Commonwealth Fact Sheet

PROTECTION OF MOVABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT 1986

If your project involves exporting Australian cultural property, such as artworks, historical, archaeological, numismatic, philatelic, science or technology objects, you need to consider whether the objects are culturally significant. The Act restricts the export of such objects and strict penalties apply for non-compliance.

1. What approvals do I need?

The National Cultural Heritage Control List categorises objects into two categories:
- Class A: cannot be exported
- Class B: require export permits
  (General, Permanent, or Temporary)

More information on these classes is available from the Arts website.

Certificates of exemption are required to import and re-export both Class A and Class B objects.

2. Who provides approvals?

The Department of Communications and the Arts regulates the movement of culturally significant objects under the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986.

3. How do I get Commonwealth approval?

Application for export permits and certificates of exemption are made with the Department of Communications and the Arts. Applications are referred to expert examiners and the National Cultural Heritage Committee for consideration. The Minister for Communications and the Arts, or their delegate, provides final approval upon recommendation by the National Cultural Heritage Committee.

Guidelines and application forms are available online.

4. More information

Commonwealth

For more information, visit the Department of Communications and the Arts website or contact:
Phone: 1800 819 461
Email: movable.heritage@arts.gov.au

Major Projects Facilitation Agency

If you would like assistance to identify the regulatory obligations for your project, please visit our Online Tool or contact us:
Phone: 02 6243 7121
Email: contact@mpfa.gov.au

This fact sheet provides general information and does not constitute legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice tailored to your individual circumstances. The Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) assists Major Project Proponents to navigate the approvals process. The MPFA does not grant approvals, nor administer this Act or its subordinate legislation.

www.business.gov.au/mpfa contact@mpfa.gov.au

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