterprise. There is evidence that they are employed by leaders of the case study organisations as they seek to satisfy the aims of the membership.
Questions of the options and beliefs which prevail in a workplace suggested by Koys and DeCotiis (1991:265) include the following categories:

autonomy, cohesion, trust, pressure, support, recognition, fairness and innovation.

Through individual responses to whether individual workers in an organisation are able (for instance) to determine their own work procedures, schedule their own work activities and set performance standards:

- or if co-workers help each other out at work, get along well, take a personal interest in one another and whether there is a lot of team spirit;
- or whether individuals can count on confidentiality in their work dealings, and co-workers carry through commitments to projects and give good advice to one another;
- or there are too many opportunities from burn out, little time to relax, too many work related problems to be solved;
- or support is offered when needed in the workplace;
- or individuals receive recognition for good work performances;
- or there is reasonableness in work practice and staff relations, no favourites and people are not given a hard time;
- or individuals are encouraged to develop new ideas and improve methods of workplace activity.

A picture of the workplace culture emerges from analysis of responses.

The investigation undertaken by the Employment Relations Research Group based on the work of Peters and Waterman (1982) concluded that “possession of a specific set of beliefs or values was one of the most important characteristics of excellent organisations. These beliefs, of which everyone in the organisation had a basic understanding were coupled with emphasis on the things which the organisation did”.

Peters and Waterman (1982) identified seven specific beliefs:

- the importance of having fun through one’s work;
- being the best at what the company does;
• people in the organisation should be innovators and should take risks without feeling that they will be punished if they fail;
• the importance of attending to details in doing a job;
• the importance of people as individuals;
• superior quality and service; and
• the importance of informality to improve the flow of communication through the organisation.

### 2.4 Characteristics of Cultural Management

A significant feature of the mixed economy that is cultural management practice in Australia is the pre-occupation with public funding. The relationship between the arts and the State is problematic. At the three levels of government there are agencies whose actions and terms of reference impinge on the day to day conduct of many arts enterprises. The areas of government intervention, policy making, planning and support for the arts is one of constant interest to producers of arts in this country. With whom power and responsibility for the development of the arts in Australia rests is the fundamental cultural management and finance question.

There needs to be policy to provide the rationale for government intervention in the public interest. The “Creative Nation” cultural document launched by the Prime Minister in 1994 is a document to be used as a policy. It is the framework which the Federal government uses to contact those actively involved with the nation’s cultural life. Donald Horne (1994:17) is sceptical of the document and suggests three principles which could provide the basis of a cultural policy and transform a shopping list into something more akin to a Charter of Cultural Rights contributed to the document by the Panel of Eminent persons. Horne offers:

For a nation, it is essential that citizens should have material that helps them think knowledgeably and seriously about themselves and their common existence;

for a lively liberal society, it is essential that our human appetite for curiosity and wonder be served by a diversity of new intellectual and artistic works, and that we should all have a wide range of access to both to the Australian cultural heritage and to the general human heritage;

for a genuinely democratic society it is essential that all citizens have opportunities to active personal engagement in artistic and intellectual experience.

(Horne, 1994:17)
The constant dilemma for cultural managers accepting government subsidy for their organisation’s annual artistic programme and its administration is their inability to offer secure employment opportunities for qualified professional staff. The lack of reliable ongoing financial resources “prevents an organisation offering full time, permanent employment; prevents advertisement and recruitment against rational assessment of duties and workload” (Bangarra Dance Theatre Annual Report, 1992).

Funding bodies get blamed when individuals and organisations fail to fulfil goals. Why? This may provide a convenient excuse (Woodward, 1995:13.1) or may be a reflection of the dilemma artists and arts organisations feel in the construct of ‘clients’, like welfare recipients being dumped by, or not adequately funded by the State. Critics and advocates of arms length funding by peer assessment still see the State as the leader, the financial master. The arts are attuned to the dictates and the criteria proffered by governments.

Individuals and groups often feel like victims through the current relationship which reinforces the welfare mentality. Debate continues as to whether the arms length funding decisions made through peer assessment are best for the arts practice in this country, or whether it is an insurance for the purposes of accountability. Woodward (1995:13.1) sees a flaw in the current system which has artists as advocates for the arts becoming part of the State apparatus and affording loyalty to a new group, rather than their peers in the industry. The peers have become, in fact, the funding group. Semantics involved with justifying cultural concerns bind cultural managers. What intellectual frameworks will measure and prioritise annual applications for the limited funding available? Is the peer assessment a response to criteria devised from within government, from within the cultural/arts industry or collaboratively established?

Some funding for cultural organisations might be attracted on the basis of it providing training opportunities. Unfortunately, most organisations have “neither the time nor the resident expertise to provide professional training; and the staff thus employed, however willing, have not been able to offer the company the administrative competency that it has needed” (Bangarra Dance Theatre Annual Report, 1992).

The role of box office and satisfying the market is another key to cultural management. What do the punters want? How do organisations attract more bums for the seats? There is an increasing market orientation in the preparation of annual programmes by cultural organisations. The availability of data on demographics, tourists, income distribution and recreation trends assists cultural organisations in the promotion of their work. Government funding is increasingly linked to the capacity of the organisation to generate considerable amounts of box office income. Promotion,
pricing, and partnership options with peers, tourism operators and the business world are increasingly being taken up by cultural managers. The role of the media, print, audio visual and film are all contributing to the raised profile of arts practice.

There appears to be no shortage of commitment to the preparation and presentation of quality cultural product by artists and technicians. Arts education and training is widely available at a high standard at primary, secondary and tertiary level. There is on-the-job training and opportunities for ongoing professional development in Australia and overseas.

The role of arts administration in contemporary Australia cannot be stated simply. Pick (1980:11) identified the allegiances into which administrators may be drawn when they effectively deal with the delivery of arts and cultural services. These include the administrator as artist, as partner of the artist, as servant of the artist, as director of the artist, as servant of the State (through arms length funding applicable to artists as well), as servant of the audience and administrator of a building. Any combination of these roles can cause conflicting claims on time, energy, and ambitions. Pick (1980:13) suggests that administrative roles include manager of routines, problem solver, entrepreneur and risk bearer and idealist. Administrators exhibit these four roles to varying degrees. The latter role is evident in each of the four case study organisation administrators where a degree of inspiration is required for staff to work for the money and conditions available in the arts. It appears to be an unteachable quality.

There is a growing acceptance, interest and understanding of the nature and integrity of the arts and their contribution to the fabric of Australian life. The role of technology and the media has heightened access and participation in arts and cultural practice. Statistical data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australia Council and the Cultural Ministers Council’s Statistical Advisory Group indicate increased involvement as employees and audience attendance. The ABS records (1994) from the 1991 Census indicate the number of people working in a cultural occupation as their main job was almost 120,000.

The increase in the number of arts administration training programmes and improvement in the substance of these programmes ensures that there is a greater preparedness for the tasks involved in cultural management. The links between the business community and arts organisations ensure that there is a clearer understanding of business imperatives and the benefits of the connection include advisory support, Board membership and sponsorship arrangements. Partnerships between the general business community and the arts include in-kind support and direct financial investment.
Cultural tourism is part of the data collectors’ vocabulary. It refers to the access for and participation of domestic and international visitors in the cultural life of the nation. There is growing recognition that the motivation for some travel is the observation, education and participation in the ways people do things in specific locations and particular times. There is evidence that festivals and special arts events, like performances, exhibitions and demonstrations, workshops and seminars are attractive to visitors as well as residents. Cultural organisations are dealing with the opportunities and challenges accordingly.

2.5 Conclusion

Chapter Two has reviewed a broad spectrum of the literature associated with issues in cultural management. Studies conducted into the operational aspects of non-profit organisations have been acknowledged, but few specifically involved with the delivery of cultural services are documented. There is little evidence of one model being appropriate for all cultural organisations and much to suggest that while a conventional business life cycle exists, the options for management choices are wide open. The characteristics of cultural management in each of the four case study organisations can be seen to be represented in material reviewed in this chapter. Each of the businesses borrows from common business practice. There are specific needs of the constituency of not for profit organisations which are addressed in ways peculiar to each organisation. It is only after an exploration of the four case studies will any commonalities be evident in the operation and delivery of cultural services. The trends in organisational culture, cultural business environments, management options and cultural tourism have been specifically highlighted. Clearly the literature supports the notion that the internal culture of an organisation borrows from the external environments in which the organisation functions and is influenced by the founders (or early leaders) and the particular artform practice it wishes to support. Schein’s model is substantiated by the literature. The Chapter also drew attention to the characteristics of current cultural management practices.
Chapter Three

Research Methods
3.1 Introduction – Case Research

This Chapter outlines the methods of data collection used in this study and the theory behind them. The framework to assess the management culture of four case study organisations is outlined. The framework proposed by Schien (1990) offered a number of research questions which have been included in the case study approach to assessing the management culture of cultural management in Australia. On a superficial level an investigation of an organisation can involve the artifacts and creations of the organisation through technology, the art and behaviour patterns. These items are visible but can sometimes be difficult to decipher.

Researchers are faced with questions concerning the status displayed by these representations of the organisation. They can investigate whether the group has an office, staff and equipment; what product does the organisation produce; what is the level of language employed by the organisation; what are the meanings of the observed behaviours; are clear lines of authority demonstrated by formal organisational structures and does the organisation have a corporate strategy which will include a marketing plan?

The researcher needs to establish the fundamental values which bind the group under investigation. The origin of these commonly held beliefs needs exploration. The awareness of those contacted in the organisation to any differences of values held in a formal and informal way need to be addressed. Schien (1990) suggests values can be tested either in the context of the physical environment or through social consensus. He alerts researchers to the changes which can happen over time in an organisation and the influence of founders and leaders on the setting and maintenance of values and culture.

While underlying assumptions of an organisation’s culture can be explored by asking questions about how a particular organisation relates to its host community; or how consensus is determined within the organisation or how decisions are made or how heroes or villians are identified, it can be difficult to distinguish the external culture from the internal culture of an organisation. It is difficult to search for these elements within the wider society, let alone searching for the unique features of an organisation. However, by adopting a case study approach and investigating four organisations, a comparative evaluation may reveal how sub-cultures express their values within a broader cultural context.
The research propositions presented in this study provide a basis for the development of practical applications. A systematic comparative approach has been taken in observing four organisations. With little research on the topic of management culture in cultural organisations, it could be expected that practices documented here can be utilised by interested parties. By observing and measuring the key variables of culture in organisations data may be used to shape new organisations.

Testing or diagnosing an organisation’s culture, let alone its management culture, can be an exercise filled with risks. The investigation of what makes an organisation special, what motivates employees and volunteers, or what role models have been used in strategic and organisational management, what performance criteria are utilised can be fraught with the risk of being side-tracked. The stories shared by personnel could easily have diverted attention to issues concerning the political concerns of the sub-cultures, the economic vagaries of government funding and other external environments which could alter the thrust of the investigation; drawing attention away from the central need to investigate the organisation’s culture from the inside.

More precise observations can be made by including a close look at the physical setting of the organisation’s operational base. Literature produced by the organisation about itself, and how its efforts are reported elsewhere provide a base for qualitative assessment to determine aspects of the organisational culture. Interviewing members of the organisation at all levels and listening to their responses are ways of better understanding how the company greets and treats strangers; how members spend their time; how a career path progression may be developed; how long people are in their jobs and investigate the anecdotes and stories which can be a reference for the organisation’s annual programme. Information from surveys administered create ‘road maps’ for managers to note methods and approaches which have been successful, useful and practical.

The case study became the preferred strategy as ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions were posed as the writer had little control over the events associated with all the organisations involved in the real life context of cultural management (Yin, 1989:13). Case studies are frequently used as a research tool as it uniquely contributes to knowledge of individual, organisational, social and political phenomena (Yin, 1989:14). The distinctive features of the case study strategy include its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence, documents, artifacts, interviews and observations. The use of multiple sources of evidence has allowed the writer to address a broad range of historical, attitudinal and observational issues. This has assisted in establishing the
validity of the process. There will be a more corroborative model established as a result of these different sources of information.

The case study method “has long been stereotyped as a weak sibling among social science methods” (Yin, 1989:10). Case study designs may use qualitative or quantitative data, they may be single or multiple case studies and may explore, describe or predict. Yin believes:

*A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.*

(Yin, 1989:23)

The five components of research design suggested as central by Yin (1989:29) are:

(i) a study’s question – need to clarify precisely the nature of the study question;

(ii) its propositions – “each proposition directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of the study” (1989:30). The propositions can be compared to research questions, in that they identify what needs to be addressed;

(iii) unit of analysis – is related to defining what the ‘case’ is. The case may be an individual person, an event or organisation. for any topic chosen, specific time boundaries are needed;

(iv) linking data to propositions – e.g. pattern-matching, where information from the case is linked to some theoretical proposition (Yin, 1989:33); and

(v) criteria for interpreting a study’s design – up to the researcher.

In this study, the propositions (stated in Chapter One) generated the questions which were used by the researcher in contact with each case study organisation. These informed the questions which were included in the survey and the interpretation of print material and artifacts presented by each organisation.

Utilising these components could result in the formulation of a preliminary theory related to the study topic. Yin nominates three (1989:37):

(i) individual theories – e.g. relating to individual development, personality, learning, cognitive behaviour, disability and interpersonal interactions;
(ii) organisational theories – e.g. related to organisational structure, bureaucracies, organisational performance; and

(iii) social theories – e.g. related to urban development, group behaviour, cultural institutions and market place functions.

3.2 Data Sources

This study collected evidence from six sources. When conducting each case study the data collection included:

- documents;
- archival records;
- interviews;
- direct observations;
- participant–observation; and
- physical artifacts.

For case studies, documents assist in the corroboration of evidence from other sources. Each of the four organisations have prepared comprehensive administrative documents, studies, notices, reports, promotional material and have generated considerable media articles. Lists, surveys, records of operation and organisational maps and charts comprise some of the archival material utilised in this study. Two interview sessions were included in the investigation. The senior executives, as well as staff and volunteers were involved in open-ended and focused questioning. The writer was able to directly observe the operation of each of the organisations during visits to the case study sites. Observations ranged from formal to casual data collection activities. The writer was able to undertake participant–observation during a ‘work experience’ visit to each organisation. Finally, evidence as physical artifacts were also collected from each of the organisations. This included merchandising, documents and products of the organisation.

Yin (1989:85) discusses these six sources of evidence upon which case studies can be based. Documentation, particularly, is helpful to verify spelling, titles, specific details from which inferences can be made and investigated further. Yin believes these six sources of evidence can be maximised if three principles are adhered to (1989:95-103). These principles assist with problems of validity and reliability of a case study and were utilised in this research.

(i) **Using Multiple Sources of Evidence.** This will facilitate a depth of understanding in the investigation. It is likely to be more convincing and
accurate if several sources of evidence are utilised. Each of the present organisations were able to provide diverse materials for examination.
(ii) Creating a Case Study Database. This is related to organising and documenting the data collected for the case studies. Yin suggests, "that every case study project should strive to develop a formal retrievable database so that ... other investigators can review the evidence directly and not be limited to written reports" (Yin, 1989:98-99).

(iii) Maintaining a Chain of Evidence. This principle assists in increasing the reliability of the information by maintaining a chain of evidence, similar to that in criminology. It provides an opportunity for cross referencing from the various sources.

The challenge is to make sense of the massive amounts of data collected through the qualitative enquiry approach, to reduce the volume of information, to identify the significant patterns and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal.

Patton offers a simple method of analysing case study evidence. The three steps he suggests (1990:388) are:

(i) assemble the raw data;
(ii) construct a case record; and
(iii) write a case study narrative. The case study is presented chronologically or thematically, indicating a holistic portrayal of a programme.

Patton (1990:375) suggests the first task in qualitative analysis is a descriptive one and must be separated from interpretation. Qualitative data analysis needs to be focused and revert to the research question. Patton identified that "many researchers neglect to do this, thus loosing the focus and clarity of the research" (1990:375).

Two data analysis strategies suggested by Yin (1989) are:

(i) relying on theoretical propositions, which simply follow the propositions which led to the case study. They would have shaped the data collection plan and would therefore reveal relevant priorities. Attention is focused on certain data.

(ii) developing a case description offers a framework for organising the case study. This is less preferable, but serves as an alternative when theoretical propositions are absent. When the original purpose of the case study is descriptive, the framework will also organise the analysis, much like a table of contents.
Proponents of the organisational culture perspective do not believe that quantitative, experimental-type logical-positivist, scientific research is especially useful for studying organisations (Ott, 1989:2). Qualitative research methods are being employed more and more to identify the basic assumptions of organisations. This study utilises a mixture of methodology to better evaluate the culture of each organisation – through interviews, reading of organisations’ records, surveys and participant involvement and observation.

The qualitative evaluation method employed in this research involved the writer in such strategies suggested above by being on-site (from where the organisation operates) to observe, talk with people and go through the organisation’s records or documentation to gather information.

Getz (1993:14) proposes the following questions as useful guides to measuring and organisation’s culture. Who founded the organisation and why? Were the founders revered or reviled? Who are the core leaders and what do they believe? What has changed in the organisation, especially with regard to its professionalisation? Do the group’s actions and outcomes reflect its stated purposes and goals? Is there evidence of an ideology or attempts to selectively recruit and indoctrinate members? What types of people does the organisation attract? Have there been crises and how have they been resolved? Have patterns of responses and ways of doing things emerged? What is the public’s perception of the organisation?

The research method is people oriented. The process of discovery through observation and face to face interviewing involved formal and informal talk, non-verbal messages and nuances. The basic assumptions about the organisation’s relationship with its environments and the human relationships within the organisation can be difficult to detect and evaluate. The qualitative techniques though assisted in better understanding each case study organisation. Lofland (cited in Patton, 1990:32) believes participants are better represented in their own terms if data collected include direct quotations from the people, both what they say and what they write down; include a great deal of pure description of people, activities, interactions and settings; capture what actually takes place and what people actually say; and get close enough to the people and situation to personally understand in depth the details of what goes on.

Multiple perspectives need to be brought together (Patton, 1989:157; Yin 1989:95–103). The multi-method approach to fieldwork increases both the validity and reliability of the data from observation, interviewing and documentation analysis. It is a creative process (Patton, 1989:159). Each of the qualitative inquiry themes (Patton, 1990:40), naturalistic, inductive analysis, holistic perspective, qualitative data, personal contact
and insight, dynamic systems, unique case orientation, context sensitivity, empathetic neutrality and design flexibility indicate the importance of participant observation, in-depth interviewing, detailed description and case studies and appropriate models for this present study.

The case study model is dependent on anecdotal, descriptive and experiential material. Crozier (cited in Pugh, 1990:296) reports on the 1960s trend to produce hard facts to measure the organisational phenomenon. The main effort was on producing data on samples and the use of statistical analyses of these data to prove or disprove hypotheses. Diverse variables affect organisations’ characteristics. Criticism of the results of this type of research included the biases which emerged. Crozier believed that method “led to innumerable demonstrations of the influence of diverse sets of variables on organisational performance”, and “while studies were more and more formalised, their results were less and less meaningful” (Pugh, 1990:297).

Case study analysis had been used in the 1950s when its basic characteristics of global, descriptive understanding reflected more the social, psychological and anthropological methodology. Focus was not on measurement of goals and results, but the case study approach borrowed freely from the methods and concepts of the social sciences on the informal, experiential. Crozier outlines alternative research (cited in Pugh, 1990:296) based on the games paradigm.

The complexity of organisations requires attention to the environment of the organisation and its output. Facts which define structure are only one aspect of the current research. Company records inform of the operational functions of an organisation; this research emphasises the existence of organisations as autonomous social systems. The rituals, knowledge, values, codes of behaviour and patterns of development reflected in an organisation’s beliefs are the basis of the present study.

Katz (1981:135) used the descriptive case study method in his early studies of the tendency toward formalisation and bureaucratisation. He constructed a ‘natural history’ of organisations consisting of five successive stages. The developmental pattern he outlined is used by this study in connection with the origin and development of the four case study organisations. He identified: “(i) origin; (ii) informal organisation; (iii) emergence of leadership; (iv) formal organisation, and (v) professionalisation.”

Getz (1993:15) suggests results from case studies cannot be generalised, however, they can be valuable for refining methods and generating hypotheses. The techniques he considers appropriate have been useful in determining the role of corporate culture in cultural organisations. The observations, assessments, interviews, the development of
a chronology of the organisation’s history, a content analysis of legal and administrative of documentation, the construction of personal profiles, the analysis of networks and observation of behavioural change will all contribute to a clear evaluation of the management culture of each organisation.

3.3 Participant Interviews

The executive officers of the case study organisations were interviewed. The individuals were friendly, co-operative and willing to share time and information of their industry experience and, in particular, talk of their current employment. They were:

- Robyn Kershaw, General Manager of Belvoir Street Theatre;
- Robin Bryant, General Manager of Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia;
- Richard Perram, Executive Officer of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd; and
- (the writer) Ros Derrett, Administrator of Theatre North Inc.

Interviews were tape recorded. Extracts are transcribed into Chapter Four of this report. Each described the values of the organisations, the traditions and development of practices under the headings offered by the writer. Each acknowledged the contribution their organisation made to the cultural identity of the nation. The arts practice of each organisation represented a response to the satisfaction of the needs of their constituency. Each saw the policy pursued by their Advisory Board or Management Committee reflecting grassroots concern for providing appropriate services.

In the case of the writer, her role as Theatre North Administrator required notes being made in response to the same questions as put to the three other interviewees. The self reflection undertaken drew on the experience of founding the organisation and being intimately involved with the day to day management of the organisation. Documentary evidence from the company’s archive complemented the personal response.

Staff, volunteers and members of the constituency of each organisation were informally met and spoken with during visits to the operational base of each organisation. Evidence of the day to day operations of each organisation were observed. Contact between the organisation and the public was observed and exchanges analysed. The co-operation of all participants in this investigation was
open, unconditional and accepting. The willingness to share positive and negative impressions of the organisation’s strengths and weaknesses reflected evidence documented in the literature on the stage or lifecycle of the organisation.

3.4 Interview Questions

Questions asked of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of each organisation at the first meeting came from the research propositions noted in Chapter One and were in eight categories:

(i) Cultural Context of the Organisation – the Constituency and Origins;
(ii) Aims and Objectives;
(iii) Arts Programming and Community Contact;
(iv) Staff;
(v) Finance;
(vi) Marketing;
(vii) Tourism Contact; and
(viii) Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership.

Each section included information which had been represented in the literature. Writers addressing cultural business environments, organisational culture, management options and cultural tourism highlighted the need to elicit information on the areas covered by the questions.

The questions are set out below.

(i) Cultural Context of the Organisation

What was the date of first meeting and initial status of the organisation?
What number of people were initially involved?
What perceived needs were to be met – political, artistic, community?
What ideological stances were taken for the formulation of aims and objectives?
Do you have a mission statement?
Why was the initial location for operation chosen?
Has any research on this particular constituency been utilised in the development of the organisation?
What network mechanisms within/between constituency have been utilised, e.g. mailing lists, subscribers?

(ii) Aims and Objectives

Are aims and objectives, mission statement documented?
How and by whom are policies determined?
How and with what degree of difficulty have priorities been set? Detail in specific periods of time, e.g. 3 years?
How have controversial issues been dealt with?
Classify the degree to which needs are met – Likert scale 1–5.

(iii) Arts Programming and Community Contact

Is there an Artistic Policy?
How is the annual programme determined?
What mechanisms are in place for communication with the organisation’s constituency?
Does the organisation actively participate in professional associations?
What is the level of artform interaction?
Has the organisation undertaken special projects?
What level of evaluation is there for the assessment of success of programming?

(iv) Staff

What are the numbers of full time paid, part time paid and casual paid staff?
How much time is committed by how many volunteers to the organisation’s programme?
Are there job descriptions for management and operational personnel?
What are the terms of contract or project based employment?
Are all staff union members?
What training programmes has the organisation utilised?
Is there a specific recruitment policy?
What career opportunities exist within the organisation?
Does the organisation employ specialist consultants?
### (v) Finance

What is the income mix of the organisation’s annual budget?
What capital resources does the organisation have?
What level of government support does the organisation receive annually?
What is the sponsorship contribution to the annual budget?
What capacity is there to generate box office?
What is the organisation’s ability to attract donations/bequests?
What level of income is derived from membership/subscribers?
What accounting system is utilised, e.g. in-house/outside?
What is the annual turnover of the organisation?
What percentage of expenditure is committed to staff salaries?

### (vi) Marketing

Does the organisation have a marketing plan?
Has any formal market research been undertaken for/by the organisation?
Have any target market segments been identified for audience development?
What has been the commitment to advertising?
How effective has publicity been?
How effective has promotion been?
What public relations strategies have been utilised?
Have sponsorship partnerships been established?
To what extent does the organisation utilise merchandising?
To what extent does the organisation document/record its annual programme?
Are strategies like telemarketing/direct mail utilised?
How does the organisation document and use feedback from consumers?

### (vii) Tourism

How important are tourists to the organisation’s operations?
Has the organisation any statistical information on contact with tourists?
Does your organisation have any links with tourism agencies?
Is any promotion undertaken through tourism outlets?
(viii) Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership

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<th>Question</th>
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<td>What specific line of business is the organisation in?</td>
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<td>Is there a corporate strategy for the organisation?</td>
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<td>What research/feasibility study is undertaken for operations?</td>
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<td>Who are the organisation’s competitors?</td>
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<td>What is the organisational structure?</td>
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<td>What are the roles and responsibilities of membership/Board/staff?</td>
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<td>Outline the decision making process – artistic and administrative.</td>
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<td>Outline operational processes of technical/commercial/financial/security/</td>
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<td>accounts/administration.</td>
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<td>How are performance reviews conducted?</td>
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<td>What are the key indicators for reporting and evaluation?</td>
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<td>How is authority dealt with within the organisation?</td>
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<td>How is esprit de corps maintained?</td>
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<td>What communication mechanisms are in place within the organisation?</td>
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3.5 Reporting the Findings

Final reports serve an important function in disseminating information to an audience beyond the decision makers and the information users (Patton, 1990). The interpretation and reporting of data goes beyond pure description. Patton sees interpretation as:

*attaching significance to what was found, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, building linkages, attaching meanings, imposing order, and dealing with rival explanations, disconfirming cases, and data irregularities as testing the viability of an interpretation* (1990:423).

Schlechty and Nobbit (1982, cited in Patton, 1990:423) have concluded that an interpretation may take three forms:

(i) making the obvious, obvious;
(ii) making the obvious, dubious; and
(iii) making the hidden, obvious.
What do the stakeholders want? Patton believes they expect that any evaluation will:

(i) confirm what they know by supportive data;
(ii) disabuse them of misconceptions; and
(iii) illuminate important things that they did not know, but should know.

The emphasis is on illumination, understanding and extrapolation, rather than generalisation and prediction. Decisions need to be made when eliminating qualitative data which connect individual cases to larger public issues. Yin (1989) suggests diverse possible audiences for case studies. These include colleagues in the same field; policy makers, practitioners, community leaders and other professionals who do not specialise in the case study methodology; special groups such as a students’ dissertation or thesis committee and funders of research (Yin, 1989:129–130).

3.6 Limitations of the Study

This study was undertaken over an 18 month period as part of the Masters by Research programme in the Faculty of Resource Science and Management at Southern Cross University’s, Lismore campus. The distance from the operational base of three of the case study organisations prevented closer scrutiny of day to day activity and developed a reliance on interviews and written documentation to which the writer had access.

The investigation was developed on a time consuming model of research, through personal contact, interviews, travel and reading. The stories provided by the CEOs and staff involved with the four organisations were informed by the personal work and training experience of the participant; their length of involvement with the organisation; their contact and interest in the constituent sub-culture represented by the organisation and their own ability to reflect of the organisation with which they were involved.

The cost of travel, correspondence, and phone contact for undertaking a comprehensive study as originally envisaged also limited the scale and depth of the investigation. The writer’s need to earn a living during the project necessarily impinged on the time committed to it.

The writer’s personal contact with one organisation, and proximity to its operation allowed for greater emphasis on it in this study. More effort was placed on gathering
material from staff and documentary evidence was more accessible because of the relationship.

The design of research was revised along the way. Contact with each of the organisations established elements of the research requiring greater or lesser attention. It was important to cater for the interviewees’ schedules and availability, so as to effectively deal with the research issues. All executives have busy schedules. All were extremely co-operative, expressed interest in the work and provided easy access to material and personnel for the writer, which was appreciated. The CEOs had worked in other cultural organisations, some in the policy and planning area.

Contact was made with other staff in each organisation on an incidental basis which allowed for other perspectives to be gained. People had worked with organisations for varying lengths of time; were at various stages of careers and work experience which informed the material they shared on how respective organisations operated. Observation of the tasks undertaken by these people and discussion on their roles, experience and attitudes contributed to the information collected for this study.

Care is required in analysing the variety of data collected from each technique so that specific lines of enquiry, issues, opportunities and conclusions are not ignored. This line of research requires the collaboration of academic and practitioner inputs. It is evident that these four studies are only a glimpse of the potential which exists in encouraging practitioners to document their management experiences.

The writer’s continued curiosity and interest in reading the growing relevant literature was balanced by professional teaching commitments. This made flexibility, practicality, creativity, patience and collaboration essential elements in the pursuit of the completion of this document.

### 3.7 Conclusion

Chapter Three has outlined the research methods and their justification from literature on cultural management and organisational culture. The approaches outlined were used to establish the narratives outlined in Chapter Four. The choice of data collection methods was influenced by the decision to use the qualitative case study approach as suggested by Schein (1985), Yin (1989), Patton (1990) and Getz (1993). The enquiry centred on the research propositions emerging from the literature on management culture, the business of cultural service provision and the not for profit sector. Each organisation offered substantial source material through personal interviews, documentation, physical artifacts, archival records, direct operational and participant observations by the writer.
Chapter Four presents the data collected from the four case study organisations. It uses the historical saga descriptive method to outline the origins, development, maintenance and aspirations of each organisation through management choices made. The responses to the questions included in Section 3.4 form the basis of the narrative.
Chapter Four

Four Case Studies
Four Case Studies

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides the substance upon which the investigation into management cultures is based. It is from the material presented below that conclusions and implications can be drawn about the development of distinctive management cultures in response to host constituencies, from founders or early leaders and the business of cultural service delivery. The data describe what constitutes management culture against a background of day to day operational activity in each organisation.

The narratives provide evidence of the origins, aspirations, development and operations of four Australian cultural organisations. They describe the factors which influenced the management choices made by the organisations. The cultures of the society at large in which each organisation operates, the nature of the culture industry in Australia and the people associated with each organisation are principal factors determining the management culture of cultural management. The historical saga has drawn attention to the change that has taken place throughout each organisation’s evolution.

While there are distinctive features to the choices made by each organisation, this comparative research provides an opportunity to examine subtext. What underlies the intangible values held by participants/stakeholders in each organisation and how these are manifested is of particular interest. Through interviews, participation in a short term internship process and by observation, a picture emerged of the operation of each organisation and the vision and goals on which the practices are based. The emerging common themes can have practical application for arts administrators, policy makers and cultural planners.

4.2 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd

4.2.1 Cultural Context

The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd (SGLMG) had its genesis in 1978 as a political celebration of Stonewall (NY). There were arrests at Sydney’s first Mardi Gras in June 1978 when the parade ended up in Kings Cross. “Mardi Gras is about celebration, remembrance and politics”, says the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the organisation, Richard Perram. “Who would think that something which started life as a political
demonstration and which ended in a riot, could emerge as the largest single night time parade in the world!” (Perram, personal communication, 1994). It is unique. Politics is still very much there, exemplified by the organisation’s participation in negotiations on the recent anti-vilification legislation.

The organisation’s constituency is the gay and lesbian community of Sydney. The organisation is sometimes called “the gay and lesbian government” (Farrelly, 1993:6) in that it provides a forum for ideas and actions for a cross section of the City’s gays and lesbians. The political agenda has a commitment to health, welfare, education, business and sexual issues. Other activities are of a celebratory nature, linking arts, recreation and social activity to satisfy expressed interests of members. The formal and informal links with the gay and lesbian community are strong and articulate. The gay media provide a constantly open communication channel.

It is not always possible for the membership to be involved with every decision or action of a political or celebratory nature. However, members are able to participate at Annual General Meetings where generally over ten percent of membership attend to determine direction and interest for the ensuing year. Some responses, like the anti-vilification issue demanded rapid attention, so the whole membership was not directly involved. There is a constant dialogue with the community on numerous issues which are raised through the Committee system. The organisation attempts to keep in touch with the issues of interest to its wider membership through the Committee system. Individual members of Committees have specific interests and when appropriate inform the debate within the organisation.

The annual report’s lists of contributions to other gay and lesbian organisations are testimony to a concern and feeling of responsibility to the expressed interests of membership. Support is in-kind, through donations of cash, endorsements and access to resources. Support is not restricted to Sydney based agencies and groups, but events and activities in other States as well, e.g. Cairns Mardi Gras Group Float, Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group, South Australian Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, Pride (Western Australia) (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:16). The type of support offered these groups includes cash donations, party tickets for fundraising, subsidised or free ticket printing, access to Workshop construction and facilities during the Mardi Gras season and access to Workshop construction and facilities throughout the year (outside the Mardi Gras season).

This definite commitment to developing a ‘sense of community’ is evidence that activity of the SGLMG is not only focused on the specific events staged by the organisation. Details of the support offered the wider gay and lesbian constituency demonstrate a responsibility to broad involvement with individuals and groups. Cash
donations, subsidy, fundraising support, access to the organisation’s Workshop resources are ways in which the outreach to their constituency is developed and achieved. SGLMG is a member of numerous organisations whose dealings impinge on their constituency, which affect the preparation and presentation of their annual programme and which link their activities to the arts, travel, media, sport and international gay and lesbian network.

Mardi Gras is a member of a number of organisations which keeps it alert to the needs and interests of its constituency. These include Arts Law Centre of Australia, Australian Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (AGALTA), Community Television Network (CTN), Federation of Gay Games, International Gay Travel Association (IGTA) and the National Association of the Visual Arts (NAVA) (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:17).

Representatives of Mardi Gras are on a number of community and government committees. These include the Anti-Discrimination Board – Lesbian and Gay Consultation, Gay and Lesbian Interagency, Police and Emergency Services Liaison Committee, South Sydney Council Gay and Lesbian Community Liaison Committee, and Surry Hills Community Consultative Committee. Members meet regularly with Federal and State Ministers and Shadow Ministers, NSW Police Service, South Sydney City Council and Sydney City Council (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:17).

In recent years, members have expressed concern about the management of the Mardi Gras Party and the Sleaze Ball. Attention was paid to revising the ticketing system, to allow members to attend without the perceived conflict with the straight community. In 1994, the gay press and general media documented a call from the gay and lesbian constituency for “a limit to the number of heterosexuals attending their parties” (Hill, 1994:44). Hill wrote in The Bulletin, “after decades of fighting for gay liberation, a backlash against heterosexuals has mushroomed in gay and lesbian venues in Sydney, particularly its high-profile dance parties” (1994:44).

The review conducted in 1994 by the organisation involved extensive consultation with members. Membership consolidated the practice of membership of the organisation being based on an individual’s nomination by a current member. This was seen to assist with the regulation of who attended the parties.

A successful project, under the auspices of Mardi Gras, has been a festival of gay and lesbian film which has now been given support for independent management and named Queer Screen. This is the only operation to date which has been through this process.
The mechanisms in place to keep in contact with the membership include a newsletter which is distributed quarterly and a comprehensive annual report. At the Annual General Meeting a forum is held. Members of the community are invited to contribute topics for discussion on this occasion. The main opportunity for members to contribute to the management of the organisation is through the election of the 14 member Management Committee. The present Board has gender parity, and while not a policy of the organisation, this practice has met with the acceptance of the membership.

4.2.2 Aims and Objectives

A Statement of Principle (1992) adopted by the Management Committee reads:

*The Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festival is a non-profit festival of events aimed primarily at the Australian gay and lesbian community, but welcoming audiences from the broadest possible base, including international visitors. Events are drawn either from national or international lesbian and gay communities or from contributors whose work particularly addresses the interests of lesbians and gay men. The Festival aims to produce, present, promote or solicit the production of events which are culturally or socially enriching, are of substantial merit, and are entertaining, stimulating, informing and challenging for their audiences.*

The Commitment Statement (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:4) from the membership of the SGLMG provides the explanation of the organisation’s aims and objectives.

- SGLMG is an organisation formed out of the diverse lesbian and gay communities of Sydney to enable us to explore, express and promote the life of our combined community through a cultural focus.
- We affirm the pride, joy, dignity and identity of our community and its people through events of celebration.
- We are committed to serving our community.
- We seek to enable individuals and groups within our community to discover, express and develop their artistic, cultural and political skills and potential.
- We strive through our events of celebration to strengthen the lives and rights of gay and lesbian people both nationally and internationally.
- We will achieve these objectives by:
  - organising events of celebration and pride, especially the annual Mardi Gras Season;
  - providing resources and opportunities to our community for creative expression; and
- providing resources and opportunities for the development of artistic, cultural and political skills and potential in individuals and groups in our community.

For 16 years, from 1978–1994, the Mardi Gras organisation was based in Boundary Street, Rushcutters Bay. In 1994, a three year lease was signed on a former box factory in Erskineville. The larger premises will house the equipment, floats and other property accumulated from Mardi Gras parades and parties. The new space will provide opportunities for new activities, e.g. a small gallery (Machon, 1994:4). The organisation would retain a presence in Oxford Street during the Mardi Gras Festival according to the President, Rob Patmore (Machon, 1994:4), particularly for the sale of tickets.

The structure of the organisation has evolved over the years in response to the needs of the members. “Initially a loose collective of dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers, Mardi Gras formally constituted itself as an association in May, 1983” (SGLMG Annual Report, 1992:3). The organisation incorporated in 1986 and became a limited liability company in 1990.

In 1988, the word ‘lesbian’ was included in the name of the organisation. This helped greatly in increasing the participation of lesbians in the management of the organisations. They can contribute to any of the Committees which each has twelve members, as well as the Board of 14.

### 4.2.3 Arts Programming

The organisation conducts six major events during each year. The *Sleaze Ball*, generally takes place in four venues at the Sydney Showground on the first weekend in October. In early February there is a *Festival Launch* function for the forthcoming Mardi Gras season. The *Mardi Gras Fair Day* has been conducted for eight years and allows for an informal family celebration. It has emerged as the second largest attended event staged by Mardi Gras (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:11). The Mardi Gras Festival features diverse events throughout the City during the month of February. The *Mardi Gras Parade* is a spectacle which featured over 3,500 participants in 1994 and was televised by ABC TV for the first time. The *Mardi Gras Party* offers 19,000 members and friends an opportunity to celebrate the conclusion of the Festival in six venues at the Sydney Showground in early March.

All operations and events conducted by Mardi Gras are involved with ongoing planning and review. There are opportunities for members to contribute to forums, fundraising, social functions from which management is able to determine appropriate development of the organisation’s activities. The four Committees for the Fair Day,
Parties, Parade and Festival regularly receive feedback from members. Other input comes from the community and experts with whom the organisation works in partnership to effectively conduct each event. There is a cycle of planning, staging and de-briefing which is followed (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:8) and has included the finalisation of the Mardi Gras Commitment Statement, the Board Policy Retreat, the annual Parade Forum, meetings with Police and Emergency Services Instrumentalities and the forum conducted at the Annual General Meeting.

The Mardi Gras Workshop is a facility which produces the scenic art and decor for Mardi Gras events. Staff and volunteers contribute to the major events like the Sleaze Ball and Party, and Parade floats, as well as smaller productions like the Festival Launch, Fair Day and the Awards Night. In 1994, over 50 volunteers worked with staff to assist 38 community groups prepare for aspects of the annual programme. The Workshop is available during non-production periods to gay and lesbian community groups.

The Sleaze Ball, staged in October, is the first celebration of the Mardi Gras year. Members are able to purchase up to five tickets each for Sleaze and the Mardi Gras Party held after the Parade in March. The preparation and execution of the decor and entertainment are elaborate and spectacular. Technology and imagination are matched by expertise in providing top quality celebratory environments. Each function has been a sellout in 1993-4. They provide the gay and lesbian community with an opportunity to participate in the biggest dance parties in the world. Each event provides an opportunity to demonstrate the artistic talent within the community.

According to the organisation, the Mardi Gras Fair Day attracted 23,000 lesbians and gay men and their families to Jubilee Park, Glebe in February 1994 (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:11). Fair Day provides for stalls, entertainment, displays and special events which have now become part of the culture like the Dog Show and Miss Fair Day contest. Community group and commercial stalls are involved. The day is seen as opportunity for community groups to promote themselves and raise funds. Stall hire charges are kept to a minimum.

The Mardi Gras Festival includes a wide variety of arts and recreation events. Functions generated from within the community are complemented by an increasing number of events staged in collaboration with Sydney’s leading arts organisations. There are debates, forums, harbour cruises, and performances and exhibitions in mainstream venues. The Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Australian Museum, the New Theatre and Sydney Theatre Company contributed to the 1994 Festival. Queer Screen’s Mardi Gras Film Event at the AFI Cinema in
Paddington and the 1st International Gay and Lesbian Comedy Festival at Belvoir Street Theatre were innovations for 1994. With the development of the Festival, the Board and the Festival Committee have recognised the need to consult with arts professionals to better serve the Festival’s growing challenges. A strategic approach being implemented includes a new festival funding scheme; a longer time frame in which to prepare for the Festival; a new marketing and advertising approach and a new development funding scheme (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:12).

The Mardi Gras Parade puts a public face on the gay and lesbian community. Sue Harben, 1994 Mardi Gras President considered the first broadcast of the Mardi Gras Parade “a momentous event” (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:3). Images of the Parade went into millions of Australian homes. The well organised and operated spectacular public street event annually attracts attention from a large crowd, which was estimated by Perram (personal communication, 1994) to be half a million members of the wider community, including a growing number of overseas visitors to Oxford Street, Sydney. (Perram’s estimate is clearly well in excess of the true quantity, since the parade route is only two kilometres and the crowds are not shoulder to shoulder and hundreds deep all the way.)

For many participants, the Mardi Gras Parade remains essentially a political statement. “To be gay or lesbian and to take space in the public streets, to shut down the traffic of this City and to claim that space as ours and to claim the right to promote our identity, is a political statement” (Harben, cited in Harari, 1993:20). Harari (1993:20) suggests beneath the froth and bubble of the carnival, Mardi Gras has earned a respectability of sorts for its organisers and for the wider homosexual community.

It is a massive undertaking. Over 700 trained volunteers who work as Parade Officials are backed up by 200 Police and 40 medical support personnel. There is street entertainment prior to the commencement of the Parade. In 1994 over 135 entries in the Parade included floats and walking groups. Organisers work closely with Police as safety for all involved is paramount to the success of the celebration. The Parade is also an opportunity for fundraising and profile raising of issues of concern to the gay and lesbian community.

Each year the organisation conducts a function to offer recognition of achievement and dedication to the community’s ideals. The Awards Night has become a fitting close to the Mardi Gras season with an opportunity to entertain, reflect and reward the efforts of the volunteers upon whom the organisation depends. The 1994 Awards Night was held at the Metro Theatre and was attended by over 450 people.
4.2.4 Staff

The CEO stated that Mardi Gras was an equal opportunity employer. Staff need to have a sympathy with the aims and objectives of the organisation. No one is excluded. Individuals need to be able to do the job as detailed in the job description. A recent head of the workshop was a heterosexual person, few knew and her work was universally accepted.

Staff support the membership which numbers over 4,500. The CEO works with two tiers of management and operational staff. One looks to planning and marketing, the other to operational administration and liaison with the volunteers. Staff is employed on a full time, part time and casual basis. Some staff had been with the organisation for over two years; others much less. Many were employed on a project by project basis.

The organisation has a strong reliance on volunteers to facilitate the various aspects of the annual programme. Professional staff work closely with the Board and those members who work on specific projects.

4.2.5 Finance

The annual turnover of the organisation is around $2 million (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:10). Funding for Mardi Gras comes largely from ticket sales to the Party and the Sleaze Ball with over $1 million being generated in the 1993–4 financial year. Membership income from the 4,695 full members and associate members generated $131,916.

The SGLMG has determined that their financial year needs to be in line with their annual programme. In 1994 the auditor’s report records a financial year ending on April 30. The organisation’s response indicates a clear commitment to providing relevant, practical administration of the organisation’s resources.

It was estimated by the organisation areas (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:18) that the extra spending by Sydney’s gay and lesbian community, combined with the Parade night spending by 500,000 spectators amounted to an injection of approximately $26 million into the South Sydney and City of Sydney Councils. (Since the 500,000 estimate is well in excess of the truth – see earlier comment – the estimate of economic impact is probably also exaggerated.) The principal beneficiaries from expenditure generated by Mardi Gras were the accommodation, cultural, personal services, retail and tourism industries, all industries which are labour intensive (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:18).

The organisation’s income is dependent on the two parties. Policy for the effective conduct of these functions affects the financial viability of the organisation. The two
annual parties, held at the Sydney Showground since 1982, had caused no serious problem with residents or authorities until 1990. At that time, residents near the Showground took action through the Liquor Administration Board (LAB) which resulted in a ban on dance parties at the Showground. To counter the ban, Mardi Gras and the Royal Agricultural Society prepared a case and returned to the LAB. The LAB was persuaded to make exceptions to its ban in the case of the two parties, though stringent noise limits were still in place (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:18).

The substantial financial commitment of $400,000 (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:18) to date to answer the repeated attempts by a handful of residents to prevent the staging of the parties has global financial impacts on the organisation. Extensive negotiations have gone on, with submissions and responses to hearings and enquiries prepared, all costly and time consuming. A further obstacle arose in 1992 when the South Sydney Council advised that development consent was required for Mardi Gras events. This had not been the case for the previous ten years. The development consent was sought and obtained. In 1994 the South Sydney Council made a financial contribution to Mardi Gras after extensive lobbying at Council meetings. The $50,000 cash subsidy provided by Council for the 1994 season was the most significant financial support offered by any level of government to Mardi Gras (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:22).

4.2.6 Marketing

A Promotion and Marketing position exists within the organisation. Mardi Gras also uses the services of an advertising (placement) agency and contracts a press person to place material on behalf of the organisation. Marketing is seen to be an important component of the administration of the organisation. People outside the organisation are contracted to conduct the press/promotion business of the organisation. There is no clipping service, however staff are vigilant, as are members, in collecting media material relating to the organisation. This ranges from letters to the editor (one suggesting that the Mardi Gras assume the management of the Olympic Games as Mardi Gras are experts!) to items from press releases and general news items. The organisation’s activities are well documented and collections of material are stored with administration.

The organisation has recognised an opportunity to develop Mardi Gras merchandising through its connections with sponsors and items like T-shirts, badges, etc. The Economic Impact Study (Marsh and Greenfield, 1993) provides sufficient impetus for a number of sponsors to come forward to contribute to the promotion of Mardi Gras. Potential sponsors are alert to the opportunities of the gay market, e.g. the above average double incomes. Commercial interests see the potential, after observing such ratings, to associate themselves with this market. Potential licensing of the use of logos
and assorted merchandising opportunities are being investigated. Within the constituency there is a pool of talent to be utilised for poster design and distribution.

Connections with international gay organisations has allowed for substantial promotion of Mardi Gras overseas. Tour operators, in the United States for example, are alert to the opportunities of Mardi Gras and numbers of visitors are increasing; through word of mouth promotion which is significant. Mardi Gras presents itself, more and more, as the event most likely to stimulate a visit to Australia in February. Brochures are sent overseas. There is an associate membership of the organisation available for people overseas, or out of town. This entitles any potential visitor to one ticket to the Parade Party (while full members are entitled to five tickets).

The impact of the screening of the Channel Four (UK) programme, “Feed them to the Cannibals” made about the 1993 Mardi Gras clearly demonstrated the lack of information available in overseas Australian government institutions. Over 700 phone calls were made to Australia House and the NSW Tourist Commission in London and the only information available was personal and anecdotal. Since then, there has been a greater willingness on behalf of the government agencies to have promotional material and the network of promotion by Mardi Gras has improved. There is a greater recognition of the opportunity to promote the City of Sydney, and NSW as a whole as a result of this hallmark event.

The organisation is specific in its target markets. Some activities are geared solely for the organisation’s constituency, while others are promoted to the wider community, including tourists. The parties are more strictly allied to members, while aspects of the festival appeal to the general public. The organisation is careful about exploiting situations through the media; photographers at the parties are accredited gay and lesbian press. Activities are documented, but care is taken about the medium chosen and personnel involved. The documentation of the programme, especially the Parade and the Festival has educational implication, while the Parties tend to be of social and not commercial value.

After three years of negotiations, there was a nationwide broadcast on ABC TV of the 1994 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade on Sunday, March 6, 1994. “Whichever way it was looked at our spectacular celebration with its displays of gay and lesbian pride, solidarity and creativity totally confounded our critics and topped the ratings on the night” (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:20). 12.4% of all Australians saw the programme in its entirety; 31.7% of all households using television nationwide tuned to the programme; in Sydney 42.6% of all households tuned to the programme; 2.5% of all Australians viewing television at that time saw the programme (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:20).
Mardi Gras has established strong links with the gay and lesbian press. Recent developments have ensured greater contact with the general media and the international media. The success of promoting Mardi Gras has been achieved through the distribution of 200 media passes to the Parade. Audio visual media as well as print have been represented in the line up. In 1994, the print, radio and television coverage rose by 122% from 418 to 925 items (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:21).

Note is made of the change in the coverage of Mardi Gras over recent years in the media. “There has been not only a growth in the coverage of Mardi Gras and its events but also a growth in the maturity of that coverage, which has largely moved its emphasis from ‘bums and tits’ coverage to articles which analyse our contribution and place it within a wider political, social and economic context” (SGLMG Annual Report, 1994:21). There is constant vigilance over how the organisation presents itself and its activities to the media. A specific challenge is how the Parade will retain its identity as a gay and lesbian celebration, while it occurs in a public street.

### 4.2.7 Tourism

Europe has a plethora of festivals of heritage value, medieval processions with dancing in the streets, jousting enactments, wine and food, and a pot pourri of arts and spectacles. The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras has provided a contemporary response to travellers’ imaginings and quest for entertainment and festivity. It provides travellers with an opportunity to discover another aspect of Australia’s cultural life.

Sydney has become a popular destination for gay and lesbian travellers, and the Mardi Gras has provided an annual spotlight for this niche market. The success of the event, its promotion worldwide and the economic study have contributed to the focus of the increasing international awareness and attractiveness. Recent research in the United States found that gays and lesbians account for $514 billion in disposable income annually (Ferrari, cited in Collins, 1994:9). Australian companies seek to benefit from such expenditure should these figures be applicable to Australia. “The pink dollar is starting to talk and the industry is starting to listen” (Conway, 1994:2). “Mainstream travel companies, especially major hotel chains, are starting to realise the potential of this market” (Amos, cited in Conway, 1994:2).

The release of a commissioned Economic Impact Study (EIS) by Associate Professor Dr Ian Marsh at the Australian Graduate School of Management, assisted by John Greenfield in September 1993 estimated a contribution of a substantial injection of dollars into the State and national economy by visitors to the Mardi Gras. From the comprehensive study key findings indicate the contribution of $15 million into the
national economy, while the State economy benefited by $12 million as a result of expenditure by international and interstate visitors.

There are 130 nationwide members of the Australian Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (AGLTA) (Collins, 1994:9). A widely distributed directory encourages visitors to extend their Australian stay beyond the Mardi Gras and visit other capital cities to embrace the variety of tourism product now on the market. An annual travel expo held in Sydney, timed to complement the Mardi Gras Sleaze Ball in early October, showcases the products of 50 Australian and overseas operators (Collins, 1994:9). Rod Stringer, President of AGLTA estimates that the gay and lesbian market is already worth between $40–$50 million a year to Australia. The Mardi Gras is the largest gay event in the world and an indication of the growing prominence it has on the world calendar is the fact that the International Gay Travel Association will hold its 1996 annual convention in Sydney. It is the first time the convention has been held outside North America.

It is not only the event which is an attractor, but according to Studendorff, gay rights has played an important part in Australia’s attraction as a tourist destination (Studendorff, cited in Miller, 1994:2). The relative safety of being gay in Australia (op. cit.) is testament to the work done by organisations such as the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd. At the 1993 Annual General Meeting of the organisation Farrelly (1993:6) reports that a question was asked whether the organisation should nominate itself for the NSW Tourism Awards.

### 4.2.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership

All statements of a public nature concerning Mardi Gras are made by the President of the Board. The CEO has worked to ensure the administration of the organisation serves the elected Board. It is important that membership is represented by the Board, and while certain data and correspondence may be prepared by the administration, it always is delivered in the name of the organisation’s executive.

The organisation has an active Board. While they are volunteers, these people all take the running on issues and actions determined from meetings of members, committees and the Board. The Board has the power and authority in the organisation to effect the policy decisions. Members of the Board work long hours on their commitment to the organisation. They contribute time, money and effort in the pursuit of a variety of aspects of the organisation’s annual programme.

Each works closely with the CEO and on their involvement with the committee system. The work on a range of the organisation’s business, with the media, with the
wider community, business and the membership at large. Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting and are motivated to perform and contribute to the ideals of the organisation. There is a great deal to achieve in the organisation’s annual programme, so members are quick to recognise Board members who are not contributing effectively. At the same time, individuals’ skills are recognised and used to advantage. The accountability that democratically elected structures allow for are in place within this organisation.

The new management structure adopted by the Board in April 1993 has been implemented and includes roles of an Executive Officer, Assistant to Executive Officer, Administration/Finance Manager, Festival Co-ordinator, Production Manager and Promotions and Marketing Manager. There is a permanent administrative staff of ten supported by numerous volunteers. The CEO handles the human resource management, policy and planning and facilitates the implementation of all actions. Staff serve as secretaries to a Committee, e.g. the CEO to the Board and this allows staff to have regular contact with the membership through the elected committee system. The Board meets fortnightly; one meeting is to discuss finance and reports and the alternate fortnight is for dealing with the policy agenda. There is an administration meeting weekly for the discussion of the day to day running of the organisation.

The organisation is working through the preparation of procedures and job descriptions and conditions of employment. As the organisation grows there is recognition of changes required to cope with scale, staffing needs, tasks to be undertaken and so on. Contracts for employment are being formulated. Monitoring of individuals’ performances and the various roles required in the organisation are constantly being evaluated.

The notion of accountability is manifested in the presentation of the annual report. It reflects a substantial measure of interest by the constituency in its own organisation. A high level of literacy is indicated as a detailed account of the organisation’s annual programme demonstrates the openness of the administration to scrutiny.

4.2.9 Research Propositions

The following observations are made of the SGLMG based on the research propositions stated in Chapter One. Each proposition offers an opportunity to address elements of the management culture of the case study organisation. Implications of the findings are recorded in Chapter Five.

The operational and strategic management choices cultural organisations make are determined by their constituency and reflect the distinctive features of that constituency.
The political movement and social justice issues which underpin the activities of the homosexual community in Sydney have had their impact on the management choices made by the SGLMG. The commitment to consultation with the constituency through the committee system; the involvement of volunteers in the preparation and delivery of the organisation’s programme and the recognition of the subculture’s media all have been demonstrated in this study.

The original goals and expressed needs of the membership shape the culture of an organisation.

Through regular contact with their constituency at open members’ forums, the SGLMG is able to gain feedback on whether the organisation continues to meet the vision of the original members. As external environments impinge on the activities of the organisation, e.g. the interest from the corporate sector for involvement through sponsorship; the economic impact study indicating the role the Parade has in the City’s tourism sector, the management of the organisation demonstrates a commitment to addressing any concerns which may be raised. The issue of heterosexual attendance at the Sleaze Ball or the Parade Party has been raised in the gay press, as well as at the constituency’s public forums. Initial aims and objectives may be modified if that becomes the expressed wish of the membership. Staff are mindful of the desires of the membership and use feedback as a tool to conduct business in a manner compatible to the interests of the membership. Access, equity and social justice issues are much talked of and believed to be of importance in the delivery of the organisation’s services to their constituency.

All contributors to the organisation’s programme affect effective and successful cultural management and management culture.

This organisation is particularly geared to responding to its active membership, which is of considerable magnitude (4,500+). It encourages involvement by the volunteer membership in aspects of planning and delivery of major elements of the annual programme. It also demonstrates an awareness of the mainstream political realities with formal contact with public service agencies like the Police, local government, the Liquor Administration Board and State politicians. The organisation’s experience in providing public events like the annual Parade identified that sound, productive community relations facilitate better practice and greater acceptance of the political stand taken by participants. Contact with media, e.g. the ABC telecasts, has an impact on the management decisions of the organisation. These formal contacts with sectors of the tourism and cultural industries have been made easier by the success of the events which the organisation has delivered.

The contribution individual organisations make to the nation’s cultural diversity can occur independently of government policy and practice.
A distinctive feature of this organisation’s development has been its lack of government funding for its programme or management. It has sought to self fund activities and raise revenue from the membership which underwrites the major event, the Parade. The organisation has recently embraced sponsorship as an alternative source of support, but has sought to maintain an independent presence on the cultural, community and tourism scene. The homosexual perspective then can be represented with little intervention from mainstream agencies. While it clearly abides by the law in its delivery of services, its activities provide alternatives to many major special events on the City’s calendar. The economic impact it has on the wider community has established certain legitimacy. Growing popular support engaged by the activities of the SGLMG has demonstrated that such diversity can be undertaken independent of government intervention and through grassroots energy and commitment.

Cultural management is readily making the connection between the arts and tourism.

Initially the SGLMG was keen to emphasis the educative and political needs of its constituency and pursued the events of its programme to satisfy their interests. The annual programme undertaken by the organisation has been seen to have community importance by the membership. However, the organisation has not been blind to the opportunity provided by the connection of event management, arts practice and visitor interest. The international gay community has been quick to respond to the provision of the services generated by the organisation. The increase in the number of national and international visitors, with the cumulative and positive impacts this has brought, has assisted the recognition of the link between the arts and tourism. While not totally ready to embrace the commercial elements of the collaboration, the organisation has demonstrated an understanding of the implications of the connection and its potential for the organisation’s future.

4.3 Belvoir Street Theatre, Company B Ltd, Sydney

4.3.1 Cultural Context

This organisation emerged from the demise of an earlier organisation, the Nimrod Theatre, which had accumulated a massive debt and was obliged to sell its only asset, the theatre in Belvoir Street, Surry Hills. The two people who instigated the organisation, Chris Westwood and Sue Hill, decided to form a syndicate to purchase the building. They worked at building up the number of shareholders. They convinced 50 people, over one weekend, to each deliver them a cheque for $1,000 for a deposit on the building. They then worked steadily over the next six months on raising the rest of the half million that was needed to purchase the building outright.
The organisation was initiated in 1984. A company which could purchase the building separately from a production company was established, so that the Nimrod situation could be avoided; i.e. the production company need not mortgage its asset against the production base. Maureen Barron, a solicitor, created a structure in which (syndicate) Company A became the entity that is Belvoir Street Theatre Limited. Company B is the rest of the production house which is eligible for government subsidy; it has tax deductible status; it is able to secure sponsorship; it is able to undertake all its activity inside the building without having the asset (of the building) as part of its balance sheet.

Company A of Belvoir Street Theatre is not an entrepreneurial organisation. The resident production house, Company B, pays rent to Company A. The asset is protected in perpetuity. The people who vote for the directors of Company B are members of the syndicate. In order to be a member of the executive of Company B individuals need to be syndicate members, nominated by a syndicate member. To vote for the directors of Company B a $25 annual membership of Company B is required. It entitles members to vote and be voted into executive positions.

The organisation has a syndicate share holding base of 1,000 shares at $1,000 each. Its capital, including property value and financial investment by members, is currently one million dollars. The initial contributors to the shareholding base were people who had crossed over from theatre into film like Sam Neill and Mel Gibson. Patrick White had a big parcel of shares; Dame Joan Sutherland and David Williamson have shares. The company is proud that there are lots of people who own the building; not just the famous or favourites; it is people who love theatre, love what the space has actually generated in terms of performance work.

The organisation’s natural constituency is professional performing artists and their sympathisers. The commitment to providing performing arts services has been evident since the beginning. Reference is constantly made to this group in the organisation’s literature and is the source of motivation in the strategic and operational decision making process.

The organisation is an artists’ organisation. It is unlike other arts organisations in that it does not have Boards of management as such. As an artists’ theatre, the people involved make decisions for other artists. There is an artistic directorate of nine people who determine the artistic policy of the organisation at any given time. There is another Board which determines the administrative activity of the organisation.

Rather than lose a performance space in inner Sydney, over 600 arts, entertainment and media professionals formed a syndicate to buy the building. “This radical new
idea in theatre ownership and operation gained the theatre a reputation as a ‘radical theatre’” (Belvoir promotional folder, 1993). The company engages Australia’s most prominent and promising directors, actors and designers to present a programme that is politically sharp-edged, popular and stimulating. The work Belvoir produces ranges from radical interpretations of classics to newly commissioned plays, the work and expression of ideas by women, Aboriginal theatre and new forms of theatre.

The artistic directorate elected for 1994 were May-Brit Akerholt, Neil Armfield, Barbara Bridges, Rosalba Clemente, Katerina Ivak, Catherine Martin, Baz Luhrmann and Robyn Nevin. Robyn Nevin wrote in the introduction of the 1994 subscription brochure:

“Unique in the world, Belvoir Street Theatre is owned and run by artists.

Everyone who works at Belvoir does so because they love it.

They love the direct audience connection and the informality of its spaces.

They love working on shows where a big imagination means more than a big budget.

They love making theatre that is meaningful and describes the world we live in.”

4.3.2 Aims and Objectives

An entry in the introduction to Belvoir Street Theatre’s 1993 subscription brochure states, “makes most mainstream theatre ... look bland and colourless”. This comment by Leonard Radic on Part 1 of Gilgul’s Exile Trilogy could well stand as Belvoir’s motto and guiding aim.

The company’s mission is defined by the group of people who are the executive at any given time. The new Board elected recently is without the core who had been in place for some years; so there is considerable fast tracking to support the artistic aims of the company. There is regular evaluation and interpretation of what the company is to be committed to for the next period of time. It is subjective. The company produces the programme it wants, not what it feels the funding agencies will fund. The choice and responsibility is with the organisation, and where there is a sympathy between funding agencies and the company on support for specific work, it is welcomed. Care is taken to be true to the aims of the company and the passion of the artists involved rather than being politically correct.
To encourage syndicate members to participate and care for what occurs in the organisation, the articles of incorporation determined that executive membership could not be longer than three years continuously. This encourages Directors not to tire or loose their way, but to serve the organisation in the best interests of Australian artists. This is a unique model for arts administration.

Those who have committed to the syndicate knew and know there are no dividends to their investment other than that the space can be used in perpetuity for performance. The Directors and the General Manager encourage elderly members, or those no longer working in Australia to bequeath shares to younger people who are interested in the performing arts. It is a safeguard for the artistic integrity of the organisation. It is a way Belvoir can invest in young artists; some, still unknown, unable to afford shares, but who will eventually contribute to the company. They can become part of the dynamic interchange. The structure is changeable, flexible, “If you stand still you’re dead”, says General Manager, Robyn Kershaw. Things happen at Belvoir because of the belief members have in the strength of the artistry. They work long and hard at developing projects.

Neil Armfield, a director, speaks of the distinctiveness of what Belvoir has to offer artistically. “Looking back over the work of the company over the past ten years ... it has been developing a very unique voice. Much of this relates to the architecture of that corner (a reference to the Upstairs Theatre’s stage) ... it produces an ensemble way of working with actors ... there is a special kind of calm ... it is like what Peter Brook calls ‘a charmed space’ ... something fundamentally spiritual” (Armfield quoted by Bennie, 1994:16).

The artistic strengths of the company have been built on over the years. There has been an ongoing commitment to “creating works of theatre with an important national and international profile” (Waites, 1994:23).

### 4.3.3 Arts Programming

The implementation of an annual arts programme comes from the Artistic Council which is a quarterly appointment. Neil Armfield, a member of the Artistic Council, became the first person to have a three year term as Co-Artistic Counsel, which meant that there was also someone in the theatre working on the current programme. Project directors had someone to work with. If they were inexperienced, or needed assistance with the machinations of Belvoir Street Theatre, they were able to discuss the strengths and limitations artistically. This position of facilitator allowed a conduit to the Board and to the General Manager. It is particularly important for the General Manager to have this connection as patterns can become established where certain sections of the
organisation are better served. The work is artistically more substantial if there is an interchange between all parties.

“While the artistic counsels promote the flourishing exchange of ideas, it doesn’t provide someone like me with a shared partner in situations where I might have to consider what I am going to do politically or strategically” Kershaw says (Evans, 1994:14A). Constant monitoring of what works best each season has allowed Belvoir to make appropriate adjustment.

Artistically, there is a great number of objectives the company wants to achieve and priorities are often not instantly fulfilled. There is insufficient funding to satisfy the needs of the company’s artistic wish list. There is not enough money coming in for more than five shows a year. So, to accommodate this the company applied recently for creative development as part of the company’s core activity. The company wishes to develop, under the direction of Neil Armfield, Patrick White’s Riders of the Chariot. The company commissions new work. Programming at given times is dependent on development work undertaken beforehand. Things are interdependent and crucial connections are needed.

For 1995, Belvoir determined to establish an actor based theatre company led by Neil Armfield. At the announcement of the formation of Company B’s acting company Armfield said, “There is at Belvoir Street a family of actors, production artists and staff common to most of our best productions who have found a way of working that is secure, in which there is a marriage of theory and practice, that is creating marvellous theatre. There is an atmosphere that you can feel the audience breathing in” (Waites, 1994:15A).

With “the intention ... to have an Australian company creating works of theatre with an important national and international profile” (Waites, 1994:23), Armfield has announced a programme which builds on previous artistic successes. Revivals to be included are The Tempest and Hamlet which has touring potential, Diving for Pearls and Aftershocks as well as The Blind Giant is Dancing by Stephen Sewell, which Armfield directed in the early 1980’s. Guest Directors, Jim Sharman will direct Jean Genet’s recently discovered play, Splendid’s and Rosalba Clemente will direct Graeme Pitt’s script based on Emma Ciccotosto’s book A Translated Life.

Armfield has invited some of Australia’s best theatre actors to join the company to be housed at Belvoir Street Theatre. Some actors will work on specific productions. Armfield cites his experience with Jim Sharman’s Lighthouse Theatre Company in Adelaide in the early 1980’s and his appreciation of Shakespeare’s actor based company as influences for the establishment of the new company. “The way the parts
fit the actors, a balanced group of personalities – the world of the play is the microcosm of what the company was,” says Armfield (Waites, 1994:23).

Belvoir Street Theatre plan to transform the Eveleigh Railway Workshops in Darlington (Sydney) into a theatre, using a grant offered by the NSW Government of $200,000. This will facilitate large scale and ambitious works from any performance group in the City. This new venue for the City is a result of a partnership between Belvoir Street Theatre, the State Rail Authority and South Sydney Council. It will comprise a vast performance space, a foyer and bar, several rehearsal spaces, workshops and storage for scenery, props and costumes.

Belvoir Street Theatre offers a popular free school matinee series concurrent with its mainstage programme. It is sponsored by Telecom Australia. Metropolitan and regional schools are invited to participate in this educational programme which involves documentation, live theatre performances and meetings with cast members after the show. This programme encourages an appreciation and critical understanding of production and performance.

The theatre hosts a series of substantial cross artform and multi-cultural programmes initiated by sub-cultural agencies in the City. Belvoir makes a considerable contribution to the annual Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Theatre Festival each February, the Nambundah Festival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts and the Asian Arts Festival. The organisation works closely with its immediate locale, having developed a strong relationship with community committees of the South Sydney Council.

### 4.3.4 Staff

There are ten full time staff and 15 casual staff at Belvoir Street Theatre. There are artists on contract, depending on the current programme, who receive a salary. The weekly operational staff meetings are an opportunity for all members to contribute to the debate on how things are done in the organisation. There is an agenda. There is a rotating Chairperson. Some meetings have staff reporting on what activities they’ve been involved with. Not all administrative decisions are made at these meetings, but it is a significant part of the internal communication network of the organisation. Staff have responsibility for budgets affecting their specific area of activity. There is a clear understanding of the direct link between individual and collective dreams for the effective running of the organisation and the reality of the organisation’s budget. Decisions on behalf of the organisation are made by the General Manager.

Outlining aspects of the structures in place at Belvoir, Kershaw comments on the flat management structure:
It means everyone has access to everyone else. There is a sense of ensemble immediately, that we are in it together and sometimes there is a feeling of organised chaos, which is how I like to work. The contradiction with flat management structures is that you do have to have a benevolent dictator. So, because I am given the authority of the General Manager and the buck stops with me from the Board, I take responsibility for that. But it doesn’t stop the flow of information, ideas or support for my colleagues and peers.

(Kershaw, cited in Evans, 1994:14A)

The staff are serving or facilitating the needs of the organisation. The ways to best serve are constantly under review. It has been important to computerise the working of the organisation. The company has come far from the days of one typewriter (on loan) to the sophistication of comprehensive sponsored computer networks.

Job descriptions provide for personnel who are multi-skilled. Also the organisation has accommodated the artistic needs with staff who are often in a number of areas of operations. During job interviews the General Manager explains the work culture at Belvoir Street. Individuals who may find it awkward working in a female environment or with people with different sexual or cultural backgrounds are discouraged. There is a wide variety of activity occurring within the Belvoir Street Theatre complex weekly and it is important that staff have an understanding of the different needs and practices of each project.

There is multi-layered training available for staff. Sometimes it is in-house; other times individuals may be seconded to work at the Adelaide Festival or the Edinburgh Festival. It is dependent on individual staff needs. At the beginning of each year staff are invited to submit what they want to achieve in the training area in the short and medium term; especially in career terms and how they can contribute more productively to the future of the company. Some staff have been with Belvoir for many years. They feel strongly about the commitment of their colleagues, the level of work, the company of artists, the support each receives from colleagues, the variety of tasks, challenge of new opportunities. There is concern about how each production is served. Each person has a responsibility and any stimulation they receive for their involvement is a positive by-product.

Each person has their own interpretation of the rituals which are undertaken within the workplace. Most comment on the relationships and respect of colleagues. “We are a very warm and welcoming company. It is the small things that count. It is to do with the organic mass that is inside. It is to do with the people inside the organisation. You can have structures ‘till the cows come home’, hoping they will protect everything. In
the end, it is the people who are managing the structures who are sustaining the growth or non growth of the work” (Kershaw, personal communication, 1993). Staff belong to professional networks beyond their place of employment. Many have had previous involvement with arts organisations in Australia and overseas. They bring a great deal of experience to their daily work. The company is represented in numerous professional associations.

Volunteers have been used on some occasions during some productions or projects. Management of volunteers in a professional situation is quite demanding and more needs to be done to streamline the organisation’s response to the integration of volunteers’ assistance.

Robyn Kershaw resigned from her position at Belvoir in December 1994, to pursue studies at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School. Reflecting on her time at Belvoir she remembers, “sitting down in the foyer thinking this is the sort of place I want to work in. There was something about what it breathed – excitement, energy and imagination. This place has an ethos, a whole set of values and philosophies that attracts a certain kind of person. I don’t think I had to become something else to embrace values here” (Evans, 1994:14A).

### 4.3.5 Finance

Over 50% of Belvoir’s income is from box office. It varies from year to year, but the company’s total annual turnover is around $2 million. Twenty seven percent of income comes from the Australia Council and the NSW Ministry for the Arts. The variance is dependent on the artistic choices made by the Board in any given year. Touring is costly. Artist development is also a costly priority. The tour to Russia of Gogol’s *Diary of a Madman*, was financially supported by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Embassy in Moscow and the international section of the Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council, the British Council, SBS, and other groups. The General Manager was responsible for tying together the financial package. This initiative had a protracted gestation, as the individual partners determined their priorities.

Full wage parity is the policy at Belvoir Street, so top performing arts practitioners work for the same payment as theatre administrators, bar staff and cleaners. This is seen as a practical manifestation of the company culture where all involved are working toward maintaining a theatre in perpetuity with shared goals and common beliefs. The collaborative structure is utilised at all levels of the company’s operation. Any profits are turned back into the company. All staff are encouraged to contribute the same degree of commitment and dedication.
Belvoir Street Theatre has received financial assistance for its programme from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Committee, the performing Arts Unit and the Literature Board of the Australia Council, the NSW Ministry for the Arts and Telecom Australia. Belvoir has earned the Sydney Theatre Critic’s Circle “Best Production” Award for three years in a row and has an audience of over one million throughout Australia and of course Moscow and St Petersburg (1994, Annual Subscription brochure). Government support for capital investment has come through the acquisition of management rights for the Eveleigh Railway Workshop.

Sponsorship is a significant element of the company’s future. At different times more energy is spent on specific aspects of the company’s income base. Sponsorship is part of the diversification of the company’s income. The box office computing software has provided useful data which can be shared with potential sponsors. It has been particularly useful in the area of marketing. It can maintain 100,000 patrons over a five year period. The data stored are useful in direct mailing for example.

### 4.3.6 Marketing

Philip Kotler believes “the Chief Executive Officer should be the Chief Marketing Officer” (cited in Drucker, 1993:61). The General Manager at Belvoir Street Theatre maintains control of the marketing of the organisation. There have been times when a consultant or an agency was engaged on specific projects, but the General Manager understood the value of contemporary marketing strategies and used their knowledge of the Sydney market and understanding of the organisation to its best advantage. There are mechanisms in place to delegate on occasions, e.g. Project Directors were able to make certain decisions, but it was important that an overall corporate image was centralised and projected.

It is essential that the organisation is constantly vigilant of how it is seen in the wider community. While it is not easy to control how the community perceives the company, stringent efforts are made to represent the company consistently graphically for example. All efforts feed back into each other, e.g. the outside publicist, the communications consultant, and the graphic designer engaged are in constant contact with the General Manager, who is central to the organisation’s image making. It is a very creative partnership undertaken on ten to fifteen percent of the organisation’s annual budget.

The venue offers particular and peculiar facilities. In marketing the programme and the organisation, the Upstairs theatre offers a special relationship between the artists and the audience. There is a distinctive style of work done here to market. The word of mouth promotion on particular works attracts substantial audience. Currently there is less dependence on competitive marketing and more experiential promotion of
individual elements of the programme. In the Downstairs theatre the major income is generated by hiring the space to individuals and groups. Belvoir takes no responsibility for the material presented, and makes few artistic judgements in connection with this space.

Successful marketing programmes have already built a certain awareness in the market place. There are subscribers, the general Sydney theatre going public, visitors to the City and schools. There are efforts to build on the loyalty of regular theatre-goers. The budget included measures to establish greater bonding with the public the organisation was keen to attract. The General Manager worked hard to motivate everyone in the organisation to implement the vision, image and goals of the annual programme. The first point of contact was stressed. The telephone enquiries or bookings were seen as important opportunities to share information about programmes and company activity. The computerised booking service provided a useful database for ongoing contact with patrons. The impact of courteous, informed personal service was highlighted.

4.3.7 Tourism

The bulk of the company’s audience is the lower North Shore, Eastern and inner Western suburbs of Sydney. However, tourists have become an important, though small segment of Belvoir’s market.

The proximity of Belvoir Street Theatre to the budget accommodation of Sydney’s inner suburbs, especially for ‘backpackers’, has had an impact on the promotion of the company’s programme. There is regular pamphlet distribution to these places. There are special offers, with coupons brought in by visitors to give certain data. It is hard to collect box office data on tourists. Individuals are invited to be on mailing lists when they phone book; if they are visitors, and do not take up the offer, the organisation gets instant feedback from them about the geographical origin of their audience.

Tourism outlets are used to promote some productions. There are specific productions which lend themselves to promotion to international visitors. There is a great deal of interest in Aboriginal theatre, and the company’s production of Louis Nowra’s, Radiance attracted substantial interest from tourists, according to the CEO. The company appears in various tourism publications which identifies the theatre as a place to see Australian theatre. The company has a strong national reputation and domestic tourists are readily accepting of a visit to the theatre as part of their Sydney itinerary. Weekends are particularly popular for visitors from interstate. There are out of town subscribers to Belvoir programmes.
4.3.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership

The General Manager is not always the decision maker. Sometimes the General Manager is the arbiter of decisions which are made in different sectors of the organisation. The General Manager is the morale builder; the caretaker of the organisation. It is the Board’s vision that is in place, and that is interpreted by the General Manager. It is organic and judgements need care taken.

Women are well represented in the workforce of the organisation. Presently the Chairs of both Boards are women as is the General Manager, Production Manager and 75% of staff. Gender equity is not an issue. The female work characteristic at Belvoir distinguishes the company from what happens elsewhere in the industry. A comfortable environment has developed which participants feel best serves the artistic endeavours of the company. Much of the work culture has been influenced by the General Manager’s concern for creating an environment which allows all staff to work co-operatively in the best interest of the company. “It’s more supportive, more nurturing; it’s more honest and sensitive” says the CEO.

4.3.9 Research Propositions

The following observations are made of Belvoir Street Theatre based on the research propositions stated in Chapter One. Each proposition offers an opportunity to address elements of the management culture of the case study organisation. Implications of these findings are recorded in Chapter Five.

The operational and strategic management choices cultural organisations make are determined by their constituency and reflect the distinctive features of that constituency.

The innovative approach to establishing an organisational structure which best represents investors and arts practitioners has provided a model for the cultural sector. The interest of persons in maintaining a resource, while not intervening in day to day management of the organisation has created interest amongst cultural managers. The organisation’s constituency has a strong, articulate commitment to a specific artform, theatre; with many contributors being established practitioners. The unique structure of two companies is open to annual review, with constant reference to the Board and the Artistic Advisors by the CEO. The artistic programme is enhanced by the experience and knowledge of the investors.

The original goals and expressed needs of the membership shape the culture of an organisation.

The emotional start to this organisation, the sincere expression of the conservation of a cultural resource and the establishment of an ensemble theatre production company
has informed the development of the organisation. Many original investors are still part of the organisation and maintain an active interest in the activities of the organisation. The original vision is enshrined in the constitution and management constantly refers to the mission as they pursue the annual programme. Numerous social functions associated with the programme also contribute feedback which ensures management adheres to the original ideals.

**All contributors to the organisation’s programme affect effective and successful cultural management and management culture.**

Belvoir Street has established strong links with the wider performing arts community. Its own annual programme includes distinctive performance projects from artists from within the organisation, as well as visiting performers. It hosts performing arts festivals from the local (geographical) community and multi-cultural projects and works in with events presented in the district. It has become a major player in the city’s performing arts scene providing services different to those of the Sydney Theatre Company. The work which is presented targets distinct markets and informs and is informed by the management culture of the organisation. It hosts multi-cultural festivals, looks to specifically encourage performance opportunities for women, Aborigines and gays and lesbians.

The company’s subscription list provides an opportunity for feedback from audiences and this influences programming and management choices made by management. Volunteer supporters of the organisation are increasingly attending to aspects of the annual programme through day to day administrative tasks. The sponsorship contribution of Telecom has made available the youth theatre access programme and has consolidated a commitment to educating audiences for the future.

**The contribution individual organisations make to the nation’s cultural diversity can occur independently of government policy and practice.**

This organisation has its origins in the performing arts industry and has consistently devoted itself to enhancing audience experience as well as providing employment opportunities for Australian artists. It has worked to develop touring programmes of interest to overseas venues and thus exported local talent. It has made a name for itself overseas and been able to showcase the diverse skills available in the country. This sharing of Australian talent has not been done entirely without support from government.

This organisation is one of two in this study which has demonstrated a close tie with government policy and practice. The company has attracted government subsidy for its programme and management and new theatre space. It has also sought sponsorship to allow it to pursue diverse programming options. This contact with
government policy and funds has not mitigated against the organisation’s interest to be recognised as an innovative company providing diverse repertoire. The certainty of government funding for specific projects has allowed for other financial commitments from corporate sponsors and other government agencies.

Cultural management is readily making the connection between the arts and tourism.

The company recognises that its location, close to the City’s CBD, influences numbers attending performances by visitors. The reputation the company has gained over the years is also a draw for national and international visitors to the City. In terms of promotion the company is addressing the distribution of information to visitors and residents of its programme and facilities. City wide accommodation and tourism outlets are informed of the company’s programme.

Many international artists play in the company spaces and this attracts visitors to the venue. Hosting festivals which are attractive to visitors allows the organisation to heighten the connection between the arts and tourism.

4.4. Bangarra Dance Theatre Ltd

4.4.1 Cultural Context

The role of dance (like music and drama) in traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies was such an integral part of everyday life that the concept of an individual dancer (actor or musician) was unknown. This did not mean that individual expertise and/or skill was not recognised and admired. Men and women, separately and together, inherited rights and obligations to and responsibility for specific cultural activities such as dance. Skills and obligations were associated with ceremonial and religious activity (ATSIC, 1994:48). This cultural context is one which generated the developments discussed below with members of the Bangarra Dance Theatre.

There is increasing interest amongst the small number of trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in contributing to the potential which exists for a performing arts industry. The founding members of Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia were dancers and administration staff from Aboriginal and Islander Dance Theatre (AIDT) which was the professional arm of National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA). They were determined to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists “to explore, express and present the identity of Australia’s unique cultures through dance and theatre performances” (Bangarra Dance Theatre Annual Report, 1992:5). That was in 1989. It was started by Carole
Johnson with Cheryl Stone in administration. An independent company was required for professional dancers who were identified and ready to go out and perform. Initial funds for the company’s activities came from the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET).

The ‘Friends’ of the initial organisation were people who were eager to allow for professional dance opportunities for graduates from NAISDA. Rob Bryant, CEO, was particularly interested in establishing an educational base for the organisation, so that a greater appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and creativity could be shared through dance and theatre. He saw an opportunity for the establishment of the equivalent of the Sydney Dance Company for indigenous people. He foresaw a long process of educating the general community, fellow artists and funding agencies of the worth of the development of this organisation. Another aspect of the task was to differentiate Bangarra from the various indigenous companies presenting performance work in Sydney at the time. The organisation was determined to establish itself as a valuable independent professional body.

The name Bangarra, which means ‘to make fire’, was registered when it became obvious that as an independent professional dance organisation there was not going to be any connection with NAISDA or AIDT. The original office for the organisation was in Carole Johnson’s flat; it was subsequently at Railway Square in Sydney. People involved worked very hard to maintain the organisation. As it developed, Rob resigned from the interim Board and applied for funds to support his appointment as the General Manager. Once this position was established there were three people in administration, himself, Cheryl Stone taking bookings, and an employed promotions person. Staff was involved in substantial lobbying in the early years. There was considerable interest amongst Aboriginal dancers in the potential of the organisation.

4.4.2 Aims and Objectives

Bangarra’s work receives positive reviews, clearly indicating that the artistic aims are being met through an entertaining and inspiring repertoire. Critic Jill Sykes suggests the work’s:

“greatest strength is the fusion of its thematic and movement sources in a way that speaks directly to an audience” and acknowledges that “this very complex area of mingling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage with contemporary dance styles, of blending traditional spirituality and today’s social attitudes, is the subject of much discussion and changing views.”

(Sykes, 1994:27)

The artistic policy is initiated by the Artistic Director. Dance from the past and present is dealt with in the choreography with influences from the traditional, ancestral
culture alongside the urban environmental influences. The company’s production of *Ochres* (1994), choreographed by Stephen Page and Bernadette Walong, brought together traditional and contemporary strands of image, ideas, creativity and movement from the spiritual and physical worlds. All environments provide cultural messages for the dancers to express.

The themes of urban and traditional Aboriginal life permeate the company’s artistic programme. The company’s vision is:

> To translate understanding of and commitment to the continuation and development of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through the dance expression of spiritual heritage and determination to survive.

(Bangarra Dance Theatre Annual Report, 1992:3).

The aim for the company’s artistic direction is to:

> be the foremost professional Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance theatre company that performs creative and distinctive combination of traditional and contemporary Australian dance, and

> involve and encourage the valuable contribution of traditional artists, complementing the spectrum of Australia’s diverse society.

(Bangarra Dance Theatre Annual Report, 1992:5)

Programming is determined through negotiations between the General Manager and the Artistic Director. The lead up time for overseas touring is substantial, so five year plans are in place. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) provides significant funding for the company’s programme, so the long range planning has become part of the advocacy programme as well.

A long term aim of the organisation has been to establish a home for performance. The company uses rented accommodation for rehearsal and performance, and looks to negotiate with government for a permanent home. This could be used, too, to promote the cultural tourism aspects of the company’s mission. There are opportunities for a combined visual and performing arts cultural venue and it is anticipated that something will be announced shortly. The Olympic Games also offers an incentive to gain public support for such a cultural centre. It will allow the name of Bangarra to be in full public view.
Bangarra is a leader in Aboriginal arts practice. It has a vision. It has “spearheaded the development of a new style of Australian dance, drawing boldly from the essence and spirituality of Australia’s traditional dance styles and combining them with the very best of contemporary dance and music” (Programme notes, Ninni, 1994). The company sees as part of its brief the provision of professional performance opportunities. It wishes to increase the profile of quality indigenous artists. It wants to provide a role model for young Aboriginal people and encourage them to contribute on and off stage to the growing cultural industry. It wants to link with other Aboriginal arts organisations to offer a comprehensive cultural package for indigenous communities, the broader Australian community and overseas visitors.

Members of the company are committed to success. Bangarra’s vision for the future includes:

- to be Australia’s flagship indigenous dance theatre company, by effectively harnessing a blend of traditional and contemporary dance styles, so that recognition be given to Australia’s indigenous cultures;
- to secure permanent premises in Sydney for the presentation of Australia’s indigenous cultures, working in conjunction with other indigenous arts organisations; and
- to expand the company’s current audience base in Australia – the general public, the people in remote areas, those living in the traditional communities and continue developing its world audience through international touring (Programme notes, Ninni, 1994).

### 4.4.3 Arts Programming

Bangarra started touring schools with programmes of indigenous dance. Some funding left over from the Bicentenary (1988) allocation of the NSW Ministry for the Arts assisted the initial programme. There was no Artistic Director as such, but both Cheryl and Carole were involved in devising shows for the five dancers, as they had been dancers themselves. The company has been able to arrange for space to be available at a nominal rent at the South Sydney Police–Citizen Youth Club. Use of this venue has proved to break down a lot of social and cultural barriers. The company has a good relationship with the Club. The present administrative office is in Chalmers Street, Redfern.

The first arts grant came for creative development. This allowed for the employment of a choreographer and freed artists from the schools’ touring to make new work. The performances were now at major community functions. There was considerable media coverage and the community perception of the organisation changed. A lot of effort
went into making Canberra (government agencies) aware of the organisation’s potential. The company performed as guests at 1990 Dance Week at the National Gallery in Canberra.

The company travelled to Indonesia in 1991. The composition of the dance company was such that the traditional element, Yirrikala and Torres Strait Islander particularly, was of interest to overseas audiences. The along with the traditional elements contributed by these groups, the contemporary style was also popular. Funds for the overseas travel came from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and allowed for the dancer component of the company to be expanded to twelve.

The company’s first theatre work was undertaken at Sidetrack Theatre in Addison Road, Marrickville. The show was called *Up Until Now*. The current Artistic Director, Stephen Page, was originally engaged as guest choreographer. Brothers Russell and David Page have also subsequently been employed more regularly. Stephen and Russell, dancers, came from NAISDA, while David’s music has become part of the company’s repertoire.

The company continues to tour domestically and overseas. Through the years, members of Bangarra have performed in Hong Kong, Indonesia, China, the United Kingdom, the United States, Spain (for Expo ‘92) and New Zealand. They will shortly extensively tour South East Asia and plan to be in Atlanta for the Olympic Games in 1996. Their work overseas is often as part of festivals. This provides opportunities to work with other artists and share ideas and techniques. The 1993 whirlwind United States and United Kingdom tour of *Praying Mantis Dreaming* included performances at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London’s South Bank Centre. In the United States, Bangarra performed in Los Angeles, New York and on the Pala Indian Reservation in San Diego county as part of an Indigenous Arts Festival which included mainland American natives as well as those from Hawaii and Ecuador (Osborne, 1993:47).

It is important to continue the educational process and to showcase indigenous talent. The company is keen to show off to funding agencies how their money is being spent, so the company often stages work at high profile events in Canberra and documents work on video especially to demonstrate the fulfilment of funding obligations. Performances are also staged at arts events which assist with the company’s profile with its peers. The company has performed in all parts of the continent in conventional venues and some interesting alternatives. It has been important to show work in traditional communities as well as the mainstream dance venues. This Aboriginal constituency needs to be assured that their culture is well represented. Visits to traditional communities provide opportunities to share interpretations and show how artists from their backgrounds are contributing to contemporary arts.
practice. The feedback from these visits is strong. The company annually provides numerous free community performances to facilitate fundraising in Aboriginal communities.

The company maintains links with other professional dance groups, in Australia and overseas. The company actively contributes to annual Dance Week activities and the National Dance Summit. Guest artists in the company are being encouraged. Africa Oye Company performed at Aboriginal Dance Theatre, Redfern as part of a cultural exchange, with Bangarra as part of the Australian representation. The company’s audience largely comprises persons well educated in dance. There is a great deal of work to do on attracting new audiences to the company’s work. There is a particular effort geared to attracting Aboriginal audiences through marketing offers including ‘two for the price of one’ seats through community groups.

**4.4.4 Staff**

The company currently employs 25 people – dancers, production and administration, full time and ten part time personnel. This includes trainees. There are no unemployed stage lighting or stage managers about, so people need to be trained in the theatre production skills required by the company. There are full and part time staff. Equal Employment Opportunity is an issue in this organisation as with any business operating in Australia. Employment within the company is based on best person for the job, but preference is given to Aboriginal people for traineeships. There are short term training opportunities for staff which are taken up from time to time.

As the organisation has developed new administrative positions have been required. The Board ratifies suggestions from the General Manager. A strategic plan has also identified the need for separating positions such as financial controller and marketing manager from the jobs undertaken by the General Manager. The 1995–6 expansion in numbers of company personnel include provision for five to six in administration, two to three in bookings/sales, four people in marketing/media, three to four in production, 16–18 performing artists, and five performance support staff.

Most artists are employed full time. They rehearse daily and are available for special projects. There are aspects of the programme which allow for the employment of special artists on a contract basis. This is evident in the overseas touring programming. Some tours require more or less artists and production members and the flexibility of employment is met through contract labour.

The company’s Artistic Director is Stephen Page. He joined Bangarra as Principal Choreographer in 1991 after training at NAISDA; and dancing and choreographing with the Sydney Dance Company and the Aboriginal and Islander Dance Theatre. The
work Stephen has created for Bangarra includes *Up Until Now*; the company’s first full length production, *Praying Mantis Dreaming* and *Ninni*. His other choreographing/directing credits include dance theatre work for stage, opera, television, rock video and special events spectacles.

Bangarra Dance Theatre personnel is distributed thus:

- a Board of Directors of nine people, with Ms Lola Forester as Chairperson;
- the artistic sector comprising the Artistic Director, Stephen Page; Musical Director, David Page; Dance Mistress Cynthia Lochard; Traditional Cultural Consultant, Guypunura Munyarryun; Dance Teachers, Special Guest composers, choreographers; and company dancers;
- the administration sector comprising (at time of study) General Manager, Robin Bryant; Operations Manager, Cheryl Stone; Financial Controller Jeanette Cheung; Publicity Officer, Dolores Scott; Administrative assistants and volunteer support; and
- the production and consultation sector.

The company has a commitment to build up its Bangarra Friends base of support. There is recognition of the value of this network of people who are interested in the work of the company. Effort is being put into developing this volunteer sector, offering incentives to them and harnessing their word of mouth information networks.

The incumbent General Manager, Rob Bryant, attended Kuringai College of Advanced Education in 1989 undertaking a Bachelor of Business degree. He had successfully conducted projects during the Bicentennial year; and was introduced to the notion of marketing Aboriginal culture. Cheryl Stone invited Rob to become a ‘Friend’ of Bangarra and he became a member of the interim Board of Directors which comprised three non-Aboriginals and himself. The three other men represented substantial business interests and have continued to offer support and sponsorship to the developing dance theatre Company.

### 4.4.5 Finance

Bangarra Dance Theatre is a non-profit enterprise established to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performing artists in the entertainment industry within Australia. Its annual turnover is in the vicinity of $850,000 per annum. Its revenue over the years has included performance fees and box office, grants from arts agencies, the Australia Council’s Performing Arts Board and Aboriginal Arts Unit, NSW Ministry for the Arts and Queensland Arts Department, ATSIC, Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade, capital grants from NSW Office of Aboriginal Affairs and ATSIC, wage subsidies from DEET and ATSIC, sponsorship and donations, programme sales, merchandising and membership.

Income earned from touring schools was supplemented at first by a wage subsidy received from DEET. The fight to secure funding for the employment of Aboriginal artists was protracted. By the end of 1989 funds had been located to pay the dancers. During the early days there were problems with black politics and the emergence of Bangarra as a new player. Arts funding was sought for 1990, from NSW Ministry for the Arts, the Performing Arts Board and the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council.

The company aspires to attracting annual grant funds from governments. This has not yet happened. Annual funding is seen to be an acknowledgement from the Australia Council of the organisation’s professionalism. Bangarra wants to be the first Aboriginal organisation to be in receipt of annual funding. The recognition from the art funding agencies has implications for acceptance in the wider community, especially the business community. Sponsors are more likely to be interested in committing to companies and projects if government funds are invested.

Bangarra has been fortunate to secure sponsorship from Arthur Andersen and Australian Associated Press Group from the outset. Other sponsors have included Qantas, Esso Australia, Peter D. Walker and Company, Logical Solutions and Cathay Pacific. A great deal of support has been in-kind. Cash support is recognised with a series of trade-offs like special nights, tickets for clients. For example, with *Praying Mantis Dreaming*, special functions were staged to attract support from computer companies to improve the service provided for the administration of the company. The General Manager is responsible for seeking out support, in whatever guise, to assist the company’s programmes. Board members also help with introductions to individuals and groups who may contribute to the future of the organisation.

Annually, the General Manager is bound to apply for funds from a variety of sources. ATSIC provides the organisation with project money. They are very supportive of the organisation’s employment opportunities. Box office is improving. Support is coming for special projects. The organisation has ordinary and corporate memberships. It provides an opportunity for fundraising.

There is a continued desire for the company to tour ‘to the back fence communities’ in such towns as Wilcannia, Bourke and Moree (Dwyer, 1994:24). The NSW Ministry for the Arts increased its funding to the company in 1994 to assist with this objective. The company played to national audiences of about 30,000 in 1993 (Dwyer, 1994:24) and
money secured through the Dance Touring Initiatives Scheme allows for a continued commitment to the outreach work. The company hires transport and equipment for each of the tours. For some overseas tours the company has secured support from airline companies. There is some capital expenditure for equipment annually.

4.4.6 Marketing

Bangarra has a unique product. If there was competition for the dance dollar in terms of audience in Sydney, it would, at this time, go to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dance Theatre. The company’s presentation is strong enough to place itself in the mainstream entertainment area. The task is to attract as wide an audience as possible and tourism is a direction the company sees as vital for its future. The style of performance being developed by the company is distinctive, particularly through the work of Stephen Page, and people are wanting to see this blend of uniquely Australian dance. By putting the company’s work before the public at special events like the AFL Grand Final, or on the Midday Show with Ray Martin, it becomes part of the general consciousness of the community. The company’s dancers were seen nationally, on television, as the Prime Minister launched the ‘Creative Nation’ cultural policy in 1994.

The 1993 Year of Indigenous People allowed for a sharing of the company’s work with many people. Attempts to break down barriers of racism have provided the company with opportunities to build partnerships. A spectacular function was the 1993 AFL Grand Final in Melbourne where Bangarra contributed to a massive performance at half time. ATSIC and DEET funded the performances by numerous groups. The pride which Aboriginal people can have in professional product is an important aspect of the company’s services. The company then provides a role model for young Aboriginal people.

The company now employs a marketing person to assist with in-house communication and the promotion of the company’s work. The company has used advertising in print and audio visual media. Television advertising has proved very successful. The company’s work is visually stimulating and attractive. The work has attracted considerable publicity for its activity which helps with the budget. It has developed quality video documentation of its work which is available to promote the company and specific programmes.

4.4.7 Tourism

Tourism provides a significant direction for development of Bangarra. Already the company contributes to the cultural image of the nation projected by mainstream tourism agencies. The company has a commitment to the future division of the professional company, so that one section would provide regular performance services
for the tourism industry. Already the company shares information with tourism agencies. Videos are seen in 55 hotels in Sydney, advertising and promotional material is available to Tourism NSW. By planning ahead the company is able to contribute to long term promotional material prepared by tourism businesses.

The company has been featured in numerous tourism promotional publications. In “A Talent for Tourism”, the Commonwealth Department of Tourism (Gray, 1994) acknowledgement is made of the strength of the contribution made by Bangarra to the national tourism strategy. It highlights the development of the company and consolidates its profile as a leader in the provision of Aboriginal arts services.

The findings of research by the Australia Council (Spring, 1993) examining the interest of international visitors in Aboriginal arts and culture provide important guidelines for Bangarra as they seriously prepare for their ongoing involvement in the tourism industry. Key findings include:

- 48% of international visitors to Australia are interested in seeing and learning about Aboriginal arts and culture;
- over one third of visitors to Australia undertake an activity related to Aboriginal arts and culture;
- the value of purchases of Aboriginal arts and souvenirs by international visitors is estimated at $46 million a year, an increase from $30 million in 1990; and
- younger visitors are more interested in seeing and learning about Aboriginal arts and culture than older visitors and they engage more often in activities which satisfy this interest.

4.4.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership

Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia is a company limited by guarantee. The first Board, elected in January, 1990 comprised six Aboriginal members and three non-Aboriginal members. The Board has been maintained at nine persons. It has been recognised that the company requires expertise not readily available to the Aboriginal community, so having positions on the Board for the corporate sector at the moment means non-Aboriginal interests are included. The company wants to take advantage of the best advice and assistance available. The majority of members are Aboriginal and the Chairperson must be Aboriginal.
From the start, participants in the development of the organisation showed and shared ‘commitment’. It has been this commitment to working hard for a cause which has been encouraged. Staff need to be kept informed of the directions and actions requiring attention at any time. There is a need for dancers and administrators to understand each other’s contribution to the organisation.

There is regular evaluation of practices like staff meetings, social gatherings for staff, division of jobs in each section of the organisation. There are members of staff who have been with the company since the beginning and they have a special contribution to make to the culture of the organisation. They have provided valuable continuity.

The artistic activity is handled by the company’s Artistic Director. There is a separation of roles, however the General Manager is in driver’s seat of the organisation. The company has utilised a conventional management structure. The General Manager has been instrumental in shaping the direction of administration; but has not interfered with the artistic side. Funding considerations impinge on the artistic side, and there are opportunities for the General Manager and the Artistic Director to collaborate on the search for sponsorship for example.

There is constant feedback on all aspects of the company’s annual programme. On each project there is a financial report, artistic and production report. This is required within three months of completion of the project. These are used for the company’s Board and the funding agencies. They monitor the organisation’s performance. They assist with the company’s accountability in the wider community. The material builds up the company’s data base. There is information which can be utilised for the future, administratively and artistically.

The technology in place has assisted in preparing this documentation and maintaining appropriate records of the organisation’s development. There is still a way to go in the application of the technology. The company has a plan to utilise as many programmes as possible to support its efforts.

4.4.9 Research Propositions

The following observations are made of the Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia based on the research propositions stated in Chapter One. Each proposition offers an opportunity to address elements of the management culture of the case study organisation. Implications of these findings are recorded in Chapter Five.

The operational and strategic management choices cultural organisations make are determined by their constituency and reflect the distinctive features of that constituency.
Bangarra Dance Theatre’s operational and management choices were initially influenced by the experience and interest of the individuals who emerged from the Aboriginal Dance community to establish the organisation. Some of the founders were dancers, others administrators and their collaborative approach determined the day to day running of the organisation and provided a role model for others who subsequently joined to effectively produce annual programmes. The network each early member of the organisation could draw on from within the Aboriginal Dance community assisted in the preparation of a business plan and the early activities. There was acknowledgement of limited arts administration experience amongst early members, however a strong commitment to represent Aboriginal dancers and dance practice brought such experience as did exist to come together to set up the organisation.

**The original goals and expressed needs of the membership shape the culture of an organisation.**

The determination to provide employment for traditional and contemporary dancers influenced the founders of the organisation, the programming and management choices for the organisation. The fundamental need was to create, nurture and promote Aboriginal dancers’ work, initially in Sydney, but ultimately nationally and internationally. The opportunities provided by touring to regional areas was the first way to satisfy this need for work. The interest by dancers and choreographers in generating the best possible opportunities for indigenous performers has informed the development of the organisation’s culture. A small administrative staff is maintained to support the original ideals.

**All contributors to the organisation’s programme affect effective and successful cultural management and management culture.**

The founders of the organisation cast their net wide to inform the arts community and the indigenous community of their interest in providing performance opportunities for indigenous artists. Government finance was sought from the Australia Council, the NSW Ministry for the Arts, ATSIC and corporate sponsors. Each of these sectors continues an involvement. Each appears to recognise the importance of their association with Bangarra. Volunteers in the Aboriginal arts community have come forward to support the administrative activities of the organisation. Agencies in the wider community have identified closely with Bangarra and have invited the company to contribute to special community and sporting events in Sydney and in the regions. The corporate organisations which have associated themselves with Bangarra have offered experts in accounting and marketing to assist the company’s administrators with planning tasks.
The contribution individual organisations make to the nation’s cultural diversity can occur independently of government policy and practice.

This is the second case study organisation which has had government funding central to its achievements. It was believed from the outset that the organisation required government support for operational strength and psychological impact in the arts sector and the wider community. With little Aboriginal arts infrastructure in place, Bangarra demonstrated a commitment to providing a unique service for its constituency; but could not raise the funds from within that constituency.

Professional Aboriginal dancers have been trained in institutions which have been sustained by government investment. Bangarra recognised the potential to represent a distinctive cultural heritage, which required government assistance for both the artistic and administrative aspects of the organisation’s functioning. A deliberate strategy was designed to attract funds from ATSIC, and government arts and employment bodies. There was no attempt to conduct business independent of government policy and involvement.

Its very presence in the dance area of the entertainment industry contributes to the provision of diverse cultural services. The company has contributed to numerous special events celebrating the nation’s cultural diversity; but little of what the company has undertaken could have been achieved without the investment of government and the education of the public to support such investment. Financial support was sought for projects from wherever appropriate resources could be located in the local, State and Federal government arenas.

Cultural management is readily making the connection between the arts and tourism.

Numerous government tourism agencies have used Aboriginal heritage as a focus for marketing of the general Australian tourism product internationally. Bangarra has noticed this window of opportunity. Many of its projects attract attention from overseas visitors, as well as providing opportunities to showcase the traditional and contemporary dance practice overseas. The company has positioned itself to represent performing arts interests at the nexus of tourism and cultural industry development.

4.5 Theatre North Inc

4.5.1 Cultural context

Regional communities have had mechanisms in place for entertaining themselves for generations. Out of this tradition have emerged more formal organisations to provide an annual programme of amateur performances. On the North Coast of NSW there is a
substantial heritage in the preparation and presentation of musical and theatrical events.

The amateur theatrical experience in regional communities has been more spontaneous. Groups of people recognised a performance opportunity and prepared to present a theatrical event for specific occasions, a melodrama here, an original operetta or Christmas pantomime there. Lismore has benefited from the commitment of gifted thespians over the years which allowed for a flourishing of these sporadic elements as well as the sustained efforts of groups like Enterprise Productions and the Lismore Theatre Club.

Professional theatrical services were generally provided by touring players. Performances were supported by the Arts Council and locally promoted by committees of folk who hosted post performance parties for the billeted artists. Nomads Theatre Company was created in 1979 by College of Advanced Education lecturer, actor and director, Brian Fitzsimmons (who was instrumental in establishing Lismore Theatre Club in 1970) as a vehicle for the growing number of energetic young actors coming from an education background.

Peter and Ros Derrett worked with Nomads to stage Bedfellows by Barry Oakley to open the Alstonville Community Centre in 1980. Both had worked in community based theatre groups, like Lismore Theatre Club. Peter had established himself locally as a Director with a distinctive theatrical style mounting productions of Marat Sade by Weiss and Equus by Shaffer for the Theatre Club to critical acclaim. Formerly a teacher and drama consultant with the Department of School Education in 1981, he was working in a new studio at (former) St Mary’s College, Lismore conducting one of the few drama courses in secondary schools in non-metropolitan NSW.

His experience of theatre at university and his work in Britain with people like Charles Marowitz and his understanding of the work of (his guru) Peter Brook led him to contact local professional artists and contemplate the development of an ensemble of theatre workers based in Lismore. Peter believed the time was right (for him and others) to embark on the establishment of an organisation to serve the needs of regional professional artists. Professional artists who had worked with Peter expressed an interest in the formation of a company where challenging contemporary material from the world of theatre could be developed. Some who had trained and worked in Melbourne, Sydney and overseas, and chose to live in the region welcomed a chance to pursue the art in close proximity to their homes. They wanted to work in theatre. Many had particular cross artform theatrical interests.
They were interested in searching for ways to contact audiences through a group approach. The process of developing a production developed by Peter Derrett was seen to be stimulating and challenging by these artists. Modelled on Peter Brook’s belief in “immediate, rough and holy theatre” there was a questioning technique, in a visual context which generated intense, ritualised passionate group dynamics. The leadership of the director and the management of the rehearsal process was thoroughly documented.

There were models which had developed in Britain and Europe which were explored prior to finally determining the structure of Theatre North. In Australia, Theatre South provided a useful glimpse at the connection between a regional theatre company and an educational institution; Peter Brook’s intense (CIRT) artistic collaboration and the repertory, ensemble practices of community groups like Joan Littlewood’s Theatre Workshop were of interest. Study tours to Britain undertaken by the Derretts in the 1970s to investigate regional theatre developments and educational drama activities indicated the success of a core of actors with a home base providing services relevant to distinctive regional audiences. Contact was made with local education authorities to elicit their support. Schools were canvassed for interest in the provision of appropriate Theatre In Education (TIE) programmes. A great deal of enthusiasm was expressed for proposed Theatre North services.

Theatre North was established in September, 1981 as a partnership between Peter and Ros Derrett. A core of ten actors worked on the first season of plays for 1982. The group met to discuss the programme. It was to feature a strong ritualised style of theatrical presentation, original music and choreography which all felt had not been available to regional audiences till that time. The management structure of the partnership allowed for administrative decisions and operations to be undertaken by the writer, while the artistic decisions were taken by Peter Derrett. Consultation with those involved in the ensemble was ongoing and collaborative. Patterns and processes for the preparation of each production were initiated by Peter Derrett, then discussed with participants; then implemented and documented. Regular meetings with the group provided guidelines for the development of the programme and the public profile. The consultative circle of group communication was born!

Negotiations between the Derretts and the management of St Mary’s College established the Drama Studio as the home base for the company. Supervision of this venue was made easier by Peters employment on the site. An arrangement was reached where Theatre North contributed ten percent of gross box office to the College for access to the space for rehearsals, workshops and performances. The College utilised the monies collected to enhance the facility and Theatre North’s capital investments also contributed to the improvement of the facility for its daily use with
students and its own, more public utilisation. The College management acknowledged the benefits of such a relationship with an essentially community based group, the opportunities it provided for students to work with professional artists and the raising of the profile of the school through the pursuit of the creative arts. The space could only be accessed by the Company when the school did not require it for educational purposes.

Actors involved from the beginning had a concern for the preparation of work which was theatrically substantial, and challenging to artists and audience alike. There was a determination that local audiences should not only be fed a diet of slight music hall fare, Australiana with caricatured corked hats or poorly translated spoofs. The skills available to the group allowed for the creation of new music for scores for shows; graphic artists and designers who could contribute their talents to set, costume and poster/logo designs for the company’s activities; choreographers who could develop appropriate movement for particular productions; and technicians who assisted with the shows’ lighting and sound. Throughout this initial period, all involved believed they were in for the long haul, that ‘the Company’ had a long life and that their present personal investment of time, energy and sometimes finance was in fact a foundation for an ensemble model of artists’ endeavour.

4.5.2 Aims and Objectives

A mission statement was established from the start. It allowed for those involved in Theatre North activities to commit themselves to provide theatrical services to the highest standard for a regional audience. The company was completely grounded in regional Australia; offering diverse live theatre as part of the cultural tapestry. From the outset there was a determination to provide employment for skilled and experienced artists, as well as the provision of training opportunities. A strong interest in the availability of theatrical activity for the region’s youth was seen to be satisfied by the development of touring programmes (Theatre In Education) to schools and communities in isolated parts of the region, the convening of skills based workshops and assistance to schools with the creation of original work.

Original members, and subsequent participants have seen the company as a theatre company and not a social club. People have come together to contribute to the preparation and presentation of theatre. Theatre North is a production company. The focus of the energy was the arts themselves. The regional identity was to be served through the creativity of the participants. There was an element of celebration of the potential for this region. The natural growth of the culture within the organisation has been reflective of growth in confidence within the regional arts community.
The aims and objectives of Theatre North were documented at the establishment of the partnership. There have been minor amendments over the years as subsequent management structures have been put in place. Original members of the group came together to formalise the structure through incorporation under the *NSW Associations Incorporation Act, 1984* (Section 10(1)) in March 1986. At this time the aims and objectives were re-assessed.

**Theatre North Inc – Aims and Objectives**

1. **Mission Statement:**

   *The chief aim of Theatre North is to present a diverse repertoire, embracing classic, new and neglected plays from the whole world of theatre at the highest standard for regional audiences.*

2. The company is committed to encouraging the creation of new work and staging commissioned projects of artistic excellence.

3. The employment of experienced, qualified, talented and hardworking performing artists, designers, composers, choreographers, writers, technicians, directors, actors and administrators is a priority. Professional rates of remuneration are offered to professional participants when available.

4. Theatrical projects will be presented to the very highest standard. This will be determined with reference to preparation, processes and production standards internationally accepted by the theatre arts profession.

5. The company’s annual programme will offer regional audiences a variety of theatrical events and services as appropriate to expressed needs. These will include work:

   - specifically addressing needs of special groups like youth, the aged, the physically and intellectually challenged, ethnic minorities and the rurally isolated, including active participation by these groups;
   - commissioned work for specific community events like festivals and celebrations;
   - mainstage productions, in a variety of venues accessible to local and visiting audiences;
   - touring within the region, nationally and internationally;
   - in skills sharing from company artists and visiting personnel, in workshops, seminars, training programmes in conjunction with other performing arts institutions and camps;
entrepreneuring visiting national and international talent for performance or workshop;
• exhibiting documentation of the company’s work; and
• Theatre In Education programmes in schools as required.

6. The company subscribes to and co-operates with like minded groups in the arts to promote the status of theatre arts. The collaborative approach to advocacy, promotion, training, professional development is seen as fundamental for the future of regional arts practice.

7. The company is committed to maintaining contact with the world of theatre through professional networks and trends. It will promote, encourage, develop and improve knowledge, understanding, appreciation, enjoyment of theatre arts generally, with particular emphasis on youth involvement.

8. The company will purchase and maintain, in good condition, any necessary property required for the effective implementation of its annual programme. It will make this property available to other regional practitioners on request.

9. The company will hire equipment, personnel and venues, when appropriate, to allow projects to proceed in an artistically and economically sound manner.

10. Open auditions are to be held in response to the company’s annual programme, as presented by the Artistic Director to the Board. Auditions for specific projects will be held as required and conducted by the Director of the project in consultation with the company’s Artistic Director.

11. The company will, as far as permitted by law, from time to time collect funds from box office, solicit, receive, enlist and accept financial and other aid, subscriptions, donations, bequests, and grants from individuals, trusts, companies, associations, institutions and conduct fundraising campaigns.

12. Through ticket pricing, the company aims to make all its work accessible regardless of income.

13. The company will maintain comprehensive quality documentation of all projects. It will conduct effective marketing programmes and undertake efficient administrative practices.

On a project by project basis, best practice has been established with reference to other professional institutions and applied in a manner which allowed for most effective implementation of company policy.
4.5.3 Arts Programming and Community Contact

There was no tradition of government support to North Coast arts practitioners. Venues posed problems. Practical, capital resources were scarce. The Drama Studio was a fitting versatile non-proscenium space to establish a new way of offering theatre. The play was the thing and minimalist, non-naturalistic presentations allowed the 1982 season to showcase an alternative to traditional options. The company’s early concerns with providing employment led to a decision to split profits amongst participants in projects. No government funding was available and box office, sponsorship and in-kind support enabled the company to function viably. The priority of the company in the early days was strong artistic work, coverage of expenses, providing youthful audiences with diverse product. In its second year, a decision was made to present a popular musical, Godspell by Schwartz to raise revenue to pursue some other projects. This strategy was employed again in 1991 when the company collaborated with the (former) Gasworks Arts Centre to stage Little Shop of Horrors by Goggin at the Lismore Worker’s Club to a substantial audience. The accrued income facilitated other, less commercial, projects and accommodated a thirst for musicals in the community which is still requiring attention.

The requests from schools for relevant theatre, to support curriculum allowed the company to employ artists on touring programmes for a number of years. Some material was group devised, other plays were taken from the Australian and British repertoire. The commitment to rural isolated communities was fulfilled by presenting many of these schools programmes for wider, community audiences. The company created a number of new works itself. It was commissioned to develop a play to support the new music curriculum for primary schools.

Over the years the company has provided personnel to work with teachers involved with school based performance projects. A series of residential related arts camps were convened by the company in conjunction with the regional education authorities. The coastal and rainforest environments challenged the young people in their preparation of cross artform presentations and skills development. Theatre North conducted a number of regional performing arts workshops for the regional arts association, NORART. Special artists were invited to contribute on each occasion. Death Defying Theatre Company, from Sydney, took part in one programme, inspiring some outrageous processional behaviour for the concluding event. One year, the focus was playwriting and directing and guest artists were David Lynch and Noel Hodda. Workshops on this programme were not restricted to one location. David and Noel worked with local artists and the team toured to some isolated communities to allow access for young people often denied such opportunities.
Members of the company also assisted two local schools in the development of student productions. Students as potential audience have been a target market for the company’s programme planning. The tyranny of distance has forced many senior secondary students to neglect the performance element of their literature studies. As well, since the implementation of 2 Unit Drama as a subject for the Higher School Certificate (HSC), Theatre North has been mindful of an obligation to provide quality theatre experiences from the world of theatre, hence the Indonesian inspired *The Struggle of the Naga Tribe* by Rendra. Plays which have featured as HSC texts have made it onto the company’s annual playbill. Workshops are run in conjunction with performances. Directors and actors are made available for teacher in-servicing and student contact. Providing an opportunity for these young people to actually go to the theatre is important. Contact through these texts is generally the first live theatre experience these students have had, in a reasonably equipped theatrical venue. The company has offered support for students involved with the annual Globe Theatre Shakespeare Competition. Productions like *Hamlet: Something’s Rotten in the State of Denmark* in 1986 and *King Lear* in 1994 have provided audiences with some alternative approaches to text and presentation. Taking risks with traditional scripts has opened up debate, e.g. female Hamlet and Fool offer challenges to conventions, which have been a feature of the company’s work.

Young people are represented in the annual programmes through specially devised projects which involve them in all aspects of the production, on stage, off stage as crew, as front of house, in design and marketing. In 1988, Lismore City Council supported the company’s Bicentennial programme which concluded with a substantial play based on young people’s experience in Lismore and district. A lively expose of lifestyle choices, personal experiences and youthful exuberance consolidated the company’s commitment to developing a distinctly regional youth theatre. Young people contributed at all levels from composition, choreography, design and management. Many have gone on to train elsewhere and work in theatre. This investment in youth has been a major factor in the company’s programming.

The annual programme of the company has often been influenced by requests coming from the community for greater contact between artists and the general public, or special interest groups. For a number of years artists from the company worked with staff and students of Biala Special School in Ballina. Here, the intellectually and physically challenged youngsters undertook weekly drama workshops. Dramatic change was the order of the day. Subsequently, two works with public performances were prepared from ideas generated from the interaction with the young people. One show was staged in the company’s Drama Studio home and attracted a significant audience. Integrated arts activity gave expression to diverse ideas related to the themes of *Carnival* and *The Seaside*. 
Collage shows for special occasions were developed by artists in the company for Senior Citizen’s Week programmes in a number of regional venues. Peace activists invited the company to contribute to public Hiroshima Day events. Lismore’s sister city relationship was enhanced with a special production devised by the company involving actors and students from Kadina High School. Narrow Road to the Deep North was staged in the City’s central park during the day. A video of the show was sent to Yamata Takada as a symbol of friendship.

A suggestion that the company produce a play by Peta Murray called This Dying Business to support the work of palliative care practitioners in the region was a significant profile raising exercise for Theatre North. The NSW Department of Health (North Coast region) invested in the preparation of the play directed by guest director, Patrick Mitchell. A substantial regional tour to hospitals, communities and schools followed. The production was invited to open the International Conference of Children with terminal illnesses at the Sydney Opera House in 1993. The audience comprised medical, community welfare and family support personnel from all over the world. The performance was well received. It equally moved youthful and community audience when the company attracted a significant injection of funds from the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation for the production to tour to more isolated communities and into southeast Queensland, including numerous venues in the Brisbane metropolitan area.

The company has taken its work to local and interstate festivals. Theatre North’s production of Berkoff’s Agamemnon opened the Cultural Centre on Brisbane’s South Bank during the 1984 Warana Festival. The striking staging attracted the attention of future producers of entertainment at World Expo ‘88 in Brisbane. The company’s Artistic Director was commissioned to prepare two new works to be staged on different occasions in the amphitheatre space during the six month international exposition. With choreographers David Spurgeon and Leanne Craig, Peter Derrett developed Sol! and Anima which were strongly ritualised, visual movement works which reached over 20,000 people.

Visiting artists have been a feature of the company’s programming. Contact with individuals and groups who wish to share their work with an ‘off Broadway’ audience has found a secure home with Theatre North. Touring groups like Canberra’s ‘People Next Door’, ‘Death Defying Theatre Co.’ from Sydney, Brisbane Arts Theatre, Leonard Teale’s ‘Quiet Achievers’ and the London Theatre Workshop have played successful seasons at the Drama Studio. London Theatre Workshop’s Lenny Kovner came with two well received shows, I, Leonardo and Mistero Buffo. He worked with Peter Derrett on fine tuning the shows prior to undertaking more extensive touring.
The company is mindful of practices overseas, e.g. the United States where, as playwright Heather McCutchen reports, “to mount a production in New York is unbelievably expensive ... so the regional theatre network ... is very important for developing writers and for the common practice of out-of-town tryouts ... Broadway’s a mess but regional theatre is going strong and the audiences are learning to come” (1994:14).

As well as performance opportunities, the company regularly provides skills based workshops for company members as well as practitioners in the wider regional arts community. International guests have included movement expert Jonathan Waud, an exponent of the Laban method; Sue Jennings, British drama therapist who worked with both actors and volunteers involved in providing ‘helping services’; David Spurgeon dance lecturer at University of NSW; David Poulton and David Napier, puppeteers; Tony Llewellyn-Jones, experienced stage, film and television actor and producer; and Tim Burns, actor.

Issues, images, idiosyncrasies and ideas prevalent amongst the regional constituency have also contributed to the preparation of some material for the company’s programme. Two recent works were commissioned to demonstrate the richness of the region’s heritage and diversity. Funding from the NSW Ministry for the Arts allowed a young Brisbane based playwright, Valerie Foley, to develop a script around the legacy of the 1973 Aquarius Festival held in Nimbin. The impact on following generations of youth provided the impetus for a collage work which involved professional artists working with a large cast of young people. Days of Future Past provided a vehicle for contemporary expression. David Allen wrote a play, Deluge, which established the contribution Italian migrants have made to Lismore’s development and connected that with the flood-proneness with which the City is easily identified. The work was well received locally, and the production went to the 1994 Adelaide Fringe Festival.

Women writers have been encouraged. Ros Derrett’s The Lion House, a play on the life of Virginia Woolf, had a successful local season and was invited to be part of a new playwrights’ programme conducted by the Riverina Theatre Company in 1985. Annie Wylie contributed a dynamic one woman show, Steamroller, which theatrically exploited the female perspective. Brenda Shero wrote her one woman tale Sugar and Spite, with assistance from a grant from the NSW Ministry for the Arts, herself and musician Sean Peter. Peter Derrett’s Journeys was an exploration in movement and design of ‘anima’ through Hermann Hesse’s Narzis and Goldmund.

A massive community based project produced by the company in 1992 involved over 250 local professional and amateur performers. Xerxes was a result of a collaboration
between Theatre North, the Gasworks Arts Centre and the Australia Council’s Performing Arts and Literature Boards. Composer, Stephen Leek created a score to the libretto developed by Ros Derrett from a classic tale of the ancient world. The epic style allowed vast groups of musicians, actors and artists to connect for a four night season at Lismore City Hall. People from 8–80 years of age participated and the community response was extremely positive. The goodwill, artistic exchange between local arts groups and individuals has had lasting impacts. The local university, schools, community choirs and orchestras, families all joined in with vigour and excitement. Another world premiere for the company!

Internationally acclaimed contemporary plays have featured in the company’s programme, not long after many were staged in the United Kingdom or the United States. Annual mainstage programmes have contained Australian plays. Programming has been significantly influenced by the availability of talented and experienced actors, directors, musicians and technicians and so on. Experienced directors are rather thin on the ground in regional areas, and Theatre North has engaged a variety of performance project directors. New artists to the region often make Theatre North an early port of call to see if there are mutual performance opportunities. English mime, Svargo, came with a proposal which involved some solo performances, as well as numerous projects in which he worked as a member of the company core.

Each year the company contributes to independent community activities. Exhibitions of images from the company’s archives have been part of public and commercial displays. These have featured in regional promotions at specific functions. They have been printed in documents showcasing regional cultural life. Members of the company have contributed to street parades, community based charitable events and media forums. The company is regularly approached by community groups to contribute to their programmes and the company obliges as often as it sees as appropriate and manageable. Members of the company have performed with other groups offering professional and amateur performance opportunities in the region.

Theatre North has membership of a number of arts and community organisations. It is a foundation member of the regional arts association, NORART. Members belong to agencies such as Actors’ Equity (Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance) the Australian Institute of Arts Administrators, NSW Community Arts Association; subscribe to Artlink, Theatrefest newsletters, Theatre Australasia, Lowdown magazine for Youth Performing Arts; belong to Lismore Theatre Company, and local Arts Council branches. Personal professional networks are maintained and material is regularly forwarded to local, State and Federal arts agencies.
4.5.4 Staff

As an entity known as an incorporated association, Theatre North is obliged to conduct its business within guidelines set down under the *Incorporations Act, 1984*. The members of the organisation’s Management Committee (Board) are volunteers. Much of the administration and operational work undertaken by the company is conducted on a voluntary basis. Each project’s budget determines who gets paid and how much and for how long. Subsidy, sponsorship, donations augment box office input into the employment equation.

This community theatre company has the options of providing professional and non-professional employment opportunities. The traditional arts context has raised no single definition of an ‘artist’. Is the artist a person who has been professionally trained in an institution; or someone whose sole income is earned from their art in practice or as a teacher of the artform; or someone who is approved of by their profession; or someone whose work is critically approved of; or a person who describes themselves as an artist? The status of an individual, and subsequently the group to which that individual belongs in Australia appears to be determined by the payment of a fee for service. Whether an artist satisfies some or all the above criteria becomes a conundrum when describing the role of a community theatre company.

When funding allows, professional participants in projects are paid Award rates. The company has faced the same dilemma as many regional arts bodies where a decision has to be made to share the resources of an underfunded project on a pro/am basis. Youthful, enthusiastic, less experienced people are generally accepting of opportunities to work with professional artists and readily take up the travel allowance option, rather than a fee for service. Few artists actually live in close proximity to the theatre, so some compensation for transport expenses is generally seen as being appropriate.

Professional services are sought for particular aspects of the company’s programme. Designers are paid for their work in establishing images on and off the stage. Corinne Fletcher designed the company’s distinctive black and white logo, Gary Jolley created a year’s themed production designs. The commissioning of original music has brought the company into contact with some of the country’s great talent; from Stephen Leek’s contribution, to youthful composers, musicians and actors Sean Peter and Matthew Leonard. Fashion designer Rob Davies from Mullum Handprints designed the extraordinary costumes for the two World Expo ‘88 productions.

Artists from outside the region have been employed on various projects. The challenges provided by introducing new people to the team has provided some of the
more interesting aspects of how an organisation’s culture is viewed. The distinctive features of Theatre North’s production preparation have been highlighted when visitors wish to contribute to the programme. Some experiences have been more successful than others. The personality of the guest, their willingness to share, their experience of work with lean organisations are all brought to bear on the present exchange. Sometimes it is the physical dislocation, the ruralness of the experience, which provides the challenge.

The company has offered a number of training opportunities to members to enhance their employment options for the future. Skills development in specific artforms has been a feature of the company’s annual programme. The Board regularly reassesses the processes it utilises in all its dealings with members of each project. The etiquette of conventional theatrical practice has been documented and tailored to the conditions under which the company can operate effectively and efficiently. At all gatherings of the company a circle is formed to facilitate information exchange, feedback and planning options. While each meeting has an agenda, all participants are invited to contribute. Each contribution becomes part of the company’s documentation/archive.

Efforts are regularly made to describe to members the systems of shared meaning of the company. The characteristics of the company’s ‘culture’ involve the degree of responsibility, freedom and independence individuals have to take initiatives which will contribute to the vision/goals/objectives of the company. Performance expectations are clearly enunciated at the beginning of each project. Generally artists have discussed these elements of identity, innovation, risk taking and reward systems at the time of audition. Clear communication is given to outline support mechanisms which exist, roles to be played by particular personnel and strategies employed to resolve conflicts of an artistic or administrative nature. A simple proforma etiquette sheet is distributed at the initial meetings of youth performance projects and discussed. It has been found to be an effective introduction to industry practice.

A number of Board members are performance practitioners and share the task of demonstrating the core values of the company. Board members are readily accessible to young and old, new and long term participants for support, information sharing and sustenance. Many people work with the company on a sequence of projects. Annual auditions allow people to make a commitment of a period of time. This lack of turnover allows for a culture to be nurtured that is responsible, caring and enhances the stability of the company. There are people who have been part of annual programmes since the company’s inception. Others maintain contact through other media, assisting front of house, convening group booking programmes, making costumes, constructing sets, donating money – then return to the stage for more concerted commitments of time and energy.
As volunteers, people generally wish to know prior to their involvement what they will have to do, how much time they will be obliged to commit, what to do if something goes wrong, what training they might receive on the job, whether initiative will be encouraged, whether their skills will be evaluated and whether they will be able to leave amicably. If volunteers can articulate their preferred work environment, it is easier to allocate appropriate tasks for each. Holland (cited in Handy, 1985:33) suggests that people might enjoy realistic, intellectual, social, conventional, enterprising and artistic work environments. Theatre North offers that sort of variety and on different projects. The characteristics for each preference is taken into account when preparing projects and attempts are made to match skills and experience to the tasks to be undertaken for successful implementation of each enterprise.

4.5.5 Finance

The financial management of Theatre North is shared between the company’s administrator and Board’s Treasurer. Financial reports are presented and discussed at each monthly Board meeting in a standard format. The administrator provides information relating to prospective and actual budget items of expenditure and income. Detailed budgets are prepared on each of the company’s projects. Annual turnover by the company has varied from $40,000 to $150,000. It is a small, lean operation. In recent years, 60–70% of expenditure has been for artists’ fees. Marketing and promotion is the next substantial investment, then production expenses and administration.

Local government and regional businesses have contributed financially, and ‘in-kind’ to the operations of the organisation. The sponsorship area has increased in importance and the relevance to local needs has been identified in programming and scheduling activity. This local support, includes substantial interest from regional media. Projects are dependent on box office viability. The company applies for funding from arts agencies regularly to support the employment of professional artists. Generally the monies requested are seen to be the minimum required to effectively undertake the project. When this is not matched by the real contribution of the funding agency, amendments are necessitated. This is the experience of most arts organisations in this country. Are projects funded to fail? In regional Australia, to seek alternative, supplementary funds to contribute to a project is quite hazardous. Long term planning with any degree of certainty is out of the question. Unrealistic expectations are established in the minds of the audience, as the perception of ongoing government commitment from an investment announced at one end of the year cannot be sustained by the end of the annual programme. The company is obliged to take financial responsibility throughout a project. Many have long gestation periods and
when subsidy of realistic proportions is not forthcoming, the change of circumstance impacts on all members of the team.

Interestingly, the Federal department administering the Commonwealth Employment Programme (CEP) in 1984 saw fit to invest thousands of dollars in a 39 week training programme the Company was able to conduct, which to gainfully employed five theatre workers. This project had a significant impact on the lives of the individuals (each is still employed in the arts); it allowed for major community based projects in the performing arts to be developed with specific groups like the aged and handicapped youth; it supported the touring of plays to schools in the region for three months and allowed the trainees to work with professional actors on a mainstage programme of plays.

Scarce resources have meant that monies outlaid on capital expenditure are limited. Expenditure on items of long term value for presentation of plays is determined on a needs basis. A demountable sloping stage was seen to be a useful investment and has been utilised in a variety of configurations in many productions over the years. Special lighting, sound and technical equipment is generally invested in after consultations between the company and the school administration. The company owns a computer. The company owns substantial props, costumes and set items. Not all company resources can be stored at the Studio, but other convenient locations exist for company equipment. A downtown office and phone are maintained in commercial premises owned by a Board member. This allows a shopfront contact point for company exchange. A post office box is maintained and the day to day operations are conducted from an office at the home of the Administrator. The company’s financial records are not computerised. With an annual turnover of around $100,000, records are maintained manually.

The company’s income is generated directly from box office, with admission prices generally separated for adults, concessions and students. Sometimes there are two prices, adults and school students; other times there are group booking concessions. Fine tuning on a project by project basis allows for target marketing of shows. Charges range from $20–$8 depending on the venue, the length of season, the costs of production. With substantial commitments to artists’ fees (up to 70%) the costs associated with each production need to be established before prices are set.

The company attracts grants for some of its work. It has been a long and dramatic road for the company to travel to break into the funding club. In 1986, the company attracted sufficient funds from CEP to employ and train five people for 39 weeks. A period of unprecedented activity enabled the company to raise its profile, provide diverse theatrical services and nurture a few careers. The NSW Health Department
contributed to the development of a touring production; but to gain access to arts funding has been a complex round of being in the right spot at the right time; semantics; addressing changing criteria; competing with other regional projects or not, and stickability.

Members of the Board have met with representatives of the funding agencies from time to time, usually in a capital city. The expense incurred in such travel is often a difficulty. Arts bureaucrats are not in the regions regularly enough. The company cannot depend of government funding. It has attracted support from commercial sponsors, regional businesses, local government donations, private donations and is on the National Cultural Register for tax exemption for donors. Donations have come from individuals and businesses which have felt moved to support the work of the company.

Lismore City Council has contributed to the company’s annual programme on a regular basis. This money has generally been directed to the youth component of the programme. Council supported the company’s tour to World Expo ‘88 through advertising on the printed programme through the Tourist Information Centre. Council offered a rent reduction on the use of Lismore City Hall for the production of Xerxes, the world premiere community musical.

Other income has come from the sale of places at workshops and seminars; sale of merchandise like T-shirts, books, cards and stickers. Postcards based on company images were sold in conjunction with the Gasworks Arts Centre. While financial management is lean, the company sees the need to modify its programme by including some shows for which no commitment of monies is made to artists. The company values their involvement, but the irregularity of government funding mitigates against this.

4.5.6 Marketing

Theatre North markets itself as a total entity. It is a production company. It is mindful of the behaviours of its regional audience as well as potential artists. It targets markets and has a marketing mix to exploit the company’s position as a provider of regional theatrical services. While no marketing plan exists, annual strategies are decided upon when the annual programme comes together. With the major thrust determined, the framework is sufficiently flexible to accommodate specific approaches during the forthcoming year. There is a budget item connected to marketing on all projects. There is an understanding of promotional mix; concern for pricing as well as positioning, packaging and partnerships, monitoring, measurement and evaluation of the effectiveness of the performance of the various strategies undertaken.
The presentation of the company’s image is organised and co-ordinated. The black and white logo is distinctive and is consolidated by all print material. It lends itself to a certain style and mood which influences numerous consumer decisions. Any ties in, like T-shirts, stickers, badges, print advertising reinforce the colour code. The presentation of a regular image is reassuring for supporters, offering certain brand recognition through visual representation. Black and white photographic images are regularly utilised to depict the house style. It is a means of differentiating itself from competitors. Design is a significant element of all presentation and documentation reveals a unique representation.

Comprehensive documentation of the company’s activities has meant a substantial base of print images exist for archival and promotional purposes. The photographic coverage of the processes as well as the productions by Peter Derrett has provided a significant resource for the marketing of the company. Copies of production prints, personnel and press material are always available and readily despatched to media outlets at short notice.

The decision to utilise photographs in the ticket/programmes employed by the company has been made for numerous reasons. The photo call comes during the rehearsal period and a lift in morale has been demonstrated amongst participants as the photograph clarifies the desired image of the piece of theatre through design and characterisation. This often pushes the cast to that final consolidation of the work. With pictures appearing in the initial document, the audience has a sense of a ‘ready work’ at the time of the ticket sale, and is reassured that the product will be “finished, complete and professional”. This clear photographic representation does much to distinguish a professional image of the company.

The ticket programme has provided a model for other groups in the region. The combination consolidates the historic nature of each project. The theatre going rituals are initiated weeks prior to the actual audience participation. Gauntlett suggests that the theatre programme comes from the tradition of a social invitation (1993:115). He elaborates with “the function of the theatre programme as a marker of membership of a particular status group is bound up with its role in constructing an interpretive community” (Gauntlett, 1993:117). Programmes are established as a separate entity from the larger theatrical work, but complement the image, content and direction.

“Theatre programme can be understood as functioning as a marker of a tourist sight and experience”(Gauntlett, 1993:124). Information about the production, the theatre company and the individuals contributing to the show are shared with the visitor. The programme plays an important role in the relationship between the performance and the audience. The company’s practice has been to include material of intellectual,
theatrical and personal interest about each production to assist the participants to
better appreciate the diverse aspects of the production.
The photographic ticket has a major impact prior to the show and sales are boosted
through the information and images. The document offers a critical historical record.
The size allows for ease of distribution nationally and internationally as part of other
promotional exchange. The document contributes to the professional portfolios of the
artists involved with each project. It provides a useful research tool for people using
the company as a model of a community theatre in secondary and tertiary courses of
study.

Photographs are used extensively in media kits for regional and national print papers
and journals. Maintaining a stock of strong images of productions, during the
production process and in performance, has allowed the company to have its material
published on short notice in a variety of print media – from tourism publications, to
arts journals and as expressions of news items which often spontaneously combust.

The company printed a book in 1991, Once in a Decade, illustrated by many Derrett
photographs. While the volume does not contain a great deal of prose, it has been
purchased by hundreds of schools and university libraries to support interest in
community theatre in Australia. Once in a Decade was compiled by Peter and Ros
Derrett as a visual account of the company’s development. Feedback from this book
has been useful in determining that another volume will be generated for the 20th
anniversary! The company has utilised bylines as a means of differentiating itself in
the marketplace. Print material used "A hard act to follow" and “You are judged by the
company you keep”.

The company regularly reviews its focus. It carries out research of potential customers
and looks to the alternative attractions for the audience dollar. The longevity of the
company’s operation, the development of a core of patrons and participants has
assisted with the company’s greatest promotional tool – word of mouth. Having a
good product is the starting point. By programming work believed to entertain,
stimulate and challenge allows marketing decisions to be an integral part of the
company’s planning. Being able to launch an annual programme, with widespread
media support, circulate dates and times well ahead of time with synopses of
productions, facilitates ongoing interest in the company’s work. The company benefits
from presenting a strong programme, has alert supporters and a regular venue which
is well known to audiences.

The company operates a very open communication system within the organisation
and is accessible through the Administrator to the general public. Public relations have
been closely attuned to the natural word of mouth medium which operates so
effectively in regional communities. A strong opening night cuts dollars off the advertising budget! Information on the company’s activities is available in print form for instant distribution to interested agencies. It serves to inform, to persuade and remind the constituency of the company’s present position. Other arts and community agencies regularly receive news of the company’s programme.

As well as the formal networks, the company has found that if the participants in a project are finding the experience satisfying, then their own informal networks will disseminate positive news of the forthcoming activity. The same applies to audience members. Those people who regularly find the company’s work appealing are more likely to introduce new people to the audience. The region is a popular destination in terms of visitors to resident friends and relatives. There has been a marked increase in new patrons through contact with consistent long term patrons. Feedback has indicated a friendly, comfortable atmosphere exists when attending the intimate Studio space; front of house are approachable, refreshments are accessible and for some it is a theatrical ‘home’. This security has ensured a regular clientele.

The location of the home base venue has caused some difficulty attracting patronage on occasion. The Studio is in the buildings of Trinity College. Access is gained through the school precinct. This is not readily identified. Publicity is often required to explain the location. Wheelchair access is available, though not too inviting. There are a lot of stairs.

The local media, radio, television and newspapers have been most accommodating over the years. The maintenance of personal contact with all levels of the media organisations has proved to been useful. Theatre North has benefited from sponsorship from NRTV (Channel Ten) and The Northern Star in the promotion of their programme. There are columns devoted to community news which freely promote the company’s work.

The Management Committee has had annual reviews of marketing strategies employed by the company. In 1994, it was evident that a workshop to explore the potential of the elements of contemporary marketing, product, people, price, place, positioning and programming, packaging, and partnerships and promotion was required. A position paper was prepared for discussion. It outlined the strengths and weaknesses of current practice. Questions were posed for ways to better establish who the company was, where it wished to go and how best get there. Emphasis was placed on the need for a balance of artistic aims with audience taste and box office returns!

4.5.7 Tourism
Theatre North has been mindful of the mobility of regional audiences. People travel from the New England Tablelands, the Tweed and Clarence regions to attend performances at the Drama Studio. School students from these areas are readily identified as they attend en block. Information regarding the company’s programme is circulated well in advance through schools, community and tourism outlets. Lismore Tourist Information Centre is supportive of information sharing of the company’s programme. A monthly publication from the Tourist Information Centre includes dates, times and performance information for potential visitors. Local hospitality outlets receive Theatre North material to share with their clients.

People from afar are part of the audience core for the company’s activities. Some stay overnight and many eat in town prior to attending a performance. The company’s relationship with Caddies Coffee Company has introduced a free pre-dinner experience into the cost of particular performances’ admission. This has successfully attracted distance travellers. Post performance functions are another way of maintaining contact with supporters. A member of the Board lives and works in the Tweed, others reside on the coast around Byron Bay, so that an extensive distribution network has been developed to promote the company’s programme and encourage visitors.

Promotion in local free media reaches visitors and residents alike. Many visitors to the region are guests of residents and if the latter demonstrate a live theatre habit, then the company is assured of attracting increased numbers of tourists.

Some projects lend themselves to targeting visitors. The Days of Future Past (1993) Aquarius project included a nostalgia, reunion component. A number of reconstructed hippies returned to Lismore and to the performances to participate as an audience. A direct mailout attracted people from all over Australia to stay in the region and see the show.

Participation in regional festivals and events allows the company to contribute to the development of a cultural tourism industry for the region. The company has been involved with Lismore’s International Festival of Friendship, Sundays in the Park, Byron Bay’s Oleander Festival, Mullumbimby’s Chincogan Festival, Brisbane’s Warana Festival, and Adelaide’s Fringe Festival.

4.5.8 Management: Strategic and Operational and Leadership

The company developed out of a partnership established by the Artistic Director and Administrator. Each has had a considerable influence on the day to day operations of the organisation as well as the formulation of any standardising of practice or policy.
This personal commitment through knowledge, experience and willingness to share has had a substantial impact on the development of the organisation. Both have dominated the management, strategically and operationally, over the years. Attempts to withdraw, to use the Committee system more efficiently will have substantial ramifications.

The monthly meetings of the Board provide a forum for the communication of ideas, the ratification of action and the planning for forthcoming activity. An annual programme is discussed, refined and implemented through consultation at the monthly meeting.

Over the years, patterns of production and performance practice have emerged. Members of the Board have taken responsibility for aspects of the operation of specific projects. Artistic leadership is taken by the Artistic Director. Auditions are held, rehearsals conducted and the creative elements are reported to Board meetings. Any artists engaged for a project are responsible to the Artistic Director. This situation works well when the Artistic Director is the Project Director. The company has found it particularly challenging when Project Directors are engaged from outside the company structure. To establish the most effective and efficient levels of collaboration and flexibility has provided several tests of the organisation's strategies for communication, productivity, authority and successful management.

Management is decidedly ‘hands-on’. During any particular project there are regular meetings, well documented and action orientated which facilitate the objectives. Reports are given at the end of each project which assists with future programming and management. Lists, timetables and action plans consistently inform participants of responsibilities and deadlines.

Members of the Board have had business experience, community development experience and artistic production experience and each can make a worthwhile contribution to the management needs of each project. People work hard. There are short rehearsal periods and they have other commitments, so the processes developed by the company over the years have saved a great deal of anxiety. It does not mean it is easy; the adrenaline required to see through each project is certainly available! The streamlined scheduling of actions allows everyone to pace themselves through the process, and there are no great surprises at the end. There is generally no panic ‘tech’ run close to opening.

The Board has seen it to be important that at least one of its members is an integral part of each project. The feedback is imperative for safe and successful project running. Future management strategies by the Board, especially as the founders withdraw from
direct involvement, on every project is a present challenge. Securing new personnel for
the Board is another target area for current discussion.

4.5.9 Research Propositions

The following observations are made of Theatre North Inc based on the research
propositions stated in Chapter One. Each proposition offers an opportunity to address
elements of the management culture of the case study organisation. Implications of
these findings are recorded in Chapter Five.

The operational and strategic management choices cultural organisations make are determined
by their constituency and reflect the distinctive features of that constituency.

The founders of Theatre North were volunteer practitioners and much of the initial
planning and development of the organisation dealt with addressing needs of
supporters from within the regional volunteer arts community. Distance, time and
energy were taken into account when determining strategies connected with meetings,
rehearsals, venues for performance, marketing and production needs. What emerged
was a very hands-on approach to problem solving.

The distinctive features of the regional arts constituency included a high level of skills
and experience gained elsewhere in earlier times; diverse work opportunities with the
company; other media and performance opportunities within and outside the region;
an expressed need for regular and planned programming to assist with individuals’
work commitments and a willingness to be involved in a variety of areas of production
and management.

The two founders were consistently involved with artistic direction and
administration with the support of other members of the company. At any given time
all members of the company were active. Programming choices which influenced
management choices reflected the availability of all resources, human and tangible on
an annual basis. For example, the rural nature of the organisation’s location informed
the choice of touring programmes, participation in festivals and involvement of people
from considerable distances from the centre in Lismore.

The original goals and expressed needs of the membership shape the culture of an organisation.

The core of regional performers who came together to establish the organisation saw
themselves ‘in for the long haul’. They had generally made lifestyle settlement choices
and were prepared to commit to company activities for years at a time. There was an
expectation of ensemble work on the artistic side as well as the administrative side.
People shared skills and interest in providing performance opportunities. The
members of the company were the company, and were instrumental at each encounter with others by perpetuating the stated and accepted ideals devised from the outset.

All contributors to the organisation’s programme affect effective and successful cultural management and management culture.

The active membership of the company influenced the annual programme but were mindful of the wider, regional environment and special needs of rural audiences. There was regular contact with audiences, as well as the education sector because of the company’s touring Theatre In Education programme; with specific agencies interested in projects undertaken by the company, e.g. the NSW Health Department with a show on palliative care. The regional corporate sector supported the efforts of the company as did the media.

The volunteer experience was central to the delivery of consistent annual programmes. While people involved didn’t always get paid, there was a determination that participants were rarely out of pocket financially. Feedback about the organisation to participants was positive and as members of small communities these people generally were satisfied that they were contributing to a worthwhile cultural identity.

The contribution individual organisations make to the nation’s cultural diversity can occur independently of government policy and practice.

Theatre North spent its first ten years without government financial support. While this created a deal of unrest and frustration, it also demonstrated that a valuable contribution to the regional cultural life could be made independent of government intervention. Box office played an important part in raising revenue, and support from local businesses and media assisted in delivering the company’s programme.

Government policy and practice did in fact impact at stages during the company’s development. The NSW Ministry for the Arts would not provide funds for two regional theatre companies which existed on the North Coast during this period, Theatre North and Nomads/North Coast Theatre Company. During this period the company continued to provide training services, performance opportunities and professional development which was not offered by any other group – funded or not.

Cultural management is readily making the connection between the arts and tourism.

Theatre North documented contact with visitors to its performances from feedback sheets, word of mouth and correspondence. The company contributed to international events like Expo ‘88 and Adelaide Festival which allowed it to highlight regional talent and raise awareness about its constituency. The company contributed to a number of regional cultural/tourism initiatives generated by arts and tourism organisations.
4.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided an outline of the development of each of the four case study organisations and its current business.

Each of the case study organisations attempts to deal with aspects of arts administration and creative development in a manner consistent with the satisfaction of their constituency, in accordance with the law, within financial constraints and in partnership with its wider community. In this study each organisation has distinctive responses to their mission statements, as outlined above. Each reflects on the impacts external influences have on the developing organisation. What is revealed are the choices each organisation makes based on the historical contexts in which it finds itself and the potential each has to pursue its vision and capacity for strategic planning to effect appropriate change.

The implications which can be drawn from these case studies are explored in Chapter Five. The commonalities are extrapolated and practical applications identified. The need for further research into cultural management in Australia is suggested. The value of the collaboration between academic and practitioner highlights the need for greater co-operation in documenting the culture, processes and products of cultural management.
Chapter Five

Conclusions and Implications of the Study
Conclusions and Implications of the Study

5.1 Introduction

In this final Chapter of the study, observations, conclusions and implications are drawn from the data collected on the four case study organisations. The five research propositions outlined in Chapter One are reviewed against the data collected from each organisation and the literature. The five propositions are:

- the operational and strategic management choices cultural organisations make are determined by their constituency and reflect the distinctive features of that constituency;
- the original goals and expressed needs of the membership shape the culture of an organisation;
- all contributors to the organisation’s programme affect effective and successful cultural management and management culture;
- the contribution individual organisations make to the nation’s cultural diversity can occur independently of government policy and practice; and
- cultural management is readily making the connection between the arts and tourism.

Schein’s (1985) model, used by Ott (1989) and Getz (1993) and now by this research, usefully identifies practical applications of the knowledge built up by historical saga. Evidence of the impact of founders and early leaders on each organisation has been discussed; the issues and options facing business in the cultural sector and the important influence of the culture of the constituency each organisation services is identified. The internal culture demonstrated by management is identified. The external culture each organisation is devoted to servicing is also described.

Two cultures are, in fact, under review. The culture which is developed ‘in-house’, within the organisation to facilitate business, is juxtaposed with the broader national culture to which each organisation contributes through its operations. What was interesting to observe was the link between the strength of the management culture and the resultant strength of the contribution to cultural management in a wider context. It would appear that a vital, well integrated management culture is a critical factor in the production of a quality cultural product. Benefits of cultural management
include security, confidence, direction and values which are repeatable in the presentation of the cultural product or service offered by the business.

Cultures are not fixed, they change over time (O’Sullivan, 1995:12). Each of the study organisations have subjected their rules to scrutiny, sometimes re-affirmed them, adjusted them or overturned them as circumstances changed. Decisions have been made on a creative and administrative level to explicitly or implicitly adopt appropriate responses and affirm cultural behaviour perceived to address the needs of the constituency of each organisation.

The broader debate on the role of cultural management in Australia indicates that creative work and business skills need not be mutually exclusive. Each of the case study organisations are attempting to develop as viable, sustainable businesses in the cultural sector. The management choices implemented by each are not unlike those practised by other small businesses in other industries. Speaking at the ‘Creating Culture – the new growth industries’ conference (1994), Leo Schofield suggested:

*If culture, in the broadest sense of that exhausted word, is really developing into an industry then we should be mindful of a number of attendant needs if the infant industry is to achieve its potential. Growth in any industry is not automatic. Growth is something that is managed, even in human beings. Growth in any industry also thrives in competition and all labourers in the cultural vineyard are to welcome it. There really can be very little doubt that culture can be a growth industry, an industry with limitless potential. But first, it needs to be shaped and marketed, and most importantly perceived as an industry – by the public, by politicians, but especially by the people who work in it.*

(Schofield, cited in Milar, 1995:3)

Janet Milar, in an editorial for the inaugural edition of *Smarts*, outlines concerns about national cultural industry development.

*A perception exists, although happily diminishing, that defining cultural workers in business and industry terms somehow tarnishes their very creativity – as if economic imperatives are laudable for other occupations but leave a nasty metallic taste in the mouth of artists.*

(Milar, 1995:1)

The case study organisations have identified their participation in national culture delivery as a serious focus for management. Their formal and informal peer networks, their partnerships with other industries and their increased use of their
customers/audience in relationship marketing clearly has them responding to the issues which are now being addressed by government through a significant Cultural Industry Development Program.

This study has observed culture in organisations through the telling of historical sagas of development. Each story reflected on the goals, resources, structure, behaviours including leadership, and the outputs and outcomes contingent on internal and external environments. Story telling emerged as a significant medium to indicate, not only the passages of time, and the rites through which individuals and projects progressed, but to consolidate the human-centric focus of the administration. The needs of the constituency constantly emerged as the starting point for the story.

It was evident that the story telling was extremely important as well as a means to perpetuate an organisation’s culture internally. Solutions to a variety of management dilemmas were attended to through the telling of a story. The illustration of issues and the demonstration of problem solving was often undertaken through the relating of a story with the intention of providing added information, an opportunity to persuade the listeners and subsequently addressing specific problems. It was useful to note how the stories were shared. On occasions stakeholders at all levels were party to the story telling; through newsletters, contact with staff and Board members; media reports and internal staff training.

*Figure 4: Factors Influencing Organisation Culture from Historical Development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environments</th>
<th>Historical Saga</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goals &amp; Objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Behaviour including Leadership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Outputs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
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</table>

Source: original for this study
The nature of the external environments in which the organisations operate is significant. Often these environments are overlooked, or taken for granted. The economic, societal, artform, natural, personal and political environments are crucial in determining an organisation’s culture.

The principal environments identified by the case study organisations which influence the strategic and operational management choices, and in turn generate a ‘culture’ include:

• (inter)national artform practice trends;
• (inter)national economic trends;
• the legal/political environment;
• demographics – composition of society by sub-cultures;
• labour market forces;
• the media;
• geographical location;
• physical resources of the organisation;
• cultural sector competition;
• technology;
• consumer behaviours and motivations;
• personal qualities of founders and leaders; and
• cultural sector education and training.

These environments are revealed in each of the historical sagas offered to this study. With this historical focus it was interesting to note how each organisation dealt with passing on the organisation’s culture internally. There was speculation of a generational change which occurs in the transfer of information and experience and a shift in the goals of participants in management. The influence of the vision of the founders and early leaders appeared to be easily absorbed by the second generation of the organisation’s management, but by the third generation there was a shift evident in the motivation for involvement. Sometimes there was a diminution of commitment to early ideals and focus was not multi-directional, e.g. a concern for funding for employment emerged rather than the idealism which had consumed early participants. It is interesting to speculate on the ‘spirit’ which drives the founders and how it can be absorbed, transferred and perpetuated as part of an organisation’s culture.
Finally, the most significant influence appeared to be the attitudes, beliefs and commitment to ideals of founders and early leaders of each organisation. There was evidence that this element substantially shaped the culture of the organisation. A determination by these individuals to present work of the highest quality, to generate employment for artists and to celebrate a cultural heritage through arts practice and to share these programmes with as wide a domestic and international audience as possible, permeates the data. There is a turnover in arts management staff with a resultant change to operations and subsequently to the culture of the organisation.

Leadership is required to negotiate with the environments in which the organisation operates for support and liaison with the constituency upon which the organisation is dependent. Leadership represents the intentions of the organisation. These can change to fit the behaviours of the environments which are dynamic. These environments can exert extreme influence over the organic structures which exist in cultural organisations to the extent that the case study organisations identified the dilemma of balancing a pre-occupation with self interest against the advocacy required sector/industry wide.

5.2 The Study Summarised

The primary objective of this study was to identify and explore the management culture of cultural organisations in Australia and the elements which impinge on its development. Limited attempts have been made in the past to document contemporary arts administration and this study provided an opportunity to investigate the challenges which exist in the provision of arts, culture and related tourism services.

Four organisations were chosen for the study. Each had been established in the past 20 years. Each had demonstrated a substantial commitment to a distinctive constituency, had significantly contributed to the development of employment opportunities for artists while providing a substantial, stimulating annual programme for residents and visitors. The study sought to highlight the aspirations, expectations, satisfactions and influences on the planning, operations and development of the participants in the management of each of the organisations.

Conclusions on the attitudes, beliefs and values held by those interviewed and observed can be drawn from the historical narratives documented in this report. Data collected from a variety of sources indicate the differences in the management choices made by each organisation when dealing with programming, personnel, finance, marketing and tourism. The constituencies of dance professionals (Bangarra Dance
Theatre), theatre professionals (Belvoir Street Theatre), homosexuals (Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras) and regional performing artists (Theatre North) provided meaningful inputs in the management choices.

Common concerns emerged from the study. Some similarities amongst organisational cultures within an industry can be explained by the fact that many organisations are dominated by people with similar professional experience. While content of programmes, location, scale of operation and access to government support, assets and structures varied, there was clearly a commitment by each organisation to offer quality arts experiences for all stakeholders, promote effective communication with all stakeholders, conduct the business of the organisation as efficiently as possible while celebrating the unique features of their cultural heritage.

Each of the organisations operates independently. They have developed independent, unique cultures from within the organisation. The culture they have developed has also drawn from surrounding influences. They have established networks important to the effective operation of their mission. They have established peer partnerships, links with governments on all levels, media and with the wider community from which they draw another aspect of their culture.

5.3 Review of Research Propositions

The following review offers a review and interpretation of the research propositions in light of Chapters Two and Four.

5.3.1

Research Proposition: The operational management choices cultural organisations make are determined by their constituency and reflect the distinctive features of that constituency.

“Societal culture is such a fundamental shaper of organisational culture that it can be easy to overlook its importance” (Ott, 1989:75). This has been demonstrated by the four case study organisations, where broad cultural beliefs, values and assumptions based on heritage, race, artform, sexual preference and geographic location have been the origin or source of the organisational culture and reflect the diverse national societal culture. The nature of the arts/culture community/business environment has also influenced the development and perpetuation of the organisation’s culture and finally the beliefs, values and basic assumptions held by the founders or other early dominant leaders. These three common threads are evident in the responses from participants in the study.
Each organisation is mindful of its stakeholders. There is an overlap as each responds to the creation, production, audience service and criticism which is integral to the artistic model. Care is taken to keep lines of communication open with each segment of interest connected with the company. On some projects in the annual programme each segment is represented, has a vested interest and wishes to participate in a quality experience. In the wider community there has been a fundamental shift as the State, the citizen and the consumer locate themselves in parts of the creative process. This raises the issue of who owns the organisation and the interventionist options available to the State particularly.

The generally accepted artistic process involves the creation of a work and the need to produce it so as to share it with an audience to critical acclaim! To facilitate that process, it is acknowledged that there is an assortment of factors which impinge on its development. Initial ideas are developed by a team with appropriate intellectual and practical skills; they seek a team who will manage to appropriate human, financial and physical resources to place the work before the public. The public can be an organisation’s membership or a wider societal audience which can include visitors which may appreciate and evaluate the artistic efforts. Individuals may at anytime find themselves in a number of the stakeholder categories outlined in Figure 5. Government financial investment in the production of artworks is a significant component of the matrix. They are obliged to evaluate their investment, mindful of press responses and audience reaction, as well as a commitment to a cultural policy at anytime.

Figure 5: Cultural Organisation Stakeholders
This model demonstrates the interaction demanded by the creation and delivery of cultural services in the 1990s. The creative forces and administrative demands are linked. There is a progression from creator, producer to audience and critics. Each of these sectors offers substantial influence independently, but are generally called upon to collaborate with one another. The resultant balance of influences impacts on the management choices made by each organisation.

Each organisation has demonstrated a proactive approach to their particular constituency. The initiatives each has taken in artform practice, internal and external communication, professional development, financial management, human resource management, marketing, community links, international networks are subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The hands-on approach by Boards, for example, indicates a keen interest in all aspects of the organisation’s development. Members of Boards readily embrace the philosophical thrust taken by the organisation as a whole and willing commit themselves to pursuing activity in the best interests of the organisation.

Each of the four organisations made distinctive management structural choices. Bangarra Dance Theatre operated with a traditional hierarchical (vertical) structure, similar to Mintzberg’s bureaucratic model; Belvoir Street Theatre used a flatter management approach with elements of Mintzberg’s missionary model; while the Sydent Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras established a mix of Mintzberg’s ad hoc organisation and missionary models through the substantial amounts of operational activity conducted through a committee system; and Theatre North demonstrated the entrepreneurial structure where management rested substantially with the Administrator and Artistic Director with regular reference to the total membership of Board members. The latter organisation served a broad, regional base, but operationally consisted of an active membership of ten people who each had a specific role on the Board. Bangarra maintained the greatest distance between operational management and Board of Directors, with conventional reporting mechanisms in place through monthly meetings.

Each organisation had a mechanism for annual revision or monitoring of management choices. There were annual meetings for members, where reports were presented and opportunities for evaluation were provided. Monthly and weekly meetings for Boards and management staff allowed for ongoing attention to practices. These attempts to keep the constituency informed and to draw from it feedback on the direction and application of founding principles were important to each organisation.
Simple mechanisms, like the book placed outside the performance space by Theatre North to solicit immediate feedback from audiences, allows for fresh, current responses to the organisation’s programming. The sale of merchandising, like T-shirts, stickers, and pins enables the organisation to recognise the spread of its influence and promotion. The database developed by Belvoir Street Theatre from people booking to see shows clearly indicates the reach of promotional campaigns and provides a source for ongoing marketing activities. The monitoring assists with the development of detailed action plans for the future. It may influence the employment opportunities for the organisation.

Modification of management strategies employed in each organisation appeared to reflect the interest of individual leaders. Acknowledgment of individual differences was a feature of each organisation, principally because staff numbers tended to be small. Names of each person were known, personal information regarding training, skills levels and experience were broadly known and appreciated. Staff had often worked with one another on numerous projects with their current employer or in related arts activity. Numerous staff acknowledged socialising with fellow workers.

Most people employed by Theatre North have been resident artists of the region, as there has been an ongoing commitment to provide some sort of infrastructure for a performing arts industry in the region. Some people have been employed from outside with a particular emphasis being placed on their capacity to share skills with locals to build up the regional resource base. Belvoir’s commitment is to engaging the whole of indigenous performing arts development and has encouraged management choices which reflect broad, national trends in the preparation of work from a wide repertoire. It engages artists of standing with national reputations, as well as addressing the audience development issues in a metropolitan context in its annual programme.

There is growing interest in strategies which ‘develop audiences’. Bangarra, Belvoir and Theatre North each devote substantial human, financial and physical resources to activities focusing on young people – the audiences and industry base for the future. There are training programmes for young people in the relevant performance skills; with tutors providing valuable practical experiences. Theatre North involves young people in mainstream projects, either as crew for production, as front of house support or in areas of promotion, to allow interested young people an opportunity to work side by side with professionals. The introduction of Dance and Drama to Higher School Certificate curricula in NSW has increased pressure of these organisations to provide work experience opportunities for interested youngsters. Each of the performing arts organisations conduct orientation courses. Belvoir is able to utilise its theatre facilities to undertake a substantial programme of ‘in-house’ activities. They have sponsorship for their major performance programme from Telecom.
Theatre North’s concern from providing access to regional audiences has determined some management choices associated with touring productions to rurally isolated communities. Partnerships are established with community based organisations, Arts Councils, schools and health agencies to present performances, seminars and workshops in community venues. Approaches from special interest groups in the region have also influenced the attention to include personnel with particular expertise at particular times. Artists have worked on projects associated with palliative care, or children with special needs or the aged or isolated through festivals and community events.

Belvoir Street encourages a close relationship with the residents of Surry Hills and maintains involvement with numerous community cultural events. It works closely with South Sydney Council, various ethnic community organisations and conducts major cultural events at its home base for local people. It has a partnership with the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras for example to hold a theatre festival in conjunction with Mardi Gras’ annual arts festival. There are also Asian arts festivals and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander festivals.

A commitment to broaden arts development, not just specifically for their own organisation’s aggrandisement, has allowed the three Sydney case study organisations to work closely together. This is indicative of a trend observed in arts marketing strategies employed in other cities. Recognition of benefits accruing from collaboration in terms of shared resources, human, financial and physical has been noted. Belvoir Street can offer venues while Bangarra and Mardi Gras provide the product for audiences.

Each organisation has looked to their community for guidance. Communication mechanisms are in place for the organisation be constantly alert to the expressed needs of their community. Experience in each organisation has demonstrated that concentration on what each does well provides dividends. Rather than trying to do everything, a concentration on strength and performance has allowed for opportunities to specialise, to do something different and to do it well. This attitude and practice contributes to the management culture of the organisation. All in all the organisation contributes because they are committed to a shared mission which is well articulated. Drucker (1993:6) suggests a mission statement must reflect opportunities, competence and commitment.

5.3.2

Research Proposition: The original goals and expressed needs of the membership shape the culture of the organisation.
Each organisation has its own organisational saga. To understand the historical development of an organisation, the major phases, the gradual or sudden, subtle or dramatic changes which have taken place in the mission, programmes, resources and personnel of the organisation; there are a variety of sources which will reveal the details. If there is a change in the perceived value of the organisation amongst members or customers this can be critical to the health of the organisation and its ‘culture’. The mechanisms the organisation has to monitor and adapt are crucial. There needs to be confidence held by the constituency that the organisation knows its business, has the personnel to respond accordingly and demonstrates a willingness to hear the needs of the membership.

This study demonstrates the importance of the contribution made by founders and early leaders in each organisation studied. Their approach has been goal oriented and its development and maintenance supplies the organisation with the ethics and culture which in turn provides the content for its sagas.

Bangarra Dance Theatre noted that the work of its founders was grounded in the historical interest amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share their heritage through dance. The founders’ sense of community, their strong urban network still had ties to the Aboriginal nations scattered across the continent which preserved a strong commitment to the rituals of dance. The need to represent the art common to the diverse Aboriginal cultures to the wider community was inspiring for many and their willingness to work long hard hours and articulate a need on behalf of their constituency, has attracted the next generation of people to be involved. These initial negotiations in an area of arts advocacy which had few precedents are held in high regard by current supporters of the organisation.

The Mardi Gras management has constant reminders of its political and educative origins through the annual programme maintained by the organisation. Like the other case study organisations, this volunteer based group has contributed substantially to a shift in the cultural mindset of the nation. It has been instrumental in influencing numerous social, legal and political shifts within the homosexual community as well as the impacts it has had on the wider community. The press has labelled the organisation as a de facto gay government on occasions. There is a serious commitment by present participants to original ideals, though emphases may have shifted over the years on how to best deliver the message.

Members of the four case study organisations expressed a need to develop a culture of taking responsibility. They perceived there was no other entity tackling the issues, providing the service or addressing expressed needs as they were. Most saw their origins in the vacuum of non-provision of support, access and appropriate services;
and believed that the original goals were worthy and were still not being offered by others to the degree their organisation could represent the need. They were making judgements and taking risks and wanted to be responsible for these decisions and actions. Management was responsible to membership, whatever the operational structure in place. People were accountable within the organisation. Individuals were invested in because of their ability to demonstrate a capacity to discharge obligations set up by the organisations. They could be volunteers or professional staff.

The cycle of creator, producer, audience and critic provided a key to the interactive responsibilities applicable in the cultural industry. It appeared that the same cycle could be attributed to the administrative features of the organisation as well as the creative. Thus there was no conflict over the core ideals for which the organisation stood or the programmes it undertook. Annual programmes each generated, responded to the needs of each layer of stakeholding in the process. There appeared to be little deviation over each organisation’s lifecycle to original goals. Programmes had expanded; seasons extended; productions toured as well as played in host locations, but little had changed in direction, style and determination to pursue specific artistic or administrative objectives.

5.3.3

Research Proposition: All contributors to the organisation’s programme affect effective and successful cultural management and management culture.

“People determine the performance capacity of an organisation” (Drucker, 1993:113). It is the yield from the human resources which really determines the organisation’s performance. Who are the stakeholders in an organisation? The study documented the involvement of founders and early leaders, managers, Boards, staff, artists, volunteers, membership and the wider constituency and community.

It is significant to note the impact of dominant founders or early leaders of these four organisations and their capacity to attract people who share views, values, beliefs attitudes and how, through the force of their personalities, they further shape the organisation’s culture. The culture is perpetuated through the choice of new personnel who demonstrate compatible outlooks to those already contributing to the organisation or who demonstrate a willingness to learn and adapt to processes in place. The writer readily identified the impacts of founders and leaders.

The leadership demonstrated by the incumbent managers was rooted in the constituency from which they and the organisation came. Each was respected and recommendations made by each were made in good faith to serve the best interests of the artform practice for their community. Both Rob Bryant (at Bangarra Dance Theatre)
and the writer (at Theatre North) were instrumental in establishing the organisations they serve, and were influential in determining management choices of a structural, strategic and operational nature. Professional arts administrators, Richard Perram (Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras) and Robyn Kershaw (Belvoir Street Theatre) have extensive national experience and the organisations they lead have employed them because of their appreciation of the constituency’s needs. Belvoir’s early mentors, Chris Westwood and Sue Hill and Bangarra’s Carol Johnston and Cheryl Stone highlight the contribution committed individuals make to the formulation of managerial patterns. Their personal networks within the constituency and their willingness to take risks to establish something in which they believed are characteristics of the emergence of an organisation’s culture. The drive they demonstrated has been taken on board and used as a model for behaviours in other situations in the organisation’s development.

The personal attributes of each of the cultural managers have demonstrated what Donald Horne suggests are essential elements in the creation of a productive culture, “imagination, creativity, capability and knowledge” (Horne, 1994:23) and have satisfied their employers and memberships that the culture evident in the organisation is being appropriately nurtured and perpetuated. Leaders bring their imaginations to the real world (Kraus and Curtis, 1990:458). The organisation’s stakeholders in this study, including staff and management, are excited by the stimulation of new concepts and ideas for the organisation. Some organisations more than others were ready to embrace new ideas. Some practices had served the day to day business of the organisation well and ‘new’ ways were sometimes seen as a threat to the status quo. Some organisations were ready to undergo substantial revamping of practices through the development of new plans presented by the CEO. The leaders provide inspiration and direction to the organisation. They help harness the social forces in the organisation and shape and guide values (Kraus and Curtis, 1990:459).

Having a clear sense of the whole organisation, the managers interviewed have indicated their varied roles with separate sets of responsibilities; to themselves, satisfying their own professional and personal needs; to the constituency in which the organisation is rooted; to the specific group which ‘owns’ the organisation, membership for example; to the cultural sector profession for ethical practices; to their co-workers; and to the wider community. They strove to facilitate an atmosphere of trust, high morale and productive performance. They needed to retain their credibility by meeting their commitments consistently and predictably and following some pattern understood by staff and Boards and by encouraging the airing and sharing of dissent.
Each of the managers had developed routines and procedures which worked for them in their determination to provide effective use of all the organisation’s resources. The most practical structures have been adopted to address goals, objectives and policies so that job descriptions, workloads, staffing allocations, effective training and scheduling of the creative and operational aspects of the organisation can be best addressed. The managers are sensitive to the changes taking place in the constituency which the organisation serves. The needs, tastes and interests which are observed influence the programming undertaken by the organisation. A certain amount of forecasting has become an important aspect of their attempt to balance the action and thoughts which are integral to their organisation’s culture.

The artistic programme was chosen as a response to the constituency and a commitment to specific artform philosophies. The ability of the artistic sector of the organisation to explain its aspirations and negotiate its needs to the administrative sector demanded special relationships of individuals as well as organisation’s structures. If the monies offered by government funding agencies for the preferred programme are less than anticipated, management is required to re-negotiate with the artistic sector to best deal with the situation. All organisations believed the artistic thrust took priority and must be best served. It may delay the preparation and presentation of some work, until adequate resources could be committed to the project.

Most projects undertaken in cultural organisations require specialist and ensemble skills. The body of knowledge which is arts practice and the traditions which have developed in the performing arts accommodate the gamut of skills, talent and experience. They provide an opportunity to pool and augment human interest and abilities. They provide opportunities for all members of the organisation to co-operate. Each can be trusted; improve their work; develop positive relationships with the tools and materials of their work; and look forward to some sort of appreciation/respect from the public which will recognise their contribution to the organisation’s creativity.

The morale of staff and volunteers is an indicator of the state of an organisation’s culture. Those who participate in an organisation are rewarded by pay, prestige and privileges (Caplow, 1976:153). How these elements are distributed, with what emphasis, how often and to whom, contributes to the level of morale at any time. There has been a demonstrated interest in each organisation in how professional and personal relationships should be conducted within the organisation. Each organisation has looked at how power is distributed, how individuals can be gainfully involved, how work is structured, how conflict is resolved and in what context is individual identity accepted. Each has developed work programmes which become the focus for the shared understanding which is that particular feeling or experience which indicates that a ‘common’ pattern is established.
These organisations have worked to quickly absorb new recruits into the formal and informal networks; to ensure that new personnel are generally better qualified than the people they replace and to eliminate lateness or absenteeism. All members of the organisation understand the existing pay and conditions, so there is little discussion required to destabilise morale. The wage parity situation at Belvoir Street Theatre is advertised at recruitment time, and has posed no points of conflict. Details of time commitments for each project in Theatre North are known to participants ahead of time and there is a minimisation of disruption on tight schedules. Much rehearsal, for example occurs in the evening. There are numerous opportunities for briefings on projects. Everyone hears the news at the same time, so there is less risk of information becoming distorted and tasks not delivered within frameworks acceptable to the organisation.

Each organisation believed they had developed practices of communication within their organisation which were unique. They positively explored the fact that all contributions to decision making, information sharing and promotion differentiated them from experiences their staff had known elsewhere. The use of notice boards; rosters for making tea for the whole staff by the whole staff; the use of a meeting circle with a rotating Chairperson from the staff or the Board; the integration of cast and crew in the preparation of a production right from the beginning of the rehearsal process.

Full time employment opportunities existed in greater measure in some organisations than in others. The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras maintained a commitment to volunteerism as an instrument of ownership and communication to a large membership base. Bangarra and Belvoir Street Theatre, with significant government financial support, provide opportunities for work and training; while withdrawal of funding to Theatre North now limits professional fees for services rendered.

The non-profit Board plays a significant role. In each of the case study organisations, the Board plays an active role. Boards used to provide moral support through sympathy with the cause, but this no longer sufficient. In the developmental cycle of non-profit organisations Boards of Directors are the lifeblood (Quinn, 1991:50). Members become involved as believers in the cause and often see the only way of getting things done is to do it themselves. As volunteers they assume many operational responsibilities, including programme creation, marketing, fundraising and eventually hiring staff.

There are people working in non-profit community and arts organisations who have little conventional business experience. They are sometimes called volunteers.
Volunteers are increasingly important in these case study organisations. They are only different from the paid workers in that they are not paid; they often do identical work. Each organisation determines whether their mission would be better served with a contribution from the volunteer sector.

As organisations mature, the hiring of professional staff can become a double-edged sword. Losing the hands-on responsibility can pose problems for channelling energy and expertise. The day to day involvement can be removed from the Board unless the mission is fulfilled through contact with staff on long term planning, fundraising, policy formulation and staff performance monitoring. Members of the Board uphold the credibility of the organisation internally and to the wider community in which the organisation resides and are well placed to provide endorsements, energy and enthusiasm as they reflect the influence of their constituency and wider community, regardless of the staff hired.

There are challenges for Boards (as for other participants in the organisation’s structure). Individuals can become complacent and non-supportive or burnout, and mechanisms need to be in place to offer solutions to these common maladies. Techniques to revitalise participants and improve the functioning of the human relationships of the organisation need to be readily implemented. Regular training programmes which engage in personal support, skills development and sharing and exchanges for staff to see how other organisations conduct their business have been identified as useful strategies. Bringing in visiting experts reinforces the commitment of the organisation to value the professionalism of each participant, either on staff or volunteer.

There is an important link between participation and empowerment. Each case study organisation conducts lean administration and production teams. The incentives on a social/communal level for volunteers involved include skills development training, and working with professionals reporting accomplishments of administrative nature through newsletters and the media.

Organisations in the study have developed mechanisms which utilise their human capital on both a personal and organisational level to best advantage. Multi-skilling was often raised. Talents of individuals have been used to solve critical creative and administrative problems. The imagination, creativity, capability and knowledge suggested as vital by Horne (1994) has been used by managers for the artistic and administration of their organisation. There has been a level of intuitive practice in management which encouraged new solutions to old problems. Sometimes the individuals required were not inside the organisation, but consultants have been engaged to work on specific projects. Study organisations had recognised the value of
forming partnerships with accountants, fundraisers and other professionals in the business world to complement skills held in-house. The financial shortfall experienced by organisations after ticket sales or government subsidy have been accounted for has increased the interest of organisations in individual benefactors or ‘angels’. Private patronage is being encouraged through personal contact with supporters of the organisation.

5.3.4

Research Proposition: The contribution individual organisations make to the nation’s cultural diversity can occur independently of government policy and practice.

Government intervention has not always been a pre-condition in Australia for making art (Macdonnell, 1992:397). Who takes responsibility for cultural leadership? Much of the delivery of arts practice historically has been provided by organisations on the periphery of government policy and investment. This study looked at four organisations which have addressed the need for an active relationship with government policy and practice in arts development. It demonstrated that the operations of two organisations are closely linked to the subsidy of government (Bangarra and Belvoir Street Theatre), while one (Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras) chose to have no contact and the fourth (Theatre North) had the choice, essentially, made for it by government.

We live in an era of priorities, not ideals. Under any form of government, there is not enough public money available to fund everything worthy of support. Money spent on art and culture needs, like everything else, to be justified against other areas of public subsidy. It is not good enough to protect your corner of public expenditure without considering the consequences for others.

(Lewis, 1990:1)

“Motherhood statement or a map of the way ahead?” is the question put by Westwood (1994:10) when questioning the development of a Federal government cultural policy. What makes for a distinctly Australian culture is the substance of the agenda which needs to address the arts and culture industries’ potential.

The historical sagas revealed each organisation carried a personalised approach to the artist-government nexus. Like Fortheringham (1996:4), the CEOs found that cultural policy and funding decisions, whether they supported or failed to support particular projects were often directed according to new aesthetic or culturally desirable values; almost always seen in terms of personalities, aesthetic beliefs and political biases of both artists and grant givers.
“At all levels from the political to the anecdotal, funding decisions are explained in terms of who saw what show or exhibition, what they thought of it, which party was in government, who was the Minister, who was on the Board/Committee, who knew and lobbied whom, who was or wasn’t at the relevant meeting, or which artistic director had a personal crisis which meant that the application wasn’t very good or it didn’t get in on time”.

(Fortheringham, 1996:4)

Strategies to be employed could include those suggested by the arts administrators interviewed for this study. These items included triennial funding, support for partnerships, loans and investment funding, incentive funding and support for best practice initiatives. They expressed interest in investment in infrastructure and allowing organisations to determine their programmes independently, so that they take responsibility for the advancement of the artform practice.

Managers of the case study organisations expressed concern about the level of training for managers. If there are to be policy changes to encourage the development of cultural industries, there is a training component required, not only for the artistic skills, but for the management needs to facilitate the creations. Criticism of the financial investment in the arts generally focuses on the monies dedicated for the artist to provide a professional service. The sooner there is a clearer understanding of the management and administrative needs that organisations have, the better will be service provided and more effective infrastructure will result.

Managers were happy to take responsibility for their own contributions to the national cultural identity, and welcomed the increased attention government was giving the delivery of cultural activity. The practitioners were concerned that their experience could contribute to the development of government policy for the future. Their perception that constituent groups each organisation represented had been marginalised and there was no need for their cultural service providers to be likewise ignored. The wider society had demonstrated a increased willingness to acknowledge, appreciate and understand the contribution made by Aboriginal heritage and culture, by homosexual activism, by the theatre community and regional arts organisations and this needs to be reflected in government cultural policy and its implementation mechanisms.

Each of the sub-cultures historically had ways of entertaining themselves; passing on the culture and expressing and interpreting the significant contextual environmental influences and documenting rituals and rites of passage. Now there is an eagerness for there to be greater access by more people to these activities, and the organisations which provide these services wish to have equity in their appropriate delivery. Not all
professional artists live in the city; some want to live and work in the regions for the same money they would receive in the metropolitan areas. Theatre North regularly attracts two percent of the local population to its seasons of shows; a figure not unlike that contributed by mainstream subsidised metropolitan companies.

It was evident that two of the case study organisation had found substantial strategies to conduct their business outside the government resource sector. Box office and volunteer labour sustained most Theatre North projects and substantial self funded amounts were generated by the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras from two celebrations whose profits subsidised other elements of the annual programme. Theatre North considered a similar strategy when including some popular ‘blockbuster’ productions to subsidise other work. Theatre North’s touring of Theatre In Education programmes was a viable model for employing artists; but the recession and a breakdown in interest by education authorities had curbed that part of the company’s activities.

All organisations sought support of a financial nature from outside the government sector. Sponsorship by the corporate sector has been embraced by each organisation. Belvoir Street Theatre and Bangarra had support from businesses who recognised the value of the high profile arts organisations and were committed to specific areas of the organisation’s programmes, like youth or touring. In the regions, too, there is increasing interest in the business community to establish partnerships with what appears to be healthy organisations delivering expressions of the regional culture.

5.3.5

Research Proposition: Cultural management is readily making the connection between the arts and tourism.

The debate about the substance of cultural tourism involves determining whether cultural tourism acts as a medium for further, broader cultural development; whether it is the process for putting the content into tourism; whether it is the way of life of a place; or whether because of the arts dynamic, the creative sustainable dynamic, that it provides a viable, flexible capacity for change and self generation for a community.

Those concerned with both the supply and demand sides of a tourism product recognise that cultural tourism offers increased employment and training opportunities. It encourages civic pride in the built and natural environment. It activates infrastructure and amenities for host communities. It creates new income opportunities for the arts industry. It promotes collaborative marketing opportunities, with partnerships between the tourism and arts sectors on a public and private level. It increases the length of stay of visitors.
In the regional sector, Theatre North noted that the predominance of VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives) tourists is reflected in its connection with this sector of the tourism industry. By developing a theatre-going audience from its domestic constituency, visitors to the region clearly demonstrate that they want to do what the locals do. So, while the business of the organisation supports an existing market, it can also stimulate a latent market and create new demand. Belvoir Street Theatre addresses this issue with their proximity to backpacker accommodation and their invitation to visitors to come and see what residents do at their inner city theatre.

Tourists feature amongst the audience for each organisation’s programmes. The tourism sector’s power and potential connection with the arts was most evident when a public event like the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras attracted substantial numbers of residents and visitors. The estimates of the multiplier effect have done much to establish the value of the event, and therefore the sub-culture in which it has its origins and the organisation which conducts it. It is important not to lose sight of whose organisation it is; whether the programme is being developed for the locals or for the visitors. Theatre North’s activities are deliberately geared to the locals, but with an increasing number of visitors to the North Coast of NSW coming to stay to ‘do what the locals do’, there is an increasing number of visitors joining the audience.

The arts community, like any other sector, can respond to tourism either by embracing it, tolerating it, adjusting to its impacts or withdrawing from any contact. Craik (1995:6) suggests cultural tourism is a high risk strategy and participants must be alert to the broader tourism context. Craik warns against the diminution of authenticity when arts practice could be compromised, especially for large markets. Exploitation of cultural expression can have negative impacts on the service provider and the artform to be shared. The Mardi Gras Parade is prepared, presented and has value for a specific group of participants; it provides a sense of fellowship. The intense experiences which accrue for spectators and visitors is not a prime concern to organisers. They are a celebratory bonus, one which reflects a contribution to the diverse national cultural landscape.

Governments, particularly, are keen to analyse the impacts of special events. Economic impacts are the usual focus. They measure the costs and benefits and allow reasonable estimates to be made for future planning. The Mardi Gras economic evaluation (1993) has provided a valuable instrument for its own use, while contributing to a greater understanding of impacts of cultural events of this nature. Such documentation assists a community in determining attitudes to embracing existing and potential events. It will consider prospective benefits which range from the upgrading of community amenities, the opportunity for the community to participate in celebrations, the
promotion of the unique (special interest) characteristics of the event to increasing earned revenue.

5.4 Implications of the Study

It can be observed that each of the case study organisations has demonstrated professionalism in establishing a purpose, a structure, management practices and outputs which consolidate the expressed needs of their constituency. There are differences in approaches and these can be attributed to the corporate culture which has developed in each.

What emerges in this exploration of management culture is the emphasis on the role of personalities and the influence individuals have on the values espoused by organisations. An understanding of the culture represented in the constituency is useful for the strategic planning undertaken by the organisation and its management. It assists with the formulation of goals and the establishment of a mission statement and allows for dealing with the challenges of external and internal crises which may need to be dealt with over time. All managers of cultural organisations need to be encouraged to document and report on their experience. This will contribute to a body of knowledge which is sadly under represented in the research literature. It also has practical implications.

It can provide road maps for practitioners in the sector. Each research proposition is explored with the following outcomes representing an assessment of the data collected from the four case study organisations. There are some practical implications, as well as further research opportunities suggested. For example, how organisations determine the required unity, energy, initiative and loyalty from its members is an ongoing component of its effective administration. The basics which need to be dealt with include planning, by looking ahead and acknowledging that the creation of a plan might be the easy part and that the action, or implementation of that plan requires determination and the devising of some system to work. The choice of personnel who care, have vision, take responsibility and initiative, understand their defined duties and recognise the existing esprit de corps of colleagues is an important aspect of human resource management. Some experience, concern and alertness to trends in the arts has been seen to be useful.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The increased attention the arts and culture have attracted in the mainstream media in recent years, is an indicator of a growth in access to and participation in arts activity by the general public. Government is exerting considerable influence on the changes
taking place in the emerging cultural industries. Policies are being developed. Frameworks need to be clearly defined. Statistics reveal the increasing numbers attending arts events. The audience is but one stakeholder in the process of preparation and presentation of contemporary arts practice. This study recognises that there is room for further inquiry into the contribution made by other stakeholders. Management choices are of particular interest. Those involved in cultural management would benefit from the outcomes of further qualitative and quantitative research into the areas listed below.

5.5.1 The business of the cultural industry

There is great potential in undertaking some comparative analysis on non-profit organisations through the application of standard sources of publicly available information. Original data could be collected involving revenues and expenditures, audiences, clients, memberships, government support, staff size, and role of volunteers. Further work on the application and value of common administration practices in the cultural sector and their relevance to the wider business community would be of interest.

The Draft National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Industry Strategy (November 1994) identifies the vision for a cultural industry which will “realise the value of ... culture through the goals of cultural maintenance and integrity, social and community development, access and economic empowerment” (1994:3). It acknowledges that the creation of products and services for cultural purposes which can also be distributed and exchanged for economic purposes constitutes ‘cultural industry’ (1994:5).

There is speculation that what management specialists consider an ‘industry’ may emerge from what is currently a ‘sector’ – a loose coalition of providers of arts and community cultural services. Formal collaborations exist; while government policy and planning increasingly identify the potential of the sector as an industry, like the tourism industry, with distinctive components. As a greater emphasis is placed on marketing and the role and power of the consumer is recognised, the consortia or collaborative marketing strategies developed will be more readily adopted by arts organisations. When arts organisations link more readily with other external partners, for example in the business, health, education, community development sectors, benefits accrued will be readily recognised.

5.5.2 Government arts policy and service delivery

Research into the ways in which governments can contribute productively to the culture industry would be useful. There is potential for a framework to be established
by the Commonwealth government to assist organisations in culture and cultural tourism industries to operate more effectively. Continuing research into the scale and existing order in these industries, the products and services being offered is required. This will facilitate measures which will strengthen the structure of cultural industries, allow partnerships with other industries and all levels of government. Research into the potential to develop domestic and overseas markets; i.e. to increase demand for cultural products and services, would be of value not only to individual organisations making up the sector, but would have implications for the wider community and national identity.

The significant growth and development of cultural activity as demonstrated by the experience of these four organisations has created a climate for government to further investigate and evaluate funding and support mechanisms for the arts in Australia. Government (at all levels) is eager to reconsider the most appropriate points of intervention by government agencies. Structural reform which has attended the growth and development of other industries in recent years is now a focus in the arts and culture. The Funding Concepts and Strategies Working Party, formed by the Cultural Ministers’ Council in 1993 suggests that:

Governments have accepted that the arts and culture have a collective benefit to society greater than that which can be reflected through free market forces. These collective benefits, not in themselves marketable, accrue to society as a whole and provide the rationale for state intervention in the market process through subsidies to the arts and culture.

The collective benefits of the arts can be categorised into two main areas, quality of life factors for the community in general and the advantages that occur as a result of linking the creativity of artists with other sectors of the economy.

(Throsby, 1992, cited in Cultural Minister’s Council Consultancy document, 1993)

Government agencies are looking to investigate and evaluate a range of alternative funding frameworks and mechanisms to better serve the arts.

5.5.3 The impact of tourism on arts practice

Qualitative and quantitative research directed at event audiences would be useful for development of the growing cultural tourism market. An appropriate methodology needs to be developed to gather data which will assist those competing to attract domestic and international visitors to complement regular (subscriber) audience and participants.
Craik comments on the trend for reports and studies into tourism being provided by economists and an absence of the “adequate consideration of social and cultural dimensions of tourist behaviour and the tourist industry” (1991:240). There is a spirited interest in regional economic development and the contribution made to this by tourism, and specifically cultural tourism is significant.

Following from this is interest in determining what impact tourism has on arts programming. There are opportunities to exploit the common target markets of cultural activities. This is well demonstrated by the increased attention to the inclusive Mardi Gras Festival with mainstream arts institutions participating in shared marketing exercises. Pooled resources, that may have otherwise overlapped, combined with a greater understanding of the tourism industry and consolidating stronger and more appropriate industry contacts bodes well for the future. Inclusive incentive schemes (passes/passports/coupons) to encourage common interest tourist opportunities could be launched. The consortia marketing initiatives undertaken in Sydney and internationally through the Great Attractions of Sydney (GAS) (Wright, 1991:6) are models with which study organisations are familiar.

The accrued data would serve to substantiate the developing tendency alluded to the above. Policy and planning could more effectively deal with the growth in cultural motivations of tourists, training and employment opportunities for artists and arts administrators, and the provision of amenities and infrastructure appropriate to the delivery of cultural events for example. Strategies for efficient delivery of government services for the culture, tourism, recreation and personal services industries would benefit from increased research in the areas suggested above.

5.6 Conclusion

Concerns raised in discussion with managers of cultural organisations included the future economic viability of the cultural industry; the need to maximise employment opportunities to satisfy the artistic and administrative needs of cultural organisations; the need to provide appropriate training opportunities for artists and administrators; the provision of opportunities to increase awareness and raise expectations and attitudes of the arts and arts practice in the wider community; the need for coordinated national infrastructure within the cultural industry; the need for government at all levels to collaborate consistently on policy formulation and service delivery in consultation with the cultural industry; the need for further research to ensure all components of the nation’s cultural industry are well served, e.g. coordinated and comprehensive databases.
Prime Minister, Paul Keating, expressed the role of the artists in the nation’s life (cited in ATSIC, 1994:8) as:

... our artists ... and everyone ... engaged in our cultural industries are value adders to the nation’s life. Fostering a creative culture makes the same economic sense as encouraging a manufacturing industry does – in fact the two are complementary. We need to be a country which makes things, which releases self-expression and which can sell to the world an unmistakable identity. For the future really does belong to those who can create ...

These observations apply to the four case study organisations which have identified how they can best prepare the creative products and services which best fulfil the needs of their particular, immediate constituency and then on-sell to the wider community when appropriate. The beliefs and values of the participants in each organisation are reflected in the management and structural choices made to effectively implement the annual programme. Cultural activity is labour intensive and the input of individuals and groups is the critical dynamic for the culture represented in its saga. The skill and experience of the participants are an important ingredient of the artform commitment in the organisation’s annual programme. National and international trends in arts practise provides one more environment in which the organisation operates.

The outlook for each organisation is affected by wider economic, social, political and physical contexts. There are growth predictions in tangential industries which will significantly influence cultural activity in the future.

The projected annual industry output growth rate to the year 2001 for the ‘recreation and personal services’ industry is 2.84 percent. The projected annual employment growth rate for ‘recreation and personal services’ is 2.33 percent to the year 2001, ranking sixth among the ABS 21 major industry subdivisions.

A significant and growing proportion of domestic and international tourists are seeking cultural tourism as a major component of their holiday. With the projected number of international tourists at 6.5 million in the year 2000, the strengthening links between cultural and tourism industries are becoming increasingly pivotal.
The significance and growth potential of the arts and cultural industries, and their links to other growth industries such as tourism and information services, highlights the need for increasing numbers of skilled people who can continue to meet the needs of industries.

(Arts Training Australia, 1994, cited in ATSIC, 1994:9)

The final Chapter of this report has provided a brief summary of the study and has drawn together the major themes of the investigation into four organisations operating in the culture industry in Australia. Implications of the study have been raised and discussed in terms of the contribution the identified organisations and their peers make to the cultural life of the nation. The major limitations of the study have been specified and these along with the main findings have been helpful in identifying a number of areas worthy of further study.

This study has contributed to the body of knowledge in the management of cultural organisations in Australia. It is has raised evidence of a need for further research into a number of aspects of relationships and responsibilities between organisations and stakeholders in the preparation and delivery of arts product and services. These include organisation’s membership and their aspirations; management structure and the business of operational challenges; tensions between professional staff and volunteers; cultural organisations and government policy and practice; the peer assessment and arms length funding debate; the impact of cultural tourism on the creation of art; and community celebrations and their impact.

Cultural organisations in Australia demonstrate considerable diversity in their visioning, structure, management practises and the products they produce. Some are extremely professional in the way they deliver the services to which they are committed. Not for profit, volunteer based organisations can be professional in the way they respond to their constituency and provide quality cultural services. Many cultural organisations understand the importance of issues associated with efficient business practice, from human resource management to marketing and strategic planning. By observing organisations which have been in the business for substantial periods of time, have adapted to changing internal and external influences and which are highly regarded by their peers and the public alike, new or emerging organisations can better identify practices which may be appropriate to their conditions and contexts. They can then develop their own distinctive management cultures.
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