



# **Questacon - The National Science & Technology Centre**

Report of  
Activities  
1999 – 00



QUESTACON – THE NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 1999–00

**Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre**

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**and Technology Centre**

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1 September 1999

The Hon Peter McGauran MP  
Minister for the Arts and the Centenary of Federation  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

We are pleased to submit to you, for presentation to Parliament, the 1999-00 Report of Activities for Questacon - The National Science and Technology Centre.

We commend the Report to Parliament.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Webster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the start of the first name.

The Hon Robert Webster  
Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annie Ghisalberti". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a long, sweeping underline.

Dr Annie Ghisalberti  
Director

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# I N T R O D U C T I O N

Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre was officially opened in 1988, the Australian Bicentennial year. Over the past 12 years, Questacon has established itself as Australia's leading science and technology centre, attracting over 4 million people to the Centre in Canberra and reaching a further 8 million people throughout Australia and overseas.

Questacon combines education with entertainment to make science learning fun and interactive. Questacon plays a key role in popularising science and technology, and has developed a number of world-class exhibitions and programs that travel across Australia and overseas.

The Centre operates as a semi-autonomous agency of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. Questacon has a Council comprising a part-time Chairman and seven other Members appointed by the Minister. Work continued through 1999-00 to establish the Centre as an Executive Agency and a Prescribed Agency.

The body of the 1999-00 Report of Activities is divided into three sections, which follow the Director's Report and 1999-00 At a Glance.

**Part 1** provides a Corporate Overview of Questacon, detailing the Centre's structure and goals, and lists some significant organisational developments.

**Part 2** demonstrates Questacon's progress towards achieving each of its five goals.

**Part 3** provides an overview of the year's activities.

Appendices provide additional information on the Centre's programs and operations. Other documents available to the public include the Centre's *Customer Service Charter*, the *Questacon Plan*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Handbook* and a schedule of Questacon's fees and charges.

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

1999-00 has been an eventful year for Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre. The Centre saw the end of an era with the retirement in November 1999 of the founding Director, Dr Michael Gore and the appointment in December of its new Director, Dr Annie Ghisalberti, formerly the Chief Executive Officer of Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth, Western Australia. Mike Gore left Questacon with the highest commendation for his vision and leadership. The tributes to him at his farewell dinner from the Minister and from his colleagues said it all about Mike and his achievement in founding a very important national cultural institution.

Dr Ghisalberti, or Annie, as she prefers to be known, comes to Questacon with the highest qualifications. Annie has been involved in the science industry since 1987, with a background in biochemical research. Her diverse background, working in universities, state government and the private and not for profit sectors makes her well suited to steer Questacon's direction for the next five to 10 years. One of Annie's strengths is her firm belief in collaboration and her ability to lead a creative and dynamic team in promoting science awareness. Over the past 10 years, Questacon has mastered the art of communicating messages about science and technology by combining education with entertainment. Under Annie's direction, we are looking at new ways of making Questacon relevant into the new century and at creative ways of reaching more people with messages, not only about science and technology, but about Australian innovation, in particular.

Government funding to refurbish the building and upgrade exhibitions in the Centre at Canberra enabled the launch of the new look building, along with Questacon's exciting major new exhibition, *SideShow*, in April 2000. The new exhibition and improved public access in the building has already drawn record numbers of visitors. Council appreciates the Government's strong support for the Centre, reflected in the additional funding for the Centre's capital assets.

I am particularly keen to see the results of Questacon's partnership with the Australian Technology Park (ATP) in Sydney. Questacon at ATP will showcase Australian innovation in technology, exciting and educating Australians about the importance of innovation and new technologies to our economy and our standard of living. The proposed new centre aims to inspire young people to pursue technology-related careers and business opportunities as well as to demonstrate to the world that Australia is indeed a 'clever country'.

I have greatly appreciated the hard work and support of my fellow Council Members. This year saw the retirement of Professor Ian Lowe, Dr Peter Pockley and Associate Professor Tim Roberts. While it is always sad to see the departure of such hardworking and well qualified Members, I am always pleased at the quality of the replacement Members – in this case, Ms Gabrielle Kibble and Dr Geoffrey Vaughan. I am fortunate to be embarking on Council work over the next year with the support of eminent and hardworking leaders in their respective fields.

This year, the Centre reached over 1 000 000 people across Australia and overseas through its world-class exhibitions and programs—a 20.3% per cent increase on last year's total. This is a most fitting start to a new era at Questacon under Dr Ghisalberti's directorship. I am sure that her vision, drive and leadership will take Questacon into the next century with renewed vigour.



The Hon Robert Webster  
Chairman

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This is my first Questacon Annual report as Director. On 30 November 1999, Questacon's founding Director, Dr Michael Gore, retired. Dr Gore's association with Questacon goes back over 20 years. It is unlikely we would have a Questacon if he hadn't convinced many Ministers and others to support the new national science centre as a Bicentennial project.

Taking over the Directorship of Questacon from such a well known and widely respected public figure was a daunting prospect. On the other hand, the opportunity to create a new era and direction for Questacon was an exciting challenge. From Western Australia, I was new to Canberra and the national arena. This has enabled me to bring a fresh perspective and keen drive to the leadership that I hope will set the tone for a vibrant Questacon for many years to come.

This year, Questacon was reaccredited as a full member of the Association of Science and Technology Centres (ASTC). Questacon is one of the few science centres outside North America to achieve this status. This is a great example of Australia as a world leader. I am keen to build further on Questacon's reputation as an outstanding interactive science centre. Fortunately, the Questacon team lives and breathes the challenge of delivering interactive science exhibitions and programs in creative ways.

Since its establishment, Questacon has attracted some one million dollars each year in sponsorship. In this respect I believe that it is one of the most successful of the national cultural institutions. Major partnerships have been forged with organisations like Shell Australia, NRMA, BHP, IBM and Orica. The Shell sponsorship, covering 15 years, is the longest sponsorship partnership of its type among the cultural institutions. We will be building on this goodwill and Questacon's reputation as a provider of quality interactive exhibitions to take us into new territory.

This year saw a major building and exhibition upgrade. In the 1998-99 Budget, the Government provided \$4.6m over three years to upgrade the building and exhibition galleries and to maintain and upgrade exhibitions. In April 2000, the new look building was launched with the opening of *SideShow*, a great exhibition which explores the fun behind the science of the fairground. This much needed capital funding has allowed us to enhance the experience for the visitors to the Centre in Canberra.

I am pleased to be working with a most impressive team of Council Members, eminent in their fields and drawn from all over Australia. They have provided unstinting help, guidance and advice. At a time when Government funding is keenly competitive, it is imperative that we all work smarter – know our audience, know what they want, find the best ways to deliver, our programs and reach as many people as possible.

In 1999-00, over one million visitors participated in a Questacon experience across Australia and overseas. I am looking forward to building on this wonderful start to the new century, to keep Questacon a household name that people associate with fun and learning about science, technology and innovation. I am particularly keen to make science accessible to everyone, especially those who have less opportunity to interact with science, including women and people in regional, rural and remote areas.

Australia is home to some of the world's greatest innovations and innovators. In 2001, Australia's Centenary of Federation, I am looking forward to the exciting new ways Questacon will be showcasing Australian innovation.



Dr Annie Ghisalberti

# 1 9 9 9 - 0 0 AT A GLANCE

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 073 731 people participated in a Questacon program in Canberra, around Australia and overseas.
- *Spiders! Live*, an exhibition of live spiders from Australia and overseas, including several giant tarantulas from South America, attracted record visitor numbers, with over 10 000 people visiting *Spiders! Live* over the three day long weekend in October.
- *SideShow - the science behind the fun*, a new exhibition designed and developed by Questacon, opened in April to coincide with the launch of Questacon's new look building. *SideShow* has proved a very popular drawcard, with over 82 000 visitors experiencing the exhibition since its first three months.
- *Innovative Australians*, an exhibition showcasing 100 stories of contemporary Australian science and technology innovation toured to Chile, Argentina and Mexico for the Department of Industry, Science and Resources.
- *NRMA RoadZone*, a road safety exhibition, opened in Sydney in July 1999. The exhibition, which was designed and developed by Questacon for NRMA Ltd, has already travelled to four venues in NSW, reaching a total of 68 319 young Australians with important road safety messages.
- Questacon, through its association with Shell Australia, began travelling alongside the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay, providing interactive sports science shows to visitors at Torch Relay community celebration sites around the nation. In all, the *Shell Questacon Science Circus* will visit 142 of the 187 celebration sites, with the first commencing in Alice Springs on 8 June 2000.
- Questacon began designing and developing an interactive sports/science exhibition for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The exhibition will be displayed at Homebush for the duration of the Games.
- Questacon continued working with the Australian Technology Park in Sydney to establish Questacon at ATP, an interactive technology centre showcasing technology and innovation.
- Questacon received accreditation as a Full Member of the premier science and technology organisation, the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) headquartered in Washington, DC. Questacon is one of only three science centres outside North America with this special status.
- The Questacon website was upgraded to include the very latest in web technologies. The site attracted **2.5 million** hits during the year.
- Questacon was awarded the Major Tourism Attraction prize at the 1999 Canberra Region Tourism Awards.
- Questacon commenced work on four new exhibitions: *Awesome Earth*, a joint collaboration involving Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth; *Predators* and *Sea Chest Secret*, two new travelling exhibitions; and an Australian Innovations exhibition, designed to highlight Australian science and technology innovations for the Centenary of Federation in 2001.

## STATISTICS

<b>Total visitors in all Centre programs</b>	<b>1 073 731</b>
Visitors to the Centre in Canberra	344 847
Visitors to the Centre's Outreach programs	168 286
Visitors to the Centre's Travelling exhibitions (in Australia)	473 531
<b>Total participants in Australia</b>	<b>986 664</b>
Visitors to the Centre's Travelling Exhibitions (outside Australia)	87 067
<b>Visitors to the Centre's website</b>	<b>2 418 444</b>
Locations visited by the Centre's Outreach programs	

Questacon continued its commitment to reach people in regional and rural communities who do not have the same opportunities as Australians in capital cities. Questacon programs were run in every Australian State and Territory, including:

- every capital city;
- over 40 regional communities and cities in every state, including: Dubbo, Grafton, Port Macquarie, Taree, Gympie, Tewantin, Bundaberg, Innisfail, Alice Springs, Groote Eylandt, Halls Creek, Kununurra, Ballarat, Seymour, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Launceston; and
- remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in North West WA and the Northern Territory.

### Sponsors

The total revenue recognised from sponsorship and program support grants in 1999-00 was \$1.383 million.

# PART 1

## CORPORATE OVERVIEW

### THE COUNCIL

The Questacon Council comprises a part-time Chairman and seven other Members appointed by the Minister. The Centre's Director is an Executive Member of the Council and provides the link between the Centre's Leadership Team Committee and the Council.

Members of the Council as at 30 June 2000 were:

#### *Chairman*

The Honourable Robert Webster  
Executive Director  
International Banks and Securities Association of Australia (NSW)

#### *Deputy Chairman*

Mr Anthony Adair  
Senior Associate  
The Centre for Independent Studies (Vic)

Ms Gabrielle Kibble  
Adjunct Professor  
Built Environment,  
University of New South Wales (NSW)

Mr Peter Laver  
Chancellor  
Victoria University of Technology (Vic)

Prof Lesley Parker  
Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor  
Curtin University of Technology (WA)

Dr Geoffrey Vaughan  
Chairman  
Cooperative Research Centres Committee (Vic)

### **2 Memberships - Vacant**

The terms of Professor Ian Lowe, Dr Peter Pockley and Associate Professor Timothy Roberts expired on 12 February 2000. These Members had served Questacon's Council for three years. Two new Members are expected to be appointed by the Minister early in the new financial year.

### **Council Remuneration and Tenure**

On 1 March 1999, the Remuneration Tribunal determined that the rate per meeting for Category 2 part-time public office holders (Questacon Council category) was \$325 for the Chair and \$250 for Members.

Council appointments are for three years, with some Members reappointed for two years, to ensure continuity of service.

### **Council's Major Activities**

Questacon is expected to be established as a Prescribed Agency and as an Executive Agency during 2000-01. Over the last financial year, Council was involved in a range of matters, including:

- the possibility of Questacon establishing an interactive technology centre at the Australian Technology Park in Sydney;
- seeking additional Budget funding for major building works and exhibition upgrades;
- forward planning for the Centre's programs, activities and management, including financial planning;
- seeking private and public sector support for new exhibits, exhibitions and programs; and
- policy oversight of Centre programs, activities and resource issues.

Council has three sub-Committees—Resource Management, Fundraising and Public Programs. Council met four times during 1999-00.

## **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The Leadership Team comprises the Director, Deputy Director, the Centre's three Executive Managers and three senior managers. The Leadership Team sets policy, allocates resources and plans for the future at a strategic level.

## **PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre is a sub-program of the Arts Program of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

***To be a world-class science and technology centre that increases national awareness, understanding and positive attitudes to science and technology.***

Science and technology are integral to our modern life. There is no element in our daily routines at home, work, school or play where science and technology do not play a fundamental role.

Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre aims to extend the boundaries of science education and encourage enthusiasm for knowledge about science and technology and how it is part of our everyday lives.

## GOALS

1. To have a broad sponsorship base and increase revenue from sources other than government.
2. To provide quality and relevant interactive programs that present science and technology in contemporary contexts.
3. To increase participation in Questacon programs, particularly for the key audiences of families and schools.
4. To deliver Questacon programs more effectively and efficiently.
5. To be a well-managed and progressive organisation with a strong business focus.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Questacon - The National Science and Technology Centre is an agency within the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. The Centre has four branches—Executive, Programs, Business Management and Marketing, with each branch reporting directly to the Centre's Director.

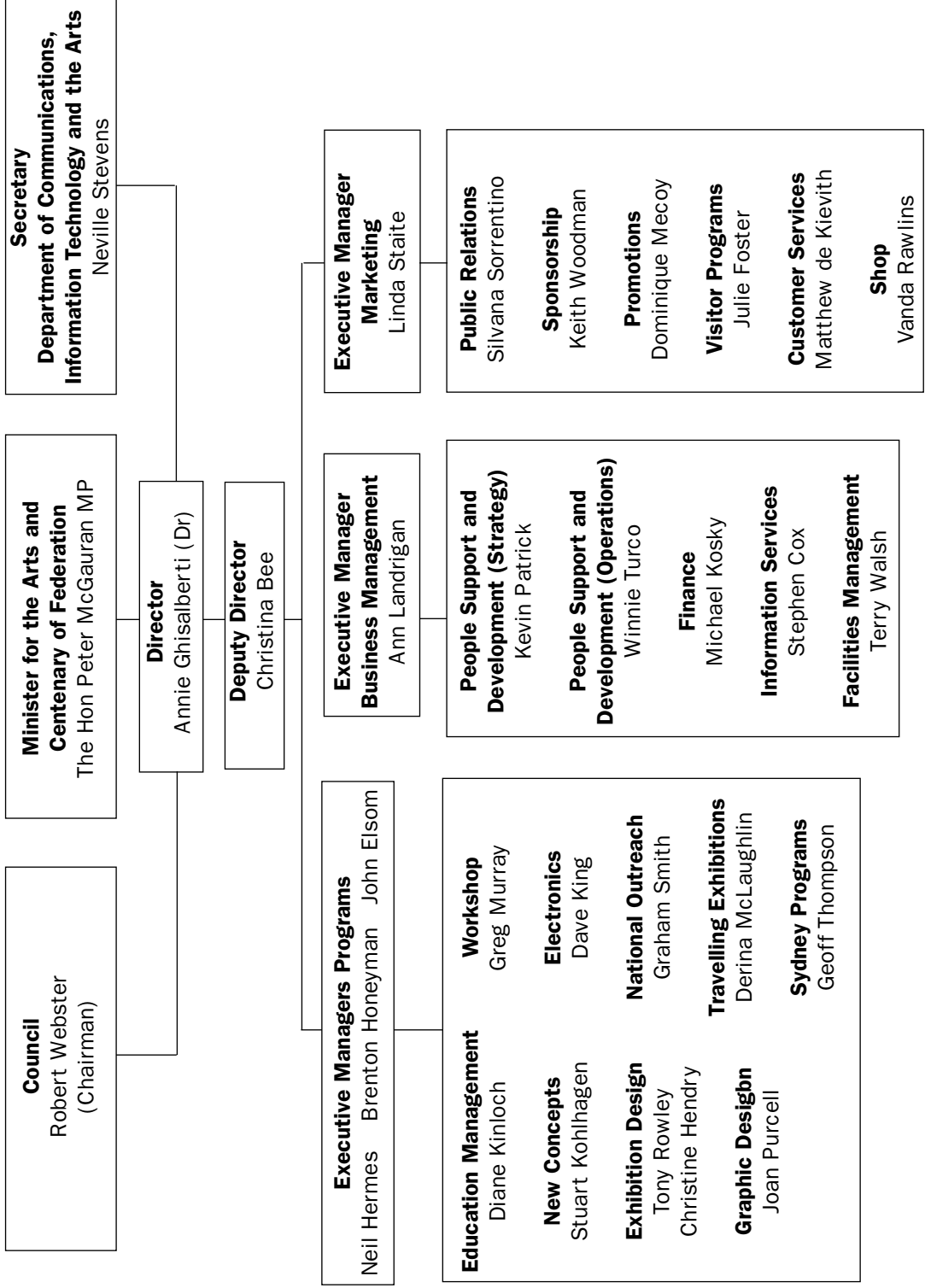
Executive Branch provides leadership for the Centre's activities, provides internal and external general policy support, coordinates external accountability and supports the Council.

Programs Branch is responsible for the design, development, production and delivery of high quality, stimulating and entertaining programs that promote and popularise science and technology throughout Australia and the Asia Pacific.

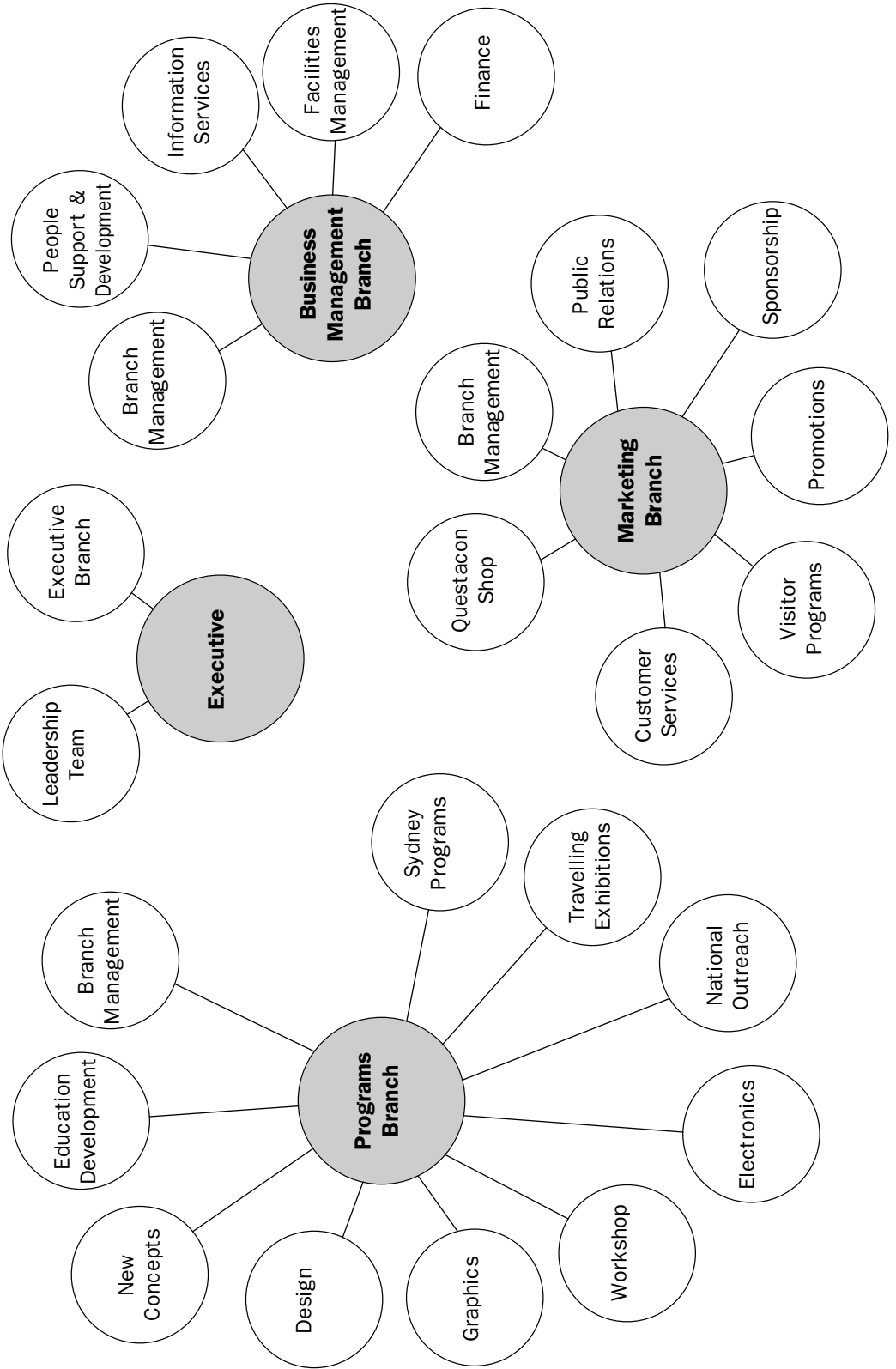
Business Management Branch provides business planning, performance management, and corporate management services for the Centre, including human resource management, corporate management, finance, information services and facilities management.

Marketing Branch is responsible for the strategic marketing of the Centre to increase visitor numbers to Centre exhibitions and programs and to raise Questacon's profile. It assists program areas to market their programs, coordinates market research, undertakes public relations, promotional and sponsorship activities and manages the Centre's Membership program. Marketing is also responsible for the Centre's Customer Service including venue hire, special programs, Questacon Assistants and Volunteer Explainers. The Branch is also responsible for the Questacon Shop and Cafe.

# THE NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE TEAM STRUCTURE AS AT 30 JUNE 2000



**QUESTACON – THE NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE TEAM STRUCTURE**



## **VISITOR NUMBERS**

A total of 344 847 people visited the Centre in Canberra during 1999-00, representing a 20 per cent increase on last year's total of 286 288. The total number of paying visitors was 281 451 in 1999-00, an increase of 18 per cent compared with last year's figures.

In 1999-00, the total number of people visiting Questacon exhibitions and programs, both at the Centre and throughout Australia and overseas was 1 073 731. This represents a 20.3 per cent increase on last year's total of 892 010. The Centre allows free entry to all its members.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

In 1999-00, Questacon received a budget allocation of \$7.028 million from the Commonwealth Government, comprising of operational revenue of \$6.284 million and Capital Use Charge of \$0.744 million. The Centre also received an equity injection from the Commonwealth Government of \$4.6 million over three years to:

- carry out major refurbishment on the Centre's building in Canberra; and
- assist in the refurbishment of exhibition spaces in the Centre in Canberra.

The Government funding represented 57 per cent of the Centre's total revenue for 1999-00. Revenue received from sources other than government totalled \$5.220 million, which represents a 24 per cent increase on 1998-99 figures.

The Centre's Financial Statements are at Appendix 9, and have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with guidelines issued by the Minister for Finance and Administration.

## **FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

The Centre completed approximately 85 per cent of the major refurbishment during 1999-00, made possible by the \$4.6 million Government funding.

Works completed during 1999-00 included:

- Air conditioning and smoke exhaust systems;
- Customer service area/foyer/reception desk relocation and refurbishment;
- Shop/Cafe relocation; and
- Acoustic treatment to reduce noise in public areas.

Staff accommodation, fire detection systems upgrade and water leak rectification are to be completed during the coming financial year, 2000-01.

## INTERNAL MANAGEMENT

Work continued under the *Building an Even Better Questacon* framework to enhance Questacon's internal operations and performance. All Questacon staff participated in team workshops following the 1998-99 move to teams. Substantial improvements were made to Questacon's business planning, budgeting and financial reporting processes. A performance management scheme, *People and Business*, was introduced. A number of people policies were developed under the Centre's Certified Agreement. The Centre commenced the process of developing a new Agreement for January 2001.

The Centre entered into an agreement with a consultant to provide a confidential counselling assistance program for employees.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Consideration of disadvantaged and minority groups is a factor in the selection and design of the Centre's programs and exhibitions. Exhibition access, easy-to-understand graphics, text and topic selection (which take into account cultural and gender differences) are ways in which the Centre promotes social justice.

The Centre's travelling exhibitions and outreach programs travel to regional and remote areas to give as many people as possible access to world-class programs and exhibitions. Details of the Centre's travelling exhibitions and programs are further discussed at Goal 3.

The Centre's admission prices provide a substantial discount for family groups and reduced rates for pensioners and students.

The Centre's building in Canberra is designed and maintained to provide easy access for people with disabilities, the aged, parents and the young.

The Centre is currently formulating its Workplace Diversity Program in line with its Certified Agreement.

## PART 2

### MEETING OUR GOALS

**Questacon's mission is to be a world-class science and technology centre that increases national awareness, understanding and positive attitudes to science and technology.**

During 1999-00, the Centre continued to deliver programs designed to make science and technology both educational and entertaining. Visitors to Questacon programs and exhibitions are encouraged to use their hands, minds and bodies to make their own discoveries. By using everyday examples, we show how science and technology is involved in our lives.

The Centre exceeded the performance targets established to measure success against our key Output – "Exhibitions and programs that encourage participation in, increase awareness of, and build positive attitudes to, science and technology and their role in improving Australia's cultural and national well-being". Performance against targets is as follows:

<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual Performance 1999-00</b>
<i>Quality</i>	
• 80 per cent of visitors satisfied with Questacon programs	• 90 per cent of visitors satisfied with Questacon programs
<i>Quantity</i>	
• Over 700 000 people participate in Questacon programs, 60 per cent outside Canberra	• Over 1 000 000 people participated in Questacon programs, 68 per cent outside Canberra
<i>Price</i>	
• \$15.70 per participant (44 per cent funded by sponsorship)	• \$11.86 per participant (including capital use charge) 43 per cent funded from sources other than government

The following outlines in greater detail how the Centre performed against the goals established in the Business Plan for 1999-00.

#### **Goal 1 - To have a broad sponsorship base and increase revenue from sources other than Government**

The Centre assesses its performance of this goal against the following criteria:

- **attract new major sponsors;**
- **maintain and support existing major sponsors;**
- **establish loyal customer base through increased membership numbers;**
- **maintain or better 98-99 levels of visitors to the Centre;**
- **maintain or increase visitors to total package of national programs; and**
- **increase revenue from commercial programs and other activities.**

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### ATTRACT NEW MAJOR SPONSORS AND MAINTAIN AND SUPPORT EXISTING MAJOR SPONSORS

#### Sponsors campaigns

Questacon relies on corporate sponsorships and grants to undertake many of its public programs. Support is highly valued and comes in various forms from many sectors of the community. Mutually beneficial partnerships are developed to meet sponsors' individual corporate and marketing objectives.

## EFFECTIVENESS

Sponsorship support of the Centre was received in various forms throughout the year. Sponsorship revenue recognised in 1999-00 amounted to \$1.383 million which was in support of both continuing and new exhibitions and programs.

This money included grants, sponsorship and donations, contributing to the Centre's operations during 1999-00. This compares with \$0.997 million recognised as revenue during 1998-99.

A new major sponsorship was secured for transporting the *Shell Questacon Science Circus* for two years. Cootes Holdings Pty Ltd signed a sponsorship contract with Questacon in December 1999. In addition, Questacon was successful in attracting Bayer Australia as the major sponsor for the *Spiders! Live* exhibition. WIN Television also provided sponsorship for the Centre's new permanent exhibition *SideShow*, in the form of advertising.

The Centre's sponsorship policy was reviewed during the year, resulting in a set of principles for entering into agreements with commercial partners and sponsors, as well as revised strategies for seeking sponsors. The Council approved the policy early in 2000.

Questacon entered *The Australian Financial Review* 1999 National Sponsorship Awards in recognition of the long standing relationship held with Shell Australia in their support of the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*. Questacon was included in *The Australian Financial Review's* supplement in September concerning Corporate Sponsorship in Australia.

A corporate video, focusing on the benefits and successes of sponsoring a Questacon exhibition or program, was released in the middle of the year. The video assists with presentations to companies who are unable to visit the Centre in Canberra.

Questacon's major sponsors were again supportive of Questacon for the year. Shell, NRMA and BHP continued to support the success of the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*, the launch and travelling of *NRMA Roadzone*, and travelling the nature exhibition *BHP WildScience* throughout Australia, respectively.

In addition, Questacon worked closely with Shell Australia on two special Olympic related projects. This included sending members of the *Shell Questacon Science Circus* on the road with the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay to perform special sports science shows at the community celebration sites, and designing and developing a sports science exhibition for the Olympic Games at Homebush.

## ESTABLISH LOYAL CUSTOMER BASE THROUGH INCREASED MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

### KEY ACTIVITIES

#### **Questacon membership program**

Questacon's membership program continued to offer a suite of benefits to members. These included 12 months free entry to Questacon and other Australian science centres, discounts at the Questacon Shop and Café, 12 months subscription to the *Questacon Magazine* as well as joint membership benefits with the Canberra Southern Cross Club, ACT, Hoyts, Belconnen and Woden, ACT, the Premier Hotel Groups around the country and GEO Magazine.

### EFFECTIVENESS

#### ***The Q Club***

During the year, the number of memberships totalled 1 492 with 538 new memberships and 954 existing memberships renewed during this period. This represented a 6 per cent drop in the number of memberships. Memberships are expected to increase following a concerted membership drive that commenced after the launch of *SideShow*.

## MAINTAIN OR BETTER 98-99 LEVELS OF VISITORS TO THE CENTRE

### KEY ACTIVITIES

During the year, a number of promotional activities were held at the Centre to enhance the experience of visitors and to encourage repeat visitation.

### EFFECTIVENESS

Almost 345 000 people participated in a Questacon program at the Centre in Canberra in 1999-00, an increase of 20% on last year's figures.

*Spiders! Live* attracted some of the best Questacon visitor figures since the Centre opened in 1988. Over 10 000 people visited *Spiders! Live* over the three day long weekend in October.

*SideShow - the science behind the fun* has proved a very popular drawcard, with over 82 000 visitors experiencing the exhibition since it opened in April.

The Centre also introduced extended opening hours (opening at 9.00am instead of 10.00am) allowing school groups to visit the Centre earlier.

## MAINTAIN OR INCREASE VISITORS TO TOTAL PACKAGE OF NATIONAL PROGRAMS

### KEY ACTIVITIES

During 1999-00, the Centre actively targeted schools throughout Australia encouraging them to participate in a Questacon program.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### Schools Program

During the year, 117 936 school children from across Australia visited Questacon - an increase of 10 per cent on the previous year.

During the year, the Centre launched a comprehensive schools marketing campaign aimed at attracting more schools to Questacon. In November, the Centre distributed flyers to 7 000 schools across Australia. In February, event brochures were distributed to all schools in the Canberra region. A Questacon calendar was produced and distributed to every Australian school. In April, up to 70 teachers in the Canberra region attended a special *SideShow* launch. In addition, the Centre's Special Program's Coordinator visited tour and coach operators across the region and also began conducting teacher familiarisation visits, escorting teachers around the galleries prior to school visits.

### INCREASE REVENUE FROM COMMERCIAL PROGRAM AND OTHER ACTIVITIES (OVER 2 YEARS)

## KEY ACTIVITIES

Questacon's reputation for designing, developing and travelling exhibitions as well as its diverse range of programs combine to generate increased revenue for the Centre. This amounted to \$5.220 m in 1999-00, a 24 per cent increase on 1998-99.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### Exhibitions

The Centre commenced planning for its next major touring exhibition. The topic has been determined via extensive research, and the timing and extent of the exhibition will be dependent upon the level of sponsorship or joint collaboration with other organisations that can be attained. In addition, Questacon has recognised the market demand for a smaller touring exhibition to be developed that can be easily packaged and toured to smaller venues both within Australia and overseas. Consequently *Sea Chest Secret* will commence touring in 2000-01.

Questacon continues to receive many requests from industry and other organisations to assist with design and development of interactive exhibits and associated programs. Questacon has developed a set of guidelines to ensure it continues to meet its core objectives and that this activity remains a profitable venture for the organisation.

Questacon also runs a number of activities which help to generate other revenue for the Centre. See Goal 5.

## **Goal 2 – Provide quality and relevant interactive programs that present science and technology in contemporary contexts**

The Centre assesses its performance of this goal against the following criteria:

- **the number and diversity of programs that address current and emerging science and technology;**
- **showcase Australia's work in science and technology in Questacon programs;**
- **develop and deliver programs aimed at enhancing science and technology education; and**
- **conduct fun and exciting activities that involve people in science and technology.**

### **KEY ACTIVITIES**

#### **INCREASE THE NUMBER AND DIVERSITY OF PROGRAMS THAT ADDRESS CONTEMPORARY AND EMERGING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

##### **New Exhibitions**

1999-00 was a busy year for Questacon's Programs Branch, with six new exhibitions either completed or under development during this time.

### **EFFECTIVENESS**

**NRMA RoadZone.** Questacon's newest outreach program, is a road safety exhibition developed by Questacon and NRMA to replace the *NRMA Tomorrow's Drivers* exhibition. *NRMA RoadZone* aims to teach 9-14 year olds important safety messages with a number of high tech, interactive exhibits. This is the first time that interactive road safety education delves into the issues of peer pressure, consideration for others, street awareness and accepting personal responsibility. The exhibition was launched by NSW Transport Minister, The Hon Carl Scully, NRMA President, Mr Nick Whitlam, and Questacon Council Chairman, The Hon Robert Webster, on 30 July 1999 in Sydney. *NRMA RoadZone* attracted 18 319 visitors to 30 June 2000. A further 50,000 visited *NRMA RoadZone* while it was at Questacon.

**SideShow – The Science Behind the Fun.** Extensive development work began in 1998-99 on a new permanent exhibition focusing on the science of fun parks and sideshow alleys as a result of additional funding in the 1998-99 Budget to upgrade programs at the Centre in Canberra. *SideShow* opened in April 2000 with the launch of the new look building. *SideShow* is proving very popular with the public, attracting 35 000 visitors in its opening month alone.

*SideShow* tackles a wide range of science topics, from the mechanics of *SideShow* rides to the psychology of fear. A range of physical and sensory experiences combine to promote science and technology through a mix of education and entertainment.

**Australian Innovations Gallery.** During 1999-00, Questacon began designing and developing a new gallery to mark the Centenary of Federation and 100 years of Australian innovation. The gallery, which is

scheduled to open at Questacon in January 2001, will feature an animated theatre allowing visitors to step into the heart of rural Australia and discover more about Australian innovations. The theatre will highlight some of this country's clever innovations ranging from indigenous technology to some of the more recent science and technology advancements.

The Australian Innovations gallery will also include Paula Dawson's holograms – *The Eidola Suite and Innovative Australians* – an exhibition showcasing 100 contemporary stories on Australian science and technology innovations.

**Awesome Earth.** Questacon began working with Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth to design and develop a new exhibition on the Earth's natural phenomena. The new *Awesome Earth* exhibition will open in Perth in December 2000 and will then be installed permanently in Questacon's popular Force Gallery in July 2001. The exhibition will allow visitors to experience earthquakes in a realistic house, view volcanic eruptions, crashing continental plates, mini tsunamis, tornadoes, lightning and other awesome natural phenomena.

**Predators.** During the year, the Centre conducted customer research to determine the theme of its next major travelling exhibition, to follow on from the success of the blockbuster *Terrorsaurus* exhibition. The research results concluded that a 'predators theme' focusing on how predators catch their prey, how prey avoid being eaten by predators and the diverse range of predators in our world, was the most popular exhibition concept amongst the Centre's target audience. (See Goal 4 – Market Research). During the year, a Predators team was formed with initial concept work undertaken. The *Predators* exhibition, which is designed to open at Questacon and then travel to venues across Australia and overseas, is due to be completed within the next two years.

**Sea Chest Secret.** The Centre began work on a new portable travelling exhibition to replace the nine-year old *Fascinating Science* exhibition. *Sea Chest Secret* is designed to travel to state museums, regional science centres, marine parks, zoos, science festivals and other venues across Australia and overseas. Targeted at upper primary and lower secondary school students, *Sea Chest Secret*, is a problem solving exhibition covering a range of disciplines such as environmental science, art and maritime history. A subset of eight exhibits from the exhibition will be on display in Hawaii in January 2001 with the full exhibition to commence touring Australian venues in April 2001

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### Special Exhibition Program

During the year, Questacon featured an extensive incoming exhibition program to complement the Centre's permanent favourite exhibits. Exhibitions included:

- *Tasmanian Tiger - the Mystery of the Thylacine* - to 11 July 1999
- *Illusions* - 14 February to 5 September 1999
- *Powerplay - Tomorrow's Adventure Playground* - 3 August to 3 February

- *Spiders! Live* – 18 September – 31 January 2000
- *BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1999* - 25 March – 4 June 2000
- *NRMA RoadZone* – 4 May to 16 July 2000

## EFFECTIVENESS

***Tasmanian Tiger – The Mystery of the Thylacine*** is a national touring exhibition developed by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. The exhibition is aimed at people of all ages and is the first exhibition of its kind to trace the historical, scientific and social story of Australia’s largest marsupial carnivore. The exhibition was supported by the *Visions of Australia* grants program of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.

The ***Illusions*** exhibition features over 50 exhibits about the senses, perceptions and the brain. The exhibition from the Heureka Science Centre in Finland, was brought to Australia by Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth, WA and Scienceworks, Melbourne, Vic.

***Spiders! Live***, an exhibition from the Australian Museum featuring 12 species of live spiders, including the South American bird eating Tarantula, and Australian funnel web and red back, was visited by 140 000 people between September 1999 and January 2000. The exhibition was supported by a wide range of programs such as Botanic Garden walks, public lectures dealing with arachnophobia, puppet shows, Spiders by Night and other lectures. Biology based exhibits have previously been identified as an area needing further recognition in the Questacon exhibition program.

***Powerplay – Tomorrow’s Adventure Playground***, is a multi media exhibition for children designed to explore modern technology. Built in South Australia by Megafun, in association with the Investigator Science Centre, Adelaide, the exhibition includes a ‘magic carpet ride’, a virtual train set and voice manipulation.

This is the second year Questacon has hosted the ***BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year*** exhibition. The photographic exhibition featured the 1999 entries of the highly prestigious Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. Its Australian tour was organised by the Australian Museum, Sydney. The award-winning photos explore the link between art and the elements of photographic processes used by professional and amateur photographers from around the world. This static exhibition provides a counterpoint to Questacon’s usual interactive exhibitions.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### SHOWCASE AUSTRALIA’S WORK IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN QUESTACON PROGRAMS

Questacon has developed a number of exhibitions and programs that showcase Australia’s expertise in science and technology. During the year, the Centre travelled a number of these exhibitions and programs across Australia and overseas.

## EFFECTIVENESS

**Innovative Australians** was developed by Questacon and IDP Education Australia for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *Innovative Australians* is a travelling exhibition that showcases Australian contemporary science and technology research and development. After touring Asian countries last year, Questacon attracted funding from the Department of Industry, Science and Resources this year, to tour the exhibition to Chile, Argentina and Mexico where it featured in embassies, universities and other venues. The exhibition has its own website which can be accessed via the Questacon website, [www.questacon.edu.au](http://www.questacon.edu.au).

The Centre also commenced planning a new Australian Innovations exhibition in Canberra which will showcase Australian science and technology innovation and is planned for opening in January 2001, to coincide with the Centenary of Federation celebrations.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### DEVELOP AND DELIVER PROGRAMS AIMED AT ENHANCING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Questacon programs and resource materials continued to be used by educational institutions to enhance the teaching and promotion of science understanding.

## EFFECTIVENESS

All the Centre's education programs are developed in collaboration with experienced educators, including primary and secondary school teachers.

### Professional Development Workshops for Teachers

The Centre offers a variety of development workshops for primary and secondary school teachers including:

- *Creative Exhibit Design Workshops;*
- *Hands-on Maths Workshops* run in conjunction with the *Questacon Maths Centre;*
- *Hands-on Minds-on Primary Workshops;* and
- Teacher In-services on the themes of the Centre's exhibitions.

The workshops can cater to groups of individual teachers or whole schools in cities, country towns or isolated regions. They develop participants' skills in designing interactive science and technology activities based on their curriculum requirements.

### Post Graduate Courses in Science Communication

Questacon collaborates with the Centre for the Public Awareness of Science (CPAS) at the Australian National University (ANU) in mounting two graduate courses as well as participating in other CPAS activities. Students undertaking the Graduate Diploma in Scientific Communication are the explainers for

the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*. These are all highly qualified graduate students who have been selected nationally for the quality of their science and their potential for science communication. They are awarded scholarships and divide their time between *Science Circus* tours and academic work at the ANU. Fifteen scholars graduated from the course in 1999; a further 15 are undertaking the course in 2000.

The Graduate Diploma is a world first in using the *Science Circus* as its laboratory, and the 150 graduates of the program continue to promote and enhance the quality of science and technology education and communication throughout Australia and the world.

The Centre also participates in the supervision of Master of Scientific Communication students at ANU. The Masters course is more theoretical than the Graduate Diploma, but one of its six units is a practical one supervised by members of the Centre's staff. The Masters course is the first of its kind in Australia.

The once unique association between the Centre and the ANU is now being emulated by other science centres and universities, both in Australia and overseas.

### **Resource Materials**

A range of resource materials for teachers and information about how to access resource material is featured on Questacon's website at [www.questacon.edu.au](http://www.questacon.edu.au) (See Goal 3)

*Exciter Packs* are an education resource and science communication tool. They allow people of all ages to enjoy the thrill of discovery. Titles available are *Bubbles*, *Environment*, *Music*, *Balloons*, *Candles* and *Light*.

### **Questacon Website**

The Centre's award-winning Website was upgraded during the year and features a special section for teachers. This section provides information on Questacon workshops and travelling exhibitions, as well as group bookings and school visits. The teacher resource material provides a valuable learning resource relating to Questacon's current exhibitions.

### **Science Schools**

During the year, Questacon's former Director, Dr Gore gave presentations to various West Australian science summer schools and to the Siemens Science Experience at the Australian National University. Graduates of the *Shell Questacon Science Circus* program also presented shows, on behalf of the Centre, at science, maths and engineering summer schools for senior secondary students in Canberra and Toowoomba.

### **Pacific Science Congress**

This was held at the University of NSW on 7 July and Questacon's International Programs Manager presented papers to representatives of science and education institutions in the region.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### DEVELOP AND DELIVER FUN, EXCITING ACTIVITIES THAT INVOLVE PEOPLE IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Questacon conducts a number of programs aimed at encouraging people to get involved in science and technology. These include the Q Club membership program, *Fun 'n' Science*, Camp-ins, Questacon lectures, Science Theatre, Science Drama and Questacon by Night as well as activities conducted throughout National Science Week.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### The Q Club

Questacon's membership program continued to offer a suite of benefits to members. These include 12 months free entry to Questacon and other Australian science centres, discounts at the Questacon Shop and Café, 12 months subscription to the Questacon magazine as well as joint membership benefits with the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Hoyts Belconnen and Woden, The Premier Hotel Groups around the country and GEO Magazine.

During the year, the number of membership totalled 1 492 with 538 new memberships and 954 existing memberships renewed during this period.

### Fun 'n' Science

Over 13 000 children attended Questacon's *Fun 'n' Science* school holiday program during the year. *Fun 'n' Science* aims to inform and entertain primary and junior secondary school children and to enthuse them to continue their quest for understanding. The program comprises interactive science activities and experiments. This year saw the introduction of digital photography workshops, allowing children between the ages of 10 and 14 to use high-level computer technology. Other *Fun'n'Science* activities included Snake Charming and *SideShow Science Spectacular*.

### Camp-Ins

During 1999-00, more than 650 children from schools and community groups participated in a total of six Camp-ins at the Centre. Sleeping over in the Centre is an exciting experience for the participants who take part in a variety of special scientific activities.

### Questacon Lectures

The Questacon Lecture program aims to inform the community about contemporary issues in science and technology. During the year, 12 lectures were held at the Centre, with topics ranging from arachnophobia to aboriginal science and technology and photography.

### **Questacon by Night**

The *Questacon by Night* program enables schools, community groups and social clubs to use the Centre outside normal operating hours. A total of 1 270 people took part in these programs during the year, and enjoyed science shows and exclusive use of exhibits. The programs were revamped after the opening of *SideShow*, offering *SideShow Science Spectacular* shows. Following on from a good response to the new format, it is expected that numbers will be significantly higher next financial year.

### **Spiders! Live support program**

An extensive range of activities was developed to support the *Spiders! Live* exhibition. It included Botanic Garden treks/workshops (a joint program with the National Botanic Gardens and CSIRO Entomology), arachnophobia sessions, special lectures, spiders by night, puppet shows and holiday programs. Questacon trialed longer opening hours to accommodate the popularity of this exhibition.

### **National Science Week**

During National Science Week 2000, Questacon held numerous activities both in Canberra and Sydney. The Centre displayed a number of interactive exhibits at the National Convention Centre in Canberra and also held *Science Spectacular* performances at Questacon.

Questacon also had a strong presence at SCI-FEST, a National Science Week activity held at the Australian Technology Park in Sydney, NSW. The Centre displayed *Zoom In* exhibitions and two *Starlabs*. Questacon performers presented 12 *Science Spectacular* shows at ATP. This attracted 9 500 people.

### **Science Drama**

Puppet shows were developed to support the *Spiders! Live* program during September 1999 to January 2000.

In January 2000 a number of new shows were developed. Their performance style varied and they were intended for different audiences. These shows were promoted and piloted during February and March.

*Structures* is a workshop style performance which introduces students to the idea of forces. It is aimed at eight to 11 year olds. This show was seen by 1 300 students.

For senior students a debate style performance was trialed. Two hundred senior students took part in this performance which dealt with issues of genetic privacy.

A puppet show titled *The Little Flower Bulb* and aimed at under eight year olds was enjoyed by over 150 children.

To accompany the *Sideshow* exhibition, a new show was commissioned in December 1999 and opened in April 2000. This entertaining and educational show, titled *Sideshow Science Spectacular*, is very popular with student groups as well as the public. During the Easter school holiday period it attracted over 6 000 people. This show was promoted through the Australian Science Festival program and attracted a total of about 4 000 students during this period.

### **Australian Science Festival (ASF) – Canberra. 29 April – 8 May 2000**

Questacon played a major role in the Australian Science Festival (ASF). The ASF featured the Amazing World of Science (AWoS) which included: a *Snake Charming Seminar*; *Circus-ology Workshop*; *SideShow Science Spectacular* with Questacon Performers; *Australia wide research experiment SLEEP*; Questacon by Night; and *Cams, Crankshafts and Creativity* - simple technology for primary teachers.

## **Goal 3 – Increasing participation in Questacon programs, particularly for the key audiences of families and schools**

The Centre assesses its performance under this goal against the following criteria for:

Canberra and the surrounding region:

- **deliver programs aimed at attracting more of the key audience to Questacon; and**
- **develop and implement programs to support schools in the teaching of science and technology.**

Regional and remote areas of Australia:

- **deliver Questacon programs to communities that have limited exposure to science and technology.**

Capital cities

- **target Sydney to provide Questacon programs to families and schools.**

### **KEY ACTIVITIES**

#### **DELIVER PROGRAMS AIMED AT ATTRACTING MORE OF THE KEY AUDIENCE TO QUESTACON (for Canberra and the surrounding region)**

##### **Marketing**

Questacon's Marketing Branch ran a number of marketing and promotional campaigns throughout the year, designed to attract more of the key audience to the Centre. The Centre's primary target markets include children between the ages of eight to 14 and their families, and school groups.

### **EFFECTIVENESS**

#### ***SideShow – the science behind the fun***

Questacon executed a comprehensive marketing campaign to promote the opening of the Centre's new blockbuster exhibition, *SideShow – the science behind the fun*. This commenced in April with a media launch hosted by the Minister for the Arts and Centenary of Federation, Peter McGauran MP. This was followed directly by a series of launches targeted to media and their families; tourism front-of-house staff; taxi-drivers; teachers; tour operators; and professional conference organisers. Approximately 1 300 people attended these launches.

A new television commercial was developed especially for *SideShow* by Canberra companies, Digital Alchemy and Bearcage. The advertisement was designed to appeal to Questacon's target audience and uses some of the latest advancements in digital technology to highlight Questacon as a fun, interactive and educational environment. The *SideShow* TV campaign commenced on WIN TV in April, going to Canberra and regions, including Wagga, Orange and Dubbo and reaching more than 800 000 people.

Local coverage so far has been extensive and includes all Canberra mass media. The event has also attracted stories on national children's programs, The Big Breakfast and Saturday Disney and in national press, the *Sunday Age*, *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Daily Telegraph* and an interview with the Director on Radio National. A number of promotions were also held, including a week-long promotion on Canberra's ABC radio.

The Centre also produced promotional material for *SideShow*, including posters, functions flyer, 3D clown on building and exhibition guides.

In April 2000, Questacon produced a *SideShow* themed *Questacon Magazine* which was distributed to 3 000 people (including Questacon Q Club members).

### ***Spiders! Live***

In September, Questacon launched the *Spiders! Live* exhibition, which attracted saturated coverage in the local mass media. Questacon promoted the *Spiders!* exhibition via a comprehensive campaign, including a television advertisement, radio and TV promotions, a series of lectures and postcards. For the duration of the exhibition, a specially designed giant spider (4 x 3 metres) was erected on the outside of the Questacon building. This also attracted wide media coverage as far afield as a United Kingdom backpacker magazine.

The exhibition was sponsored by Bayer Australia whilst in Canberra. A television advertisement (produced by the exhibition owners, the Australian Museum, Sydney) was aired on WIN TV for the duration of the exhibition, reaching an estimated 800 000 people in the Canberra and surrounding region. The schedule kicked off with a two-week promotion, which attracted 942 entries. In December, 120 000 *Spiders! Live* postcards were distributed to Canberra and Queanbeyan households and a further 5 000 were distributed through restaurants and hotels in the Canberra region. A series of *Spiders! Live* lectures, held at Questacon, were advertised in the *Canberra Times* and *Canberra Chronicle* and attracted a total of 800 people. A spider themed *Questacon Magazine* was produced in September and distributed to 3 000 people (including Q Club members).

### **BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1999**

Questacon was the first Australian venue to host the *BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1999* exhibition. The exhibition was promoted via a targeted media campaign, both local and national, an advertisement on FM104.7's Image Plus campaign and a mailout of BG Wildlife flyers to photography and education contacts in the Canberra region. These flyers were also distributed to Canberra's hotels, motels and some restaurants. In addition, three special lectures were held at the Centre and were during the exhibition's stay. The audiences were mainly professional and semi-professional photographers, and all were extremely interested in participating in next year's exhibition.

The exhibition attracted wide coverage including a full page spread in *The Canberra Times*, *Sun Herald* and articles in the *Telegraph Mirror*, *Canberra Chronicle* and various other publications.

An exhibition work sheet was also developed for teachers and students.

### **Powerplay – Tomorrow's Adventure Playground**

In August, Questacon launched the *Powerplay* exhibition, designed and built in South Australia by Keith Tucker of Megafun Pty Ltd in association with The Investigator Science and Technology Centre in Adelaide.

The exhibition was promoted in flyers, which were distributed in all Canberra hotels. A radio advertisement was aired on FM104.7, reaching over 200 000 people and a television advertisement (developed by the exhibition owners) was aired on WIN TV, reaching over 800 000 people.

### **General Promotions**

**Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation (CTEC).** Questacon continued to invest in CTEC's promotional campaigns, advertising in the *Canberra Holiday Guide*; *What's On in Canberra*; the Canberra Visitors Centre; *Excursion Planner* (to 14 000 schools); the CTEC web-site; and providing promotional videos.

### **Getaway Expos**

Questacon joined forces with the Canberra Rex hotels, several other attractions, and the Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation to promote Canberra at the Sydney and Melbourne Getaway shows to over 45,000 visitors.

### **Caravan and Camping Shows**

As part of a joint marketing effort with other Tourism Industry partners, Questacon attended a series of Caravan and Camping Shows in metropolitan and regional venues to promote Canberra and Questacon as a must-see tourism destination. Questacon staff attended shows in Sydney, Melbourne, Wollongong, Albury, and Dubbo, which attracted a total of 168 000.

### **3-in-1 Superticket**

A cooperative effort packaging Questacon with the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and Cockington Green resulted in the "3-in-1 Super Ticket" in 1998. This ticket is sold through NRMA offices, Aussie Holidays, the Canberra Visitor Information Centre and at each of the three outlets.

During the year, the number of tickets sold at Questacon totalled 117 Adult tickets, 55 Children's tickets, 22 Concession tickets, and 154 Family tickets.

### **Tourism Awards**

During the year, Questacon took out the following awards:

- 1999 ACT and Region Tourism Award for Major Tourist Attraction; and
- Dr Michael Gore received the award for Major Contribution to Tourism by an Individual (1999 ACT and Region Tourism Awards)

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS IN THE TEACHING OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (to Canberra and the surrounding region)

Schools are a key target audience for exhibitions and other programs at the Centre in Canberra.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### Teacher Resource Materials

Questacon develops teacher resource material designed to complement the Centre's major exhibitions. During the year, resource materials were provided to visiting teachers to complement the *Tasmanian Tiger*, *Spiders! Live* and *SideShow* exhibitions.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### DELIVER QUESTACON PROGRAMS TO COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE LIMITED EXPOSURE TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Realising that not all people can visit the Centre in Canberra, Questacon has developed a number of world-class exhibitions and programs that travel across Australia. As Australia's National Science and Technology Centre, Questacon aims to reach communities that have limited exposure to science and technology.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### Outreach Programs

During the year, Questacon reached a total of 168 286 people through its Outreach Education Program—a 58 per cent increase on the previous year. These programs travelled to a total of 34 regional and rural centres in all Australian states and an additional 120 surrounding towns. Outreach staff also travelled to and presented workshops in 33 remote Aboriginal communities, and conducted training workshops and presentations in an additional 10 towns and cities. *Shell Questacon Science Circus* scholars presenting shows with the Olympic Torch visiting a further 32 regional and rural centres.

The Centre's Outreach Education Programs incorporated four main projects in 1999-00:

The ***Shell Questacon Science Circus*** is made up of 15 science graduates who take interactive science shows and exhibits to children and families in regional and remote Australia. The *Science Circus* is a joint effort involving Questacon and the Australian National University and is sponsored by Shell Australia until the end of 2001.

During the year, the *Science Circus* reached more than 129 000 people throughout Australia. This included 92 167 people in regional, rural and remote areas, 13 045 more than the previous year.

The *Science Circus* also received funding from the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs to implement a program of visits to remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory.

**NRMA RoadZone** is Questacon's newest outreach program, a road safety exhibition developed by Questacon and NRMA to replace the *NRMA Tomorrow's Drivers* exhibition. *NRMA RoadZone* aims to teach 9-14 year olds important safety messages with a number of high tech, interactive exhibits. This is the first time that interactive road safety education delves into the issues of peer pressure, consideration for others, street awareness and accepting personal responsibility. *NRMA RoadZone* attracted 18 419 visitors to 30 June and a further 50 000 while it was on display at Questacon in Canberra.

**The Questacon Maths Centre** is an array of 500 hands-on puzzles designed to stimulate an appreciation of logic and maths. The *Maths Centre* is supported by the *Visions of Australia* grant program of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, until the end of 2000.

Approximately 6 700 school students attended the *Maths Centre* during the year, with 55 teachers attending training workshops. This represents a 29 per cent decrease on last year's student total. The decrease is due to the *Maths Centre* visiting a number of less densely populated areas in 1999-00 than in the previous year.

**Starlabs** are inflatable planetariums offering an exciting exploration of the night skies. *Starlabs* are hired out to groups of 25 people and to teachers who have completed training courses. The Outreach Education Program team also provides resource material and conducts teacher training workshops.

During the year, 60 teachers attended training workshops; the *Starlabs* were hired out nine times and 25 *Starlab* presentations were made to schools.

### **Travelling Exhibitions**

During 1999-00, the Centre's travelling exhibitions reached 473 531 people throughout Australia – an increase of 2.5% on the previous year.

**BHP WildScience**, an exhibition exploring the ways we have adapted ideas from nature, was seen by 28 831 visitors at the Investigator Science Centre, Adelaide. The exhibition toured to the Investigator Science Centre from 23 June to 19 November 1999 and then from 7 December 1999 to 7 May 2000, to the Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston, Tasmania with 27 457 visitors.

**Whodunit? Mystery at Menagerie Park** is an exhibition on forensic science jointly developed by Questacon and the Scitech Discovery Centre, Perth. It toured to Scienceworks in Melbourne and the Sciencentre, Brisbane in 1999-00, attracting 13 481 visitors in Melbourne in the 1999-00 financial year (51 996 in total) and 53 857 visitors in Brisbane from 12 August 1999 to 30 January 2000. *Whodunit?* visited the Newcastle Regional Museum from 11 February to 4 June, attracting 11 404 visitors. Forensic science proved a very popular topic with school children and families and broadens the base of science topics offered in Questacon exhibitions and programs.

**Science on the Move** toured to two venues in New Zealand. The first venue was Hamilton Science Centre from 5 February to 26 April 2000 with 4 047 visitors. The second leg of the New Zealand tour was Otago Museum in Dunedin from 15 May to 16 July 2000. The exhibition attracted 1 057 visitors while at the Otago Museum up to 30 June 2000.

**Fascinating Science** is a very portable exhibition and was seen in a wide range of venues, including Scienceworks in Melbourne from 1 July to 9 November 1999 with 156 840 visitors; Penrith Museum of Fire from 1 January to 20 April 2000 with 5 164 visitors; the Bonds SCIFEST 2000 from 17-20 May 2000 at the Australian Technology Park in Sydney with 9 500 visitors and Albury Regional Museum from 1 June to 31 July 2000 with 1 670 visitors up to 30 June. A second *Fascinating Science* exhibition toured to Kauau Discovery Museum in Hawaii USA from 21 January to 31 July 2000. This tour was possible due to a second set of exhibits being available.

**Mathamazing** is an exhibition that involves visitors in discovering ways in which mathematics is part of their daily lives. The exhibition was at Questacon from 22 February to 28 April 2000 and attracted 43 080 visitors. From 5 June 2000 to 4 February 2001, the exhibition will tour to Scienceworks in Melbourne. From 5-30 June, *Mathamazing* attracted 32 670 visitors at Scienceworks.

**Terrorsaurus** featured at the Museum of New Zealand in Wellington, New Zealand from 7 August to 31 October in 1999. There were 69 163 visitors to the exhibition, with over 10,000 in its first week. *Terrorsaurus* featured in Hobart at the Wharf from 18 December 1999 to 6 March 2000. The hire and display was organised by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. There were 46 633 visitors.

**Dinosaurs Alive!** attracted high visitor numbers while on display at Woden Plaza in Canberra. One dinosaur is also on display at the Wollongong Science Centre from December 1999 to December 2000. An estimated 25 000 people visited the dinosaur to 30 June.

**Environment** toured to Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth from 1 July to 10 October 1999. The exhibition attracted 61 024 visitors while in Perth. Once the tour finished in October, the *Environment* exhibition was then sold to Scitech Discovery Centre.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### TARGET SYDNEY TO PROVIDE QUESTACON PROGRAMS TO FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS

Questacon continued to work with the Australian Technology Park (ATP) in Sydney, NSW in establishing interactive technology programs at the Park.

## EFFECTIVENESS

The Sydney Harbour Foreshores Authority (SHFA), from 1 July 2000, has taken over management of the ATP, and Questacon is now pursuing discussions to develop interactive exhibitions and programs at the ATP in 2000-01.

Questacon also played a major role at Bonds SCIFEST 2000, which took place at the ATP during National Science Week 2000. Questacon's presence included 17 exhibits, a *Starlab* planetarium and Questacon *Time Tunnel Shows*. A total of 9 500 people attended SCIFEST at the ATP.

## **GOAL 4 – Deliver Questacon programs more effectively and efficiently**

The Centre assesses its performance of this goal under the following criteria:

- **develop and maintain strategic partnerships, both nationally and internationally;**
- **conduct ongoing evaluation of programs to ensure continuous improvement and best use of resources; and**
- **explore innovative and entrepreneurial methods of program delivery.**

### **KEY ACTIVITIES**

#### **DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, BOTH NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY**

During the year, the Centre forged new links and strengthened existing ties with both national and international partners.

### **NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **Environment Australia**

On 14 September, Questacon signed a two year Memorandum of Understanding with Environment Australia to "promote a greater understanding and awareness of conservation and its contribution to the protection of the environment and the conservation of biodiversity".

#### **Australian National University**

Questacon works closely with the Centre for the Public Awareness of Science (CPAS) at the Australian National University.

Details of Questacon's collaboration with CPAS on graduate courses are set out under Goal 2 (see page 14).

Questacon and CPAS have also joined forces to provide public presentations and workshops, training programs, workshops for scientists on communicating with the media and the general public, teacher workshops and management courses for staff involved in science centres and similar organisations.

#### **Australian Science Centres**

Questacon continued to work with Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth to develop and build large exhibitions such as *Whodunit? Mystery at Menagerie Park* and the next major collaboration, *Awesome Earth*, to be opened in Canberra in June 2001.

Questacon works actively with all state science centres which have active outreach programs to rural, remote and regional areas. Questacon is collaborating with these centres on a National Outreach Strategy to bring science and technology awareness to even more non-urban areas of Australia.

Questacon's travelling exhibitions were featured at science centres and museums around the country. The Centre in Canberra featured exhibitions toured by Scitech and Scienceworks, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, The Investigator Science Centre, and the Australian Museum.

### **Sponsorship Partnerships**

Questacon values its sponsorship partnerships which provide vital funding for public programs. Questacon's partnership with Shell Australia involves some \$3.25 million over 15 years while the partnership with NRMA involves \$3 million over 10 years.

### **Marketing Partnerships**

During 1999-00, the Questacon Marketing Branch teamed up with a number of media, business and government organisations to add value to visitor promotions.

Some of these included Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation (CTEC), The National Institutions Group (NIG), Ten Capital and WIN Television, Canberra, ABC Radio, Canberra, Mix 106.3 and FM104.7, Canberra, the Canberra Southern Cross Club, and Hoyts Movie Theatres, Canberra.

### **Network of Australian Museum Exhibitors (NAME)**

The Centre was an active participant in NAME, which provides a vehicle for the Centre to network with other organisations involved in travelling exhibitions. During the year, Travelling Exhibitions staff took part in networking meetings and attended NAME meetings in Perth and Townsville.

## **I N T E R N A T I O N A L P A R T N E R S H I P S**

### **Asia Pacific Network of Science and Technology Centres (ASPAC)**

The Centre continued to provide executive support for this network. The Centre's Director and International Programs Manager presented papers at the National Council of Science Museums-ASPAC Conference and the ASPAC Executive Meeting, held in Nagoya, Japan in March 2000. The Director held discussions about future cooperation with directors and staff of the National Science Museum, Tokyo; the China Science and Technology Museum, Beijing; the Hong Kong Science Museum; the National Science Centre, Malaysia; Petrosains, Malaysia; and the Singapore Science Centre.

### **Association of Science-Technology Centres (ASTC)**

The Centre continues to be the only full member of the ASTC in the Southern Hemisphere and one of only three institutions outside North America that has full member status of this international network. Dr Gore attended the 1999 ASTC Annual Conference in Tampa, Florida. While there, he handed the Chair of the International program Committee for the Third Science Centre World Congress to the new Questacon Director, Dr Ghisalberti. Questacon will host the Congress in 2002.

### **Australasian Science and Technology Exhibitors Network (ASTEN)**

ASTEN is a network of science centres and museums across Australia and New Zealand. In 1999, the Centre's Director was elected ASTEN President and the Centre's Manager of Public Programs and Education was re-elected as Executive Officer. During the year, the Executive Officer produced the ASTEN Newsletter and established the ASTEN website. The November 1999 annual meeting was attended by directors and senior officers of ASTEN member centres and museums and featured presentations by the directors of Techniquet, UK and Science North, Canada, who were in Australia to conduct an evaluation of Questacon as a full member of the Association of Science-Technology Centres.

### **Japan**

The Centre has a close association with Japan, dating back to its establishment in 1988 as a Joint Australia Japan Bicentennial Project.

On 21 March, Questacon signed a Friendship Agreement of Cooperation with the National Science Museum, Tokyo, Japan, effective for three years. While in Japan for the signing of the agreement, Questacon's Director, Dr Ghisalberty, visited Japanese science centres and museums and participated in the national Council of Science Museums-ASPAC Conference in Nagoya and the ASPAC Executive Meeting.

Questacon has an agency agreement with the Japanese robotics company, Kokoro. It is expected that this collaboration will result in a cutting-edge exhibition that will be in demand both in Australia and overseas.

### **New Zealand**

Questacon staff participated in New Zealand networking meetings at the Manawatu Science Centre in Palmerston North, New Zealand. The Centre is also keen to increase the number and style of exhibitions that tour to New Zealand.

An exhibit designer from Palmerston North Science centre in New Zealand visited Questacon for one week on an ASTEN scholarship to gain work experience.

## **CONFERENCES AND EVENTS**

### **International Creative Exhibit Design Workshop**

As one of the first science centres to be established in the southern hemisphere, Questacon is often approached with requests for help in creative, interactive exhibit design. This year, the Centre decided to host our first International Creative Exhibit Design Workshop to enable designers and fabricators to meet and work with world leaders in the field. The workshop was held at Questacon between 8 - 12 May, and offered three world class presenters: Mr Ned Kahn formerly from the Exploratorium science centre in San Francisco; Mr Steve Pizzey, Director of Herstonceaux science centre, Sussex, England; and Dr Stuart Kohlhagen - Questacon's own exhibit designer and developer, who was awarded the Public Service medal last year, in recognition of his 20 years of service to interactive science and technology at Questacon.

Over 40 participants from Wales, New Zealand, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines and Malaysia as well as many staff from Australian zoos and theme parks, as well as museums, art galleries and science centres and design companies attended the workshop.

### **International Committee of Exhibition Exchange (ICEE)**

During 1999-00, the Centre's Travelling Exhibition's Manager attended meetings of the International Committee of Exhibition Exchange (ICEE), including its Annual meeting in Montreal, Canada. This committee, which comes under the International Council of Museums (ICOM), is designed to facilitate international exhibition exchange. This illustrates the high level of recognition Questacon has achieved through its extensive international programs and tours.

### **Third Science Centres World Congress**

The Centre has made significant progress in preparing to host the 3rd Science Centre World Congress (3SCWC) in Canberra, 10-15 February 2002. The Centre's Director, as Chair of 3SCWC, chaired the second Meeting of the International Program Committee in Tampa, Florida, USA in October 1999. A program structure has been developed to provide for a diverse range of keynote and parallel sessions. Widespread international promotion of this major event was achieved via distribution of the first announcement at major conferences and meetings of the science centre industry, announcements in science centre network newsletters and websites.

### **Singapore**

The Singapore Science Centre approached Questacon to supply a team of science theatre performers to participate in their 'Science and Technology Education for Progress' (STEP) festival in September 1999. Four different shows were written to appeal to wide range of ages: The Time Tunnel, The Science of the Lambs: a Hyper-ethical, Circus Science and Balloons, Balls and Bangs. These programs reached approximately 9 000 students over 12 days.

### **Brazil**

Dr Gore was a keynote presenter at the International Seminar on Science Centres at the Federal University, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

### **International Model Car Challenge**

Questacon is a major facilitator and sponsor of the annual Australian-International Model Solar Car Challenge—a technology competition aimed at secondary school students. Winners of each state-based competition competed for the Questacon Trophy in the finals held at Adelaide in November 2000.

## **HOSTING INTERNATIONAL VISITORS**

During the year, the Centre hosted visits by overseas ministers, government officials, UNESCO representatives, science centre staff, teacher groups, and other important visitors from Canada, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### CONDUCT ONGOING EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS TO ENSURE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND BEST USE OF RESOURCES

Questacon is committed to ensuring the highest quality service to people visiting the Centre in Canberra or a Questacon program elsewhere. The Centre continues to evaluate its current programs and is taking steps to retire old programs and develop new ones. Much of this is based on customer and client research.

#### Market Research

Questacon is committed to ensuring the highest quality service to people visiting the Centre in Canberra or a Questacon program elsewhere. In addition, the Centre continues to evaluate its current programs and assess customer feedback on proposed new exhibitions.

## EFFECTIVENESS

In December 1999, the Centre engaged **Piazza Consulting** to conduct research involving Questacon Q Club members, primary school teachers and students, visitors to Questacon and the Canberra community. This involved a combination of telephone surveys, focus group testing and a questionnaire.

The objectives of the research were to:

- determine, among Questacon's target market, the most popular concepts for future exhibitions;
- investigate the Centre's strengths and weaknesses;
- examine the relevance and value of Questacon and its 'blockbuster' exhibitions in today's market;
- determine the level of public awareness of Questacon; and
- identify the needs and wants of our visitors.

The results of these surveys confirmed that Questacon is regarded as an excellent attraction, not only relevant in today's market place, but having the optimal mix of education and entertainment. The Centre's 'blockbuster' exhibitions were seen as paramount in importance for consistently attracting patrons and encouraging repeat visitation. In terms of what made visitors attend Questacon, teachers and Q-Club members alike agreed that the inclusion of 'blockbuster' exhibitions was of enormous importance and the motivating factor behind re-visitation.

When asked about six possible future exhibitions, Questacon's target audience (families with eight to 14 year olds) ranked an exhibition focusing on 'predators' as the most popular, thus supporting demand for the development of the *Predators* exhibition.

Both Q-Club members and teachers agreed that the main thing they expected from a visit to Questacon was for their children to gain knowledge of science and technology in an entertaining environment. The 'applied' nature of the science exhibits was emphasised, or as one parent put it;

"... to see things they wouldn't normally see and learn while they're having fun."

Teachers were adamant that a visit to Questacon tied in well with their school curriculum and programs.

"I think you can make it fit into any program. Teachers at my school often work out their programs around what is on at Questacon."

Questacon was seen as very relevant in today's market, particularly in terms of its uniqueness, entertainment and science/education value.

In addition, respondents were almost unanimous in what they thought was the best thing about Questacon. Participants agreed that the 'hands on', interactive nature of the Centre's exhibits was the main reason that they enjoyed their visit to Questacon. Some typical comments included:

"I like being able to touch things, not just look at them."

In March 2000, Questacon teamed up with the National Capital Authority to research the potential of a National Aerospace Centre and Large Screen Theatre in Canberra. The research conducted by **Environmetrics**, was aimed at determining the format (content, approach and name) of the proposed complex and also ticketing options amongst the target market.

The research involved focus groups in both Sydney and Canberra. This included Canberra residents (families with children, adults with no children and teenagers aged 15 and 16 years), Sydney visitors to Canberra (adults with children, adults with no children, children aged 11 and 12), Canberra and Sydney primary and secondary school teachers, bus tour operators, inbound tour operators and a domestic holiday wholesaler.

The research found potential synergies between Questacon and an aerospace centre, and recommended that such a centre be 'involving, dynamic and interactive' and contain a mix of subject matters with a global focus.

The Centre undertook a range of evaluations during the year, as follows:

- Questacon's Outreach Education Programs are evaluated using a range of methods from exit surveys to reviews. Planning and implementation are adjusted on the basis of evaluations to ensure the best use of human and financial resources.
- In preparation for the campaign to renew sponsorship of the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*, Questacon commissioned a review of this program. Professor Leonie Rennie of the Science Maths Education Centre (SMEC) at Curtin University of Technology, Perth, WA was engaged to conduct the review. The evaluation focused on interviews and exit surveys of general public and teachers on the North Coast NSW tour and the South West WA tour, plus analysis of and comparison with similar outreach programs in other parts of the world.

- For one week during June, the E Team, five students from Mackillop Catholic College in the ACT, evaluated Questacon's visitor experience. The E team was sponsored by the Australian Quality Council. On 30 June, the students gave a presentation to Questacon staff with suggested improvements for the visitor experience. The suggestions will be evaluated and implemented in 2000-01.
- Mr Jim Marchbank, Chief Executive Officer of Science North, Ontario, Canada and Dr Colin Johnson, Director of Techniquest, Wales (both member institutions of ASTC) conducted a review of Questacon in November to assess the Centre for a further five year accreditation to membership of ASTC. Accreditation was granted, with the review finding Questacon "outreach programmes...are outstanding in both range and scope – extending to remote and rural communities in a way which has attracted worldwide admiration." The Review also found "Questacon is without doubt among the world's leaders in the science centre field."
- Centre staff continually monitor developments in exhibitions and programs around the world and during 1999-00 attended the Australasian Science and Technology Exhibitor's Network (ASTEN) Conference; meetings of the Network of Australian Museum Exhibitors (NAME); the Asia Pacific Network of Science and Technology Centre (ASPAC); and the 1999 Conference of the Association of Science and Technology Centres (ASTC).

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### EXPLORE INNOVATIVE AND ENTREPRENUERIAL PROGRAM DELIVERY

Questacon is keen to exploit new communications and information technologies to promote science and technology and increase audience reach.

## EFFECTIVENESS

**Questacon's Website** was upgraded during the year to include the very latest developments in web technologies. The site, at [www.questacon.edu.au](http://www.questacon.edu.au) received 2 500 000 hits during the year and continued to win awards and accolades. During the year, the Centre's website won the World Best Websites – Gold Award and was nominated as a finalist in two categories of the Telstra/Financial Review Australian Internet Awards (for education site and science and technology site).

In addition, Intel recognised the Questacon website as one of their preferred websites for demonstrating the capabilities of their new Pentium III computers and Telstra made a direct link from the Bigpond kids site.

## **Goal 5 – Be a well-managed and progressive organisation with a strong business focus**

The Centre assesses its performance under Goal 5 against the following criteria:

- **develop an organisational team that demonstrates outstanding achievements;**
- **develop an increased entrepreneurial business and planning culture that is customer focussed for additional productivity and financial return;**
- **generate increased revenue, fundraising and sponsorship to support program activities; and**
- **cultivate a safe work environment that is equitable and provides opportunities for personal and professional development.**

### **KEY ACTIVITIES**

#### **DEVELOP AN ORGANISATIONAL TEAM THAT DEMONSTRATES OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS**

Questacon continued to implement the major change program begun in 1998-99. Entitled *Building an Even Better Questacon*, the changes seek to ensure that Questacon remains a high performing organisation by focusing on five elements:

- our people
- our programs
- our customers
- our suppliers
- our partners

with an overall theme of learning through involvement.

### **EFFECTIVENESS**

During the year, the key activities aimed at *Building an Even Better Questacon* included:

- adopting a team-based approach including home based teams for on-going operations and cross-Centre, multi-disciplined teams for special projects and problem-solving tasks;
- implementing the Centre's Certified Agreement;
- integrating a customer focus into everything that the Centre does, externally and internally;
- developing a new corporate plan and subsequent Branch, team and individual plans; and
- effectively planning team and individual training and development activities.

During the year, Questacon, with the help of its Human Resource Management group, developed and disseminated a range of policies, guidelines and initiatives to all staff aimed at further developing our staff, volunteer Explainers and teams. These included:

- "The Way We Do Things Around Here" - focussing on what we expect of our people, our leaders; how we work in teams; and how we provide excellent service to our customers. This also incorporates the APS Values and Code of Conduct.
- Investors in People – the Centre is committed to achieving the Investors in People Standard, as a benchmark and assessment process to determine how well we have succeeded in developing and informing our people to achieve great results.
- "People and Business" – focussing on how we link people with business through planning at a Centre, team and individual level; providing regular feedback; recognising achievement; providing development opportunities for all staff; briefing staff regularly on the Centre's business results; and guidelines dealing with how to manage underperformance.
- "Developing Q People" – this identifies priority skills required by the organisation and a Centre – wide training program to assist with development of these skills across all staff and volunteers where applicable.
- To further improve how we deal with our customers in the Centre, all Questacon Assistants (front of house staff), Visitor Programs team, and Volunteer Explainers were co-located into one team to provide an even more professional service to our visitors. New uniforms were introduced and staff and Volunteer Explainers have undergone a range of training aimed at improving the way we deal with our visitors.

### **Volunteer Explainers**

Over 100 Volunteer Explainers, representing a wide range of backgrounds, continued to play a vital role in communicating science and technology to the Centre's visitors. They presented science shows both in the Centre and at promotional displays and assisted in the running of holiday programs, Questacon by Night and Camp-ins.

A Policy and Procedures document was developed to provide better direction for the management of the Volunteer explainer program.

Staff profile information is included at Appendix 8.

## **KEY ACTIVITIES**

### **DEVELOP AN INCREASED ENTREPRENEURIAL BUSINESS AND PLANNING CULTURE THAT IS CUSTOMER FOCUSED FOR ADDITIONAL PRODUCTIVITY AND FINANCIAL RETURN**

Increasing the focus given to the customer and improved business planning are key elements of the *Building an Even Better Questacon* change program.

## EFFECTIVENESS

### **Our Customers**

Questacon introduced its **Customer Service Charter** in August 1999 after consultation with staff, Questacon members, and the public and special stakeholders such as the Council and sponsors. The Charter is distributed via pamphlets, with attached comment card, and via our website.

Visitors are overwhelmingly positive about Questacon programs. The most common comments received were that exhibits are exciting and interesting, staff were warm, friendly and helpful in assisting visitors and giving shows and that Questacon is succeeding in making science and technology accessible, interesting and fun.

To ensure the safety and well-being of all visitors, the Centre's Customer Service staff is trained in first aid and emergency evacuation procedures. Ongoing training for all Centre staff on providing high quality customer service is undertaken.

### **Business Planning and Performance Management**

The Centre further refined its business planning and performance management systems during 1999-00. This has resulted in:

- monthly budget variance reporting to all team leaders;
- monthly feedback to all staff, via an all staff meeting, which includes financial performance;
- quarterly reporting to all staff and Council on key performance indicators as outlined in the Business Plan.

This has improved financial performance against budget and a greater awareness amongst team leaders of their accountabilities and responsibilities in management of the Centres resources.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### **GENERATE INCREASED REVENUE, FUNDRAISING AND SPONSORSHIP TO SUPPORT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

Questacon is only partly funded by the Commonwealth Government, with about 40 per cent of its costs being met through self-generated revenue and sponsorship. This revenue is derived from admissions to the Centre in Canberra, leased Café operations, venue hire, travelling exhibitions and touring programs, contracting out our design and construction skills with respect to exhibitions and other forms of program delivery. The Centre continues to show steady growth in revenue received from these sources.

## EFFECTIVENESS

With the Centre undergoing major refurbishment in 1999-00, a decision was made to keep the Centre open to the public, however to ensure visitors were not unduly disadvantaged, admission prices were

halved or waived during the months of January – March 2000, depending upon the number of galleries opened. The Questacon Shop was also required to be closed for 2 months while it was relocated. However despite this interruption to business, the Centre still managed to perform above budget with respect to admissions revenue.

### **Admission Revenue**

The Centre increased its admission prices in April 2000, by approximately 25 per cent to coincide with the introduction of its new permanent exhibition – *SideShow*. The price increase will contribute to the development and ongoing operational cost of this exciting exhibit. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, increased visitor numbers contributed to an increase in admissions revenue (total \$1 570 000 million) of 33 per cent on the previous year.

### **The Questacon Shop**

As mentioned above the shop was unable to trade for two months, however it continued to make a significant contribution to the Centre, with a gross revenue of \$0.642 million for 1999-00.

### **Questacon Café**

The Cafe continues to be leased to commercial operators. The Centre signed a new contract with new operators in early 2000, which also includes catering for functions carried out at the Centre.

### **Venue Hire**

During 1999-00, venue hire continued to contribute revenue to the Centre, with \$79 082 gross revenue achieved in the 1999-00 financial year. Major clients over the last 12 months included the Australian Dental Convention, the Australian Disaster Conference, Xerox, ASI Solutions, Mallesons Stephen Jacques, James Hardie, Stegglers and FMA Australia.

The Centre's theatre and adjoining smaller theatre continued to host a variety of functions including conferences, launches and seminars. Clients included CSIRO, Australian Copyright Council, Environment Australia, IBM and Interim Technology.

### **Travelling Exhibitions**

Revenue from touring our exhibitions and associated programs within Australia and overseas continues to make a significant contribution to the Centre's overall revenue base. Travelling exhibitions revenue accounted for approximately 11.4 per cent of revenue received from sources other than government during the year, this represented a decrease of 6 per cent on 1998-99 figures. Details of Questacon's travelling programs are outlined in PART 3.

### **Sponsorship**

Sponsorship continues to be a key element for funding new and existing exhibitions and programs. Refer Goal 1 for outline of achievements in 1999-00.

### **Questacon by Night**

Following the launch of *SideShow* in April, Questacon began marketing Questacon by Night to school groups, allowing groups to experience the Centre during the evenings. Flyers were distributed to schools nationally and the response was very encouraging with 15 schools participating in a Questacon by Night from April to June. During this time, 821 students and 79 adults attended a Questacon by Night.

### **Membership**

During the year, the Centre raised membership prices in line with other science centres around the country. Whilst the number of memberships during 1999-00 fell by 5 per cent compared to the previous year, income received was up by 35 per cent on 1998-99. A concerted membership drive commenced in April 2000 to coincide with the launch of *SideShow*, with the number of Questacon memberships expected to increase over the coming financial year.

## **KEY ACTIVITIES**

### **CULTIVATE A SAFE WORK ENVIRONMENT THAT IS EQUITABLE AND PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Centre is committed to ensuring a safe environment for both visitors and staff. Professional development is a key priority under both the *Building an Even Better Questacon* program and the Centre's Certified Agreement.

## **EFFECTIVENESS**

### **Building Upgrade Program**

Funding received from the Government this financial year has enabled the Centre to address a number of Occupational, Health and Safety issues from both the visitor and staff perspective. The key elements of the upgrade included:

- addressing noise and light issues in the foyer;
- upgrading the air-conditioning system to improve air quality and temperature throughout both public and administration areas;
- improving accommodation for front of house staff; and
- improvement in visitor flow, to enable an enhanced visitor experience.

### **Performance Management and Individual Development Plans**

The Centre's Certified Agreement for 1999-00 states that the Centre is an organisation which aims for everyone to take responsibility for performance. The Centre undertakes a rolling performance management and review cycle in which individual, team and Branch plans are informed by the Questacon Corporate Plan.

### **Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)**

Questacon's OH&S Committee comprises representatives from designated work groups and unions. The committee is chaired by the Centre's Business Manager and meets quarterly to review progress and address new issues. Staff are currently undergoing intensive training in their OH&S responsibilities. Risk Management and Hazard Identification along with training in emergency procedures with the majority of staff trained to Fire Warden level. A large number of staff are currently trained as First Aid Officers, with Questacon's Certified Agreement providing a commitment to provide first aid training to all staff. Office ergonomic training was provided in 1999 and two Health Check Programs were held in 1999 and 2000.

During 1999-00, no directions were given under Section 45 of the Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employees) Act 1991 and no notices were given under Sections 30, 46, 47 or 68. Staff reported 16 minor accidents throughout the year, with six resulting in compensation claims. Questacon has strict reporting requirements in relation to accidents, which ensure quick investigations and resolutions.

### **Workplace Diversity**

The Centre's Workplace Diversity Policy, "Managing our Diversity" encourages all staff to recognise, respect and value staff diversity. It aims to create an environment where staff abilities and experiences can be used to their fullest without exploitation. The objectives of the Centre's 2000-01 Workplace Diversity Program covers a range of initiatives, including fair treatment for all, balance of work and home and quality customer service to all visitors.

The Centre's Workplace Harassment Policy aims to create a work environment where staff can participate, contribute and develop in the workplace to the best of their ability, harassment free. The Centre has trained several staff members as Workplace Harassment Contact Officers to aid in the implementation of the policy and provide advice and support to staff.

### **Industrial Democracy**

With the successful implementation of "Building an Even Better Questacon", of which a fundamental element was the move towards a team based approach, staff of all levels within the Centre have become involved in many decision making processes including cross functional project teams. A major outcome of this change has been the interaction between staff working in various teams across the Centre, which has led to greater understanding, more effective work practices and happier staff.

The Centre's Workplace Relations Committee is made up of nine staff members from across the Centre and deals with issues arising from the current Certified Agreement, developing policy and the development, and implementation of the next Certified Agreement through extensive consultation processes with all staff.

## PART 3

### 1999-00 IN SUMMARY

#### VISITOR NUMBERS

Programs at Questacon at Canberra	Numbers
Paying Visitors	281 451
Complementary (non-paying)	29 112
Members	6 562
Lectures	1 275
Fun 'n' Science	13 118
Camp-ins	661
Feb-March Pilot Shows	1 810
Questacon by Night	1 627
Venue Hire	4 987
Special programs	3 986
Birthday Parties	258
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>344 847 (20% increase on last year)</b>

Outreach Programs	Outside Canberra	At Questacon *
Shell Questacon Science Circus	129 167	38 000
NRMA RoadZone	18 319	50 000
QMC/Teacher Workshops	6 700	
Starlab/Teacher Workshops	14 100 (est)	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>168 286 (20% increase on last year)</b>	

Travelling Exhibitions (in Australia)	Outside Canberra	At Questacon *
Terrorsaurus	46 633	
Whodunit? Mystery at Menagerie Park	78 742	
BHP WildScience	56 288	
Environment	61 024	
Mathamazing	32 670	43 080
Fascinating Science	173 174	
Dinosaurs Alive!	25 000	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>473 531 (2.5% increase on last year)</b>	

Travelling Exhibitions (outside Australia)		
Innovative Australians	6 800	n/a
Terrorsaurus	69 163	
Fascinating Science	6 000 (est)	
Science on the Move	5 104	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>87 067 (134% increase on last year)</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1 073 731 (20.3% increase on last year)</b>	

\* These figures included in total programs at Questacon in Canberra.

## 1999-00 IN SUMMARY

### INCOMING EXHIBITIONS AT QUESTACON, CANBERRA

In 1999-00, Questacon featured the following incoming exhibitions:

***Tasmanian Tiger, The Mystery of the Thylacine***

3 March to 11 July 1999

From the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart

Total Visitors: 15 015 9 (from 1 July 1999)

***Illusions***

14 February to 5 September 1999

From: the Heureka science centre in Finland with the Australian tour organised by Scitech and Scienceworks, Museum Victoria, Melbourne

Total Visitors: 69 998 (from 1 July 1999)

***Powerplay – Tomorrow's Adventure Playground***

3 August – 4 February 2000

From: Megafun, in association with the Investigator Science Centre, South Australia

Total Visitors: 187 149

***Spiders! Live***

18 September 1999 – 31 January 2000

From: the Australian Museum, Sydney, NSW)

Total visitors: 71 078

***BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1999***

25 March to 4 June 2000

Tour organised by the Australian Museum, Sydney

Total Visitors: 61 482

## TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS

The Centre's travelling exhibitions featured at the following locations. Where possible, a breakdown of visitor numbers is given.

Exhibition/Location	Tour Dates	Visitors per tour
<b>BHP WildScience</b>		
The Investigator Science and Technology Centre, Adelaide, SA	23-30 Jun -19 Nov 1999	28 831
Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston, Tasmania	7 Dec 1998 7 May 2000	27 457
<b>Terrorsaurus</b>		
Museum of New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand	7 Aug 1999 31 Oct 1999	69 163
Tasmanian Museum Hobart, Tasmania	18 Dec 1999 6 Mar 2000	46 633
<b>Dinosaurs Alive!</b>		
Woden Plaza Canberra, ACT		N/a
Wollongong Science Centre, Wollongong, NSW	1 Jan 2000 30 Jun 2000	25 000 (est to 30 Jun 2000)
<b>Whodunit? Mystery at Menagerie Park</b>		
Scienceworks Museum, Museum Victoria, Melbourne, Vic	13 Feb 1999 11 July 1999	13 481 (from 1 July 1999)
Sciencentre, Brisbane, Qld	12 Aug 1999 30 Jan 2000	53 857
Newcastle Regional Museum, Newcastle, NSW	11 Feb 200 4 Jun 2000	11 404
<b>Innovative Australians</b>		
ACET 200 Conference, National Exhibition Centre, Canberra ACT	10 Jan 2000 14 Jan 2000	250
Santiago, Chile	15 May 2000 31 May 2000	6 800
Buenos Aires, Argentina	15 Jun 2000 26 Jun 2000	Next financial year

## TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS

<b>Fascinating Science</b>		
	Two exhibitions	
Scienceworks Museum, Museum Victoria, Melbourne, Vic	1 Jul 1999 9 Nov 1999	156 840
Museum of Fire, Penrith, NSW	28 Sep 1998 11 Oct 1998	5 164
Bonds SCIFEST 2000, Australian Technology Park, NSW	17 May 2000 20 May 2000	9 500
Albury regional Museum, Albury, NSW	1 Jun 2000 31 Jul 2000	1 670
Kauai Discovery Museum, Hawaii, USA	21 Jan 2000 31 Jul 2000	6 000 (est to 30 Jun 2000)
<b>Mathamazing</b>		
Questacon, ACT	22 Feb 2000 28 Apr 2000	43 080
Scienceworks, Melbourne, Vic	5 Jun 2000 4 Feb 2001	32 670
<b>Environment</b>		
Scitech Discovery Centre, Perth, WA	1 Jul 1999 10 Oct 1999	61 024
<b>Science on the Move</b>		
Hamilton Science Centre, Hamilton, New Zealand	5 Feb 2000 26 Apr 2000	4 047
Otago Museum, Dunedin, New Zealand	15 May 2000 16 Jul 2000	1 057 (to 30 Jun 2000)

## PROMOTIONAL DISPLAYS USING QUESTACON EXHIBITS

During 1999-00, a number of Questacon exhibits featured in promotional displays at the following locations. Where possible, estimated visitor numbers are provided.

Location	Dates	Visitors
<b>Caravan and Camping Shows</b>		
Wollongong	3 - 5 Mar 2000	14 000
Albury	31 Mar – 2 Apr 2000	10 250
Melbourne	6 - 9 April 2000	57 074
Sydney	29 Apr – 7 May 2000	76 546
Dubbo	23 - 25 June 2000	11 500
<b>Getaway Shows</b>		
Sydney	29 – 31 Oct 1999	21 127
Melbourne	12 – 14 Nov 1999	23 087

## OUTREACH PROGRAMS

### Shell Questacon Science Circus

A total of **167 167** people visited the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*. This total comprised **129 167** to the SQSC around Australia and **38 000** at Questacon in Canberra. This also included:

- 83 477 for the *Science Circus* during its six tours throughout Australia;
- 5 690 at the 2000 Olympic Torch relay sites and 2 000 at the Shell family day, Geelong, and 3 000 at the training tour to Queanbeyan; and
- 35 000 at the Australian Science Festival.

The *Shell Questacon Science Circus* tours during 1999-00:

Tour Location	Dates	Towns	Total Visitors	Number of Schools
North West Western Australia and Northern Territory	July 30-August 20 1999	Broome Derby Fitzroy Crossing Halls Creek Kununurra Darwin <i>plus 33 Aboriginal communities and School of the Air presentations</i>	10 432	53
South East Queensland	August 30-September 19 1999	Toowoomba Ipswich Kingaroy Dalby	10 320	78
North Eastern Murray Valley	November 1 – November 21 1999	Albury Shepparton Seymour Wangaratta	12 472	78
Central New South Wales	February 27–March 19 2000	Parkes Dubbo Mudgee Orange Bathurst	17 934	95
South Eastern Coastal Qld	April 3 - April 20 2000	Bundaberg Hervey Bay Gympie Sunshine Coast	13 012	77
New South Wales North Coast	May 21- June 13 2000	Taree Port Macquarie Coffs Harbour Grafton Byron Bay Lismore	19 307	106

## QUESTACON MATHS CENTRE

Tour location	Dates	Total Visitors
Ballarat, Vic	7 Jul-18 Sept 1999	1 100
Warrnambool, Vic	4 Oct-6 Dec 1999	2 250
Wagga Wagga, NSW	2 Feb - 13 Apr 2000	1 450
Newcastle, NSW	3 May - 29 Jun 2000	1 900
		<b>6 700</b>
	Total teachers at all 1999-00 venues at professional development workshops in the Questacon Maths Centre	<b>35</b>

## NRMA ROADZONE

Tour location	Dates	Total Visitors
Sydney, NSW	Term 3 1999	2 900
Wagga Wagga, NSW	Term 4 1999	4 200
Wollongong Science Centre	6 Jan – 30 Apr 2000	11 219
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>18 319</b>
Questacon	4 May – 30 Jun 2000	50 000
<b>Total</b>		<b>68 419</b>

**STARLAB**

<b>Starlab Program</b>	<b>Tour location</b>	<b>Participants/Hires/Presentations</b>
<p><b>Teacher Training Workshops</b></p> <p>* Workshops accommodate 20 people each, usually from several schools. The trainees then take the Starlab to their school to use in their teaching programs.</p>	<p>Emerald</p> <p>Townsville</p> <p>Mackay</p> <p>Melbourne</p>	<p>40 teachers</p>
<p><b>Starlab Hire</b></p> <p>These hires are by teachers who have previously completed Starlab training by Questacon staff.</p>	<p>Canberra (5)</p> <p>Bundaberg</p> <p>Palm Island</p> <p>Torres Strait</p> <p>Cairns</p> <p>Grafton</p>	<p>Total of 10 hires</p>
<p><b>Starlab Presentations</b></p>	<p>Canberra</p> <p>Hughenden</p> <p>Kingaroy</p> <p>Toowoomba</p> <p>Wangaratta</p> <p>Seymour</p> <p>Castlemaine</p> <p>Dandenongs</p> <p>Mornington Peninsular</p> <p>Melbourne (8)</p>	<p>17</p>

# APPENDIX 1

## LOCATIONS VISITED BY A QUESTACON PROGRAM DURING 1999-00

### **Australian Capital Territory**

Canberra

### **New South Wales**

Albury  
Bathurst  
Coffs Harbour  
Dubbo  
Grafton  
Mudgee  
Newcastle  
Orange  
Parkes  
Port Macquarie  
Queanbeyan  
Sydney  
Taree  
Wagga Wagga  
Wollongong

### **Victoria**

Ballarat  
Castlemaine  
Dandenongs  
Geelong  
Melbourne  
Mornington Peninsular  
Seymour  
Shepparton  
Wangaratta  
Warrnambool  
Wodonga

### **Tasmania**

Hobart  
Launceston

### **South Australia**

Adelaide

### **Western Australia**

Broome  
Derby  
Fitzroy Crossing  
Halls Creek  
Kununurra  
Perth

### **Northern Territory**

Alice Springs  
Darwin  
Groote Eylandt  
Katherine

### **Queensland**

Airlie Beach  
Atherton  
Blackwater  
Bokarina  
Brisbane  
Bundaberg  
Cairns  
Cherbourg  
Coolangatta  
Dalby  
Emerald  
Gladstone  
Gympie  
Hervey Bay  
Hughenden  
Innisfail  
Ipswich  
Kingaroy  
Mackay  
Maroochydore  
Maryborough

Moranbah

Mt Coot-ha

Nambour

Nathan

Palm Island

Port Douglas

Proserpine

Redcliffe

Rockhampton

Southport

Tewantin

Toowoomba

Torres Straits

Townsville

Tully

Warrick

Woodridge

### **International**

Brazil

Chile

Hawaii

Korea

Mexico

New Zealand

Singapore

Thailand

## APPENDIX 2

### QUESTACON PUBLIC LECTURE PROGRAM 1999-00

Lecture	Speaker	Date
The Future of Human Space Exploration	Jim Reilly NASA astronaut	20 July
Spiders in Our World	Theo Evans CSIRO Division of Entomology	20 October
Arachnophobia	Annemarie Jubb Psychologist	18 November
How Sociable is a Huntsman?	Dr David Rowell Snr Lecturer Botany and Zoology, ANU	20 January
Bats for All Seasons	Dr Chris Tidemann Snr Lecturer Dept of Forestry, ANU	5 February 4 March
Rock and Stroll	Monica Yeung Geologist	12 February 11 March
Architecture and the Built Environment	Eric Martin Architect	19 February 18 March
Aboriginal; Science and Technology	Robert Clegg Wiradjeri Elder	26 February 25 March
BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year guest speaker Series	Heide Smith Professional photographer	26 May
BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year guest speaker series	Andrew Henley Professional photographer	31 May
BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year guest speaker series	Iain Dawson Horticultural Research Officer National Botanical Gardens	2 June
In Search of King Solomon's Ring: Studies on the Cognitive and Communicative Abilities of Grey Parrots	Dr Irene Pepperberg University of Tucson, Arizona, USA	22 June

## APPENDIX 3

### SHELL QUESTACON SCIENCE CIRCUS 2000 SCHOLARS

Name	University	Science Discipline
Lucy ANDREW	Adelaide	Anatomy, Histology, Physiology
Amy BLAYLOCK	Adelaide	Botany Zoology
Philippa BOARDMAN	NSW/ANU	Information Technology Resource and Environment Management
Ross BUCHANAN	Canberra	Applied Science Medical Laboratory Science
Eleanor CLUNE	Melbourne	Physiology
Marijke DE WEERD	Flinders	Biotechnology Molecular Biology, Microbiology
Lyndall GULLY	Flinders	Molecular Biology Microbiology
Annette HARRIS	Queensland	Biochemistry Pharmacology
Amy JOHNSTON	Canterbury, New Zealand	Biochemistry
Jennifer LYNCH	NSW	Medical Physics
Gayle McNAUGHT	NSW/Macquarie	Ecology Secondary School Science
Michelle NEILSON	NSW	Physics Computer Science
Eugenia O'BRIEN	Canberra	Ecology Environmental Science
Sara PHILLIPS	Melbourne	English, Psychology Zoology
Deborah SHAW	Adelaide	Pharmacology Physiology

## APPENDIX 4

### ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING THE SHELL QUESTACON SCIENCE CIRCUS SCHOLAR PROGRAM DURING 1999-00

Shell Australia Pty Ltd  
The Australian National University, through the Centre for the Public Awareness of Science  
Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs  
ABC Science Unit on-line ("The Lab")  
ABC TV (Quantum)  
Australian Museum, Sydney  
CSIRO Education Programs (Double Helix Magazine)  
CSIRO National Awareness program  
Discovery Science Centre, Bendigo  
Museum Victoria  
Newcastle Regional Museum  
Office of Senator Natasha Stott-Despoja  
Radio 2XX Canberra  
Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games  
The Canberra Times  
Taronga Zoo  
The Artful Scientists  
Robbie Weeks Media  
Green Words and Advertising  
Australian Academy of Science  
Sciencentre, Brisbane  
The Amazing Fruit Fly Circus, Albury, NSW  
Safe House Program (East Timorese Refugees)  
Puckapunyal Army Base, Victoria

# APPENDIX 5

## ADVERTISING AND MARKET RESEARCH

In 1999-00 the following agencies were engaged:

Piazza Consulting (Dec 99)	\$24 115
Environmetrics (Mar 00)	\$8 067
- Joint with NCA and MaxVision	
University of Canberra, CRC	Nil**

\*\* This work was conducted by students as part of their course work.

### Master Communications Agency

MA@D Communication	\$95 897.50
	(creative head hours)

MA@D Communication was appointed in April 1998 on a three-year contract to handle advertising, promotional and graphic design services for the Centre.

### Media Advertising

Print	\$21 479
Radio	\$12 153
TV	\$84 076

Questacon deals directly with media outlets for advertising.

### Direct Mail

During the year, a Questacon *Spiders!* mailout was distributed to 120 000 households in Canberra and Queanbeyan. Distribution costs were sponsored by Bayer Australia – the major sponsor for the *Spiders! Live exhibition* while it was at Questacon.

### Spiders mailout

- 120 000 Spiders! Live postcards maildrop to ACT households
- Voucher redemption of 927
- 5 000 Spiders! Live postcards Attachment 4d
- Distributed through restaurants & hotels with redemption rate of 169

## APPENDIX 6

### PUBLICATIONS AND PRINTING 1999-00

*3 in 1 Superticket* brochure  
*3 in 1 Superticket* poster  
*Annual Report of Activities 1998 – 99*  
*Annual Review 1998 – 99*  
*Birthday Party* brochure  
*Birthday Party* invitations  
*Birthday Party* gift voucher  
*Birthday Party* birthday card  
*BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1999* flyer  
*Dr Mike Gore* farewell invitation  
*International Training Workshop 2000* brochure  
*Powerplay – Tomorrow’s Adventure Playground* flyer  
*Q Club members* brochure  
*Questacon Magazine* (September 1999)  
*Questacon Magazine* (December 1999)  
*Questacon Magazine* (April 2000)  
*Questacon Magazine* (July 2000)  
*Questacon What’s On* in-house newsletter  
*Questacon 2000* Guide  
*Questacon – Q by Night and Camp in* brochure  
*Shell Questacon Science Circus 2000* brochure  
*SideShow* Exhibition Guide  
*SideShow* Teachers Resource Guide  
*SideShow* Poster  
*SideShow* Function brochure  
*SideShow* flyer  
*SideShow* Invitation  
*SideShow* photo frame  
*SideShow* Science Week flyer  
*Spiders! Live* brochure  
*Spiders! Live* postcard

#### **Miscellaneous Printing**

1999 Christmas Card  
Business cards  
Corporate stationery (letterhead, envelopes, with compliments slips)  
Name badges  
Q & A stickers  
*Questacon* balloons

## APPENDIX 7

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### CONTRIBUTORS AND SPONSORS 1999-00

Valued sponsorships received or continued during 1999-00, include:

Australian Geographic	Shell
Australian Mathematical Society	Skyline Displays
Australian National University Department of Physics	South East Australian Airlines
Australia & New Zealand Industrial & Applied Mathematics	Southern Cross Club, Canberra
Australian Photonics	Steve Parish Pty Ltd
Bayer Australia	Streets Ice Cream
BOC Gases	Tantrix Games (Aust.) Pty Ltd
Broken Hill Proprietary Co Ltd	<i>The Canberra Times</i>
Coca Cola Amatil	Tourism Tasmania
Cootes Holdings Pty Ltd	Visions of Australia
Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs	WIN Television
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	
Department of Health & Aged Care	
Environment Australia	
Fox Studios	
Frank Hodgekiss Agencies	
Fuji-Xerox Australia Pty Ltd	
Hoyts Belconnen	
Independence Studios	
J B Boag's	
Johnco Productions Pty Ltd	
Judius	
Lend Lease Foundation	
Microsoft	
Moose Enterprises	
National Space Development Agency of Japan	
NRMA	
Orica	
P & O Nedloyds	
Paula Dawson	
Power of Ten	
Privileges Card	
Qantas	
Radio FM 104.7	

# APPENDIX 8

## STAFFING SUMMARY

### Staff as at 30 June 2000

	Permanent Full Time		Permanent Part Time		Temporary Full Time		Temporary Part Time		<b>Total</b>
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
	Senior Executive Band 2					1			
Senior Executive Band 1		1							1
Executive Officers	6	2	1		2	5		1	17
APS Officers	11	8	2	4	16	14	18	24	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>116</b>

## A P P E N D I X 9

### CONSULTANTS ENGAGED DURING 199/2000 FINANCIAL YEAR

Where a specific need cannot be met through the Centre's internal staffing resources, a consultant may be engaged to produce the required outcome to achieve best value for money. Purchasing policy and procedures covers engagement and selection of consultants.

Company Name	Task Performed and Justification	Expenditure for 1999/2000 \$
Advance FM	Building redevelopment consultancy services and facility project management services (b) (c) (1)	124,675
AND Design	Exhibition design & consultation services (a) (1)	5,000
Andrew Rankine	Exhibition development services (b) (1)	800
AR Personnel Services Pty Limited	Develop code of conduct policy & guidelines (b)(c)(1)	4,166
Concept Education Pty Limited	Develop and deliver E team program (b)(1)	1,600
Deacons Graham & James	Legal advice (b)(c) (1)	535
Deborah Anderson	Consultation on Stage 1 of the Singapore Science Theatre. (a) (1)	4,085
DMR Consulting Group	Implementation of certified agreement (b) (1)	2,331
Dr Byte Consulting	Computer advisory services (a) (1)	320
Environmetrics	Undertake a feasibility study (a) (b) (1)	24,200
Direct Ergonomics	Ergonomic advisory services (b) (1)	2,741
F1 Solutions	Database analysis and development services (b) (1)	6,127
Fundraising Management Consultants Pty Ltd	Conduct fund raising feasibility study (b)(c) (1)	6,000
Ian Mortimer	Design & show construction consultancy services for new and proposed exhibitions (a) (1)	2,300

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Task Performed and Justification</b>	<b>Expenditure for 1999/2000 \$</b>
Intercept Consultants	Workplace Harassment policy training development (c) (1)	1,600
Le Quesne Associates Pty Limited	Air conditioning evaluation and consultancy services	120,310
Louise Goggin	Development of exhibition educational content (b)(1)	200
Palm Management	HR consultancy services (a) (b) (1)	2,025
Peter Pinnington	Facilitate planning for touring exhibitions(a) (1)	500
Piazza Consultancy	Undertake market research to determine the potential for new and proposed exhibitions and programs (b)(c)(1)	28,540
Power of 10	IT Consultancy and support services (a)(c)(1)	21,055
Reengineering Australia	Consulting service on Purchasing Review Project Team. (b) (1)	1,575
Rushton Group	Valuation services. (b) (c) (1)	15,850
Sanchjack Consulting	Structural consulting engineering services for exhibition development(b)(1)	7,800
Science Alive	Construction drawings for Exhibition (a) (1)	1,500
Stephen Barker	Consultation on Stage 1 of the Singapore Science Theatre. (a) (1)	5,685
Stewart Luke	Consultation on Stage 1 & 2 of the Singapore Science Theatre (a) (1)	5,065
Technology One Pty Limited	Financial systems consulting (b)(1)	1,450
Tooher Gale & Associates	Freight Contract management (b) (1)	21,720
Upton Martin	Business planning consultancy (c) (1)	4,000
Value Sourcing	Consultation services on IT Outsourcing Strategies (b) (c) (1)	2,438

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Task Performed and Justification</b>	<b>Expenditure for 1999/2000 \$</b>
Vector Solutions	Design drafting for Cybercity exhibit (a)(1)	495
Wizard Information Solutions Pty Limited	Consultancy assistance in implementing financial system and ongoing support (b) (1)	38,341
Power of 10	Professional consultation for YR2000 Project (b)(1)	5,337

**Justification Code**

(a) Centre staff with the specialised skills or knowledge needed to perform the task were not available within the required timeframe.

(b) There were no Centre staff with the specialised skills or knowledge needed to perform the task.

(c) Independent advice was required.

**Other Matters Code**

(1) Tenders not publicly advertised in the Gazette/ Telstra Transigo.

# APPENDIX 10

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE MANAGER BUSINESS MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

In our opinion, the attached financial statements give a true and fair view of the matters required by Schedule 2 of the Finance minister's Orders made under Section 63 of the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997.



Annie V Ghisalberti  
Director

SEPTEMBER 2000



Ann M Landrigan  
Executive Manager  
Business Management

SEPTEMBER 2000

# THE NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### NOTE 1 - OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

The objective of the National Science and Technology Centre is to be a world class science and technology centre that increases national awareness, understanding and positive attitudes to science and technology.

The National Science and Technology contributes to one outcome:

**A cultural environment that enriches the lives of all Australians.**

The National Science and Technology Centre delivers the following output to contribute to the outcome:

**Exhibitions and programs that encourage participation in, increase awareness of, and build positive attitudes to, science and technology and their role in improving Australia's cultural and national well-being.**

### NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### (A) BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

While the National Science and Technology Centre is not required to report separately, the financial statements are prepared consistent with the requirements of section 49 of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* and are a general purpose financial report.

The statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- *Requirements for the Preparation of Financial Statements of Commonwealth Agencies and Authorities* made by the Minister for Finance and Administration. (Schedule 2 to the Financial Management and Accountability (FMA) Orders);
- Australian Accounting Standards;
- other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Boards; and
- the Consensus Views of the Urgent Issues Group.

except that these statements do not separately show Administered and Departmental items.

The statements have been prepared having regard to:

- Statements of Accounting Concepts; and
- The Explanatory Notes to Schedule 2 issued by the Department of Finance and Administration

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets which, as noted, are at valuation. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

The continued existence of the National Science and Technology Centre in its present form is dependent on Government policy and on continuing appropriations by Parliament.

## (B) SPECIAL ACCOUNTS

The Centre manages a special account to receive contributions and donations used to achieve the Centre's objectives. Accordingly, the trust fund is brought to account in the Centre's financial statements. (See Note 22)

## (C) REVENUES FROM GOVERNMENT

Revenues from Government are revenues relating to the core operating activities of the Centre.

Policies for accounting for revenue from government follows:

### **Agency Appropriations**

Revenues from Government relate to the operating activities of the Centre and the outcomes managed by the Centre on behalf of Government, except to the extent that they represent the receipt of assets arising from a restructuring of administrative arrangements.

Appropriations to the National Science and Technology Centre for its departmental output is recognised as revenue to the extent that they have been received or are entitled to be received at year-end.

Appropriations to the National Science and Technology Centre for capital injections are recognised directly in equity, to the extent that the appropriation has been received into the Centre's bank account, or are entitled to be received by the Centre at year-end.

The appropriations for capital items for 1999-2000 include, as carryovers, the re-appropriations to the Centre of unspent amounts from 1998-99. These amounts were recognised directly in equity in the financial statements for 1998-99.

This is a change in the policy adopted in prior years when the amounts appropriated for Centre running costs were recognised as revenue in the year of appropriation, except to the extent of unspent monies carried over into the new financial year.

### **Resources received free of charge**

Services received free of charge are recognised in the Operating Statement as revenue when and only when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense.

Contributions of assets at no cost of acquisition or for nominal consideration are recognised at their fair value when the asset qualifies for recognition, unless received from another government agency as a consequence of a restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, the assets are initially recognised at the amounts at which they were recognised by the transferring agency immediately prior to the transfer.

### **(D) OTHER REVENUE**

Revenue for the sale of goods and services is recognised upon delivery of services to customers. Revenue for sponsorships is recognised as earned in accordance with individual sponsorship agreements. Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets. Revenue for disposal of non-current assets is recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

All revenues described in this note are revenues to the operating activities of the Centre, whether in its own right or on behalf of the Commonwealth, except for gains from the sale of agency assets.

### **(E) BAD AND DOUBTFUL DEBTS**

Bad debts are written off during the year in which they are identified.

### **(F) EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS**

#### **Leave**

The liability for employee entitlements includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of the Centre is estimated to be less than the annual leave entitlement for sick leave.

The liability for annual leave reflects the value of total annual leave entitlements of all employees at 30 June 2000 and is recognised at the nominal amount.

The non-current portion of the estimated liability for long service leave is recognised and measured at the present value of the future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at 30 June 2000. In determining the present value of the liability, the Centre has taken into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation. The current portion of the liability is based on an estimation of long service leave payable within twelve months.

**Separation and redundancy**

Provision is also made for separation and redundancy payments in circumstances where the Centre has formally identified positions as excess to requirements and a reliable estimate of the amount of the payments can be determined.

**Superannuation**

Staff of the Centre contributes to the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme and the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme. Employer contributions in relation to these schemes are treated as an expense. No liability is shown in the Balance Sheet as the employer contributions fully extinguish the accruing liability which is assumed by the Commonwealth.

**(G) LEASES**

Operating lease payments are charged to the Operating Statement on a basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

**(H) CASH**

Cash includes notes and coins held, deposits held at call with a bank or financial institution.

**(I) ACQUISITION OF ASSETS**

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and revenues at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor agency's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

**(J) PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT****Asset recognition threshold**

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the Balance Sheet, except for purchases costing less than \$2000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

**Revaluations**

Schedule 2 requires that property, plant and equipment be progressively revalued in accordance with the 'deprival' method of valuation in three-year cycles.

The Centre revalued its Building as at 30 June 1998 and its remaining property, plant and equipment as at 30 June 1999 using the deprival basis of valuation.

The financial effect of the move to progressive revaluations is that the carrying amounts of assets will reflect current values and that depreciation charges will reflect the current cost of the service potential consumed in each period.

Assets in each class acquired after the commencement of the progressive revaluation cycle will be reported at cost for the duration of the progressive revaluation then in progress.

### Depreciation and Amortisation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the Centre using, in all cases, the straight line method of depreciation.

Depreciation/amortisation rates (useful lives) and methods are reviewed at each balance date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods as appropriate.

Depreciation and amortisation rates periods applying to each class of depreciable assets are as follows:

<b>Class</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	1998-99
Building	<b>40 Years</b>	40 Years
Exhibitions	<b>3 – 20 Years</b>	5 – 10 Years
Leasehold Improvements	<b>10 – 40 Years</b>	10 Years
Computer Equipment	<b>3 – 10 Years</b>	3 – 10 Years
Plant and Equipment	<b>10 – 20 Years</b>	5 – 10 Years
Software	<b>5 Years</b>	5 Years
Furniture and Fittings	<b>10 Years</b>	10 Years

### (K) INVENTORIES

Inventories held for resale are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Inventories not held for re-sale are valued at cost, unless they are no longer required, in which case they are valued at net realisable value.

A provision for obsolete stock is raised based on a review of inventory on hand at year-end.

Cost incurred in bringing each item of inventory to its present location and condition are included in the cost of inventories where they can be allocated on a reasonable basis.

### (L) TAXATION

The Centre is exempt from all forms of taxation except fringe benefits tax and the goods and services tax.

### (M) FOREIGN CURRENCY

Transactions denominated in a foreign currency are converted at the exchange rate at the date of the transaction. Foreign currency receivables and payables are translated at the exchange rates current as at balance date. Associated currency gains and losses are not material.

## (N) INSURANCE

The Commonwealth's insurable risk managed fund, called 'ComCover', commenced operations in 1998 – 1999. From that date, the Centre has insured with the fund for risks other than workers compensation, which is dealt with via continuing arrangements with Comcare.

The new arrangements replace the previous policy of non-insurance and require the systematic identification, quantification, reporting and management of risk across the Centre

## (O) CAPITAL USE CHARGE

A capital use charge of 12% is imposed by the Commonwealth on the net departmental assets of the Centre. The charge is adjusted to take account of movements in net assets for revaluation, gifts and other equity related adjustments during the financial year.

## (P) COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation in these financial statements where required.

Comparatives are not presented in the Notes dealing with Reporting on Outcomes, due to 1999-2000 being the first year of the implementation of accrual budgeting.

## (Q) ROUNDING

Amounts have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 except in relation to the following:

- remuneration of executives; and
- remuneration of auditors.

## (R) FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Accounting policies for financial instruments are stated at Note 26.

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## OPERATING STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2000

	Notes	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000
<b>Operating revenues</b>			
Revenues from government	3	7,034	6,829
Sales of goods and services	4	3,657	3,082
Interest	5	146	119
Net gains from sale of infrastructure, plant and equipment		34	-
Reversals of previous write-downs		-	8
Other revenues from independent sources	6	1,383	997
<b>Total operating revenues (before abnormal items)</b>		<b>12,254</b>	<b>11,034</b>
<b>Operating expenses</b>			
Employees	7	4,219	3,868
Suppliers	8	5,592	6,030
Depreciation and amortisation	9	2,099	1,656
Net write-down of assets	10	70	89
Net losses from sale of infrastructure, plant and equipment		11	3
<b>Total operating expenses</b>		<b>11,990</b>	<b>11,646</b>
<b>Operating surplus (deficit)</b>		<b>264</b>	<b>(612)</b>
Gain or loss on extraordinary items	11	-	3,500
<b>Net surplus or deficit after extraordinary items</b>		<b>264</b>	<b>(4,112)</b>
<b>Equity interests</b>			
Net surplus (deficit) attributable to the Commonwealth		264	(4,112)
Accumulated surpluses at the beginning of the reporting period		16,072	20,184
<b>Total available for appropriation</b>		<b>16,336</b>	<b>16,072</b>
Capital use provided for or paid	2	(744)	-
<b>Accumulated surpluses at end of reporting period</b>		<b>15,592</b>	<b>16,072</b>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2000

	Notes	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Financial assets</b>			
Cash	12, 22	2,767	2,171
Receivables	13	325	1,310
Accrued revenue		33	23
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b>3,125</b>	<b>3,505</b>
<b>Non-financial assets</b>			
Land and buildings	14A, 14C	22,456	21,047
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	14B, 14C	12,892	10,925
Intangibles	14C, 14D	186	186
Inventories	14E	118	218
Other non-financial assets	15	60	450
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>		<b>35,712</b>	<b>32,826</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>38,837</b>	<b>36,331</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Debt</b>			
Loans	16	2,712	-
<b>Total debt</b>		<b>2,712</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Provisions and payables</b>			
Employees	17	1,077	999
Suppliers	18	728	646
Other provisions and payables	19	708	1,042
<b>Total provisions and payables</b>		<b>2,513</b>	<b>2,687</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>5,225</b>	<b>2,687</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Capital	20	2,930	1,000
Reserves	20	15,090	16,572
Accumulated results	20	15,592	16,072
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>33,612</b>	<b>33,644</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>		<b>38,837</b>	<b>36,331</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		<b>3,618</b>	<b>2,131</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		<b>1,607</b>	<b>556</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		<b>3,303</b>	<b>4,173</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		<b>35,534</b>	<b>32,158</b>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2000

	Notes	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Appropriations for outputs		7,028	5,825
Sales of goods and services		3,657	3,259
Interest		136	119
Other		1,049	2,260
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>11,870</b>	<b>11,463</b>
<b>Cash used</b>			
Employees		(4,140)	(3,752)
Suppliers		(5,233)	(6,639)
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>(9,373)</b>	<b>(10,391)</b>
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	21	<b>2,497</b>	<b>1,072</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		30	-
Proceeds from sales of equity instruments	-		6,291
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>6,291</b>
<b>Cash used</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(6,829)	(1,336)
Purchase of equity instruments		-	(4,908)
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>(6,829)</b>	<b>(6,244)</b>
<b>Net cash from (used by) investing activities</b>		<b>(6,799)</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Proceeds from borrowing's		3,712	-
Equity injections		1,930	1,000
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>5,642</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Cash used</b>			
Capital use charge paid		(744)	-
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>(744)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net cash from (used by) financing activities</b>		<b>4,898</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Net increase / (decrease) in cash held</b>		<b>596</b>	<b>2,119</b>
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period		2,171	52
<b>Cash at the end of the reporting period</b>		<b>2,767</b>	<b>2,171</b>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS

AS AT 30 JUNE 2000

	1999-00	1998-99
	\$000	\$000
<b>BY TYPE</b>		
CAPITAL COMMITMENTS		
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	82	-
<b>Total capital commitments</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>-</b>
OTHER COMMITMENTS		
Operating leases	327	54
Other commitments	764	320
<b>Total other commitments</b>	<b>1,091</b>	<b>374</b>
COMMITMENTS RECEIVABLE	1,627	1,863
<b>Net commitments</b>	<b>(455)</b>	<b>(1,489)</b>
<b>BY MATURITY</b>		
<b>All net commitments</b>		
One year or less	135	(269)
From one to two years	(228)	(535)
From two to five years	(361)	(685)
<b>Net commitments</b>	<b>(455)</b>	<b>(1,489)</b>
<b>Operating Lease Commitments</b>		
One year or less	126	50
From one to five years	201	4
<b>Net commitments</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>54</b>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## SCHEDULE OF CONTINGENCIES

AS AT 30 JUNE 2000

	1999-00	1998-99
	\$000	\$000
<b>CONTINGENT LOSSES</b>		
Claims for damages/costs	100	40
<b>Total contingent losses</b>	100	40
<b>CONTINGENT GAINS</b>		
Approximate for Exhibition insurance claim	40	-
<b>Total contingent gains</b>	40	-
<b>Net contingencies</b>	60	40

### SCHEDULE OF UNQUANTIFIABLE CONTINGENCIES

The Contingent Loss represents an estimate of the NSTC's liability based on claims in existence at year end and values determined by reference to precedent cases. NSTC is defending the claims.

The Contingent Gain represents an insurance claim outstanding in relation to damage to an exhibit. The extent to which the losses incurred will be paid is yet to be determined.

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

	1999-00	1998-99
	\$000	\$000

### Note 3 - Revenue from Government

Appropriations for outputs	7,028	6,757
Resources received free of charge	6	73
Total	7,034	6,830

### Note 4 - Sales of Goods and Services

Entry Charges to Exhibitions	1,573	1,795
Sale of Inventory Goods	655	840
Rent & Service Contract Licence Fees	-	191
Fees for Services Provided	41	-
Other Sale of Goods & Services	1,388	255
Total	3,657	3,081

### Note 5 - Interest

Interest from other Government agencies	68	-
Interest from Other Sources	77	119
Total	146	119

### Note 6 - Other revenues from independent sources

Sponsorships	1,383	917
Other revenue	-	80
Total	1,383	997

### Note 7 - Employee expenses

Remuneration for services provided	3,902	3,608
Separation and redundancy payments	113	183
Total remuneration	4,015	3,791
Other employee expenses	203	76
Total employee expenses	4,219	3,867

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

	1999-00	1998-99
	\$000	\$000
<b>Note 8 - Suppliers expenses</b>		
Supply of goods and services	5,567	5,976
Operating lease rentals	25	54
Total suppliers expense	5,592	6,030

### Note 9 - Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	2,050	1,629
Amortisation of intangible assets	49	27
Total	2,099	1,656

Depreciation expenses in 1999-2000 are \$605,000 lower than they would have been as a result of the extension of useful lives of infrastructure, plant and equipment assets for which assets have been revalued. (1998-99: nil)

The aggregate amounts of depreciation or amortisation expensed during the reporting period for each class of depreciable asset are as follows:

Buildings on crown land	594	657
Infrastructure plant, and equipment	1,456	972
Intangible assets - computer software	49	27
Total	2,099	1,656

### Note 10 - Net write-down of assets

Financial assets		
Bad debts written off	4	38
Non-financial assets		
Infrastructure, plant and equipment written off	-	50
Inventories written off	66	-
Total	70	89

### Note 11 - Loss on extraordinary item

Loss resulting from the reclassification of NSTC building as a crown building controlled by the National Capital Authority.	-	3,500
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### Note 12 - Cash

Cash at bank and on hand	2,047	32
Cash in Special Accounts - See Note 22	720	2,139
Total	2,767	2,171

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000
<b>Note 13 - Receivables</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Appropriations carried over	-	1,000
Goods and services	311	307
Other	19	8
<i>Less: Provision for Doubtful Debts</i>	(5)	(5)
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>1,310</b>
Receivables are aged as follows:		
Not overdue (current)	5	1,068
Overdue by:		
- less than 30 days	236	213
- 30 to 60 days	30	19
- 60 to 90 days	18	14
- More than 90 days	41	-
<i>Less: Provision for Doubtful Debts</i>	(5)	(5)
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>1,310</b>
<b>Note 14 -Non Financial Assets</b>		
<b>14 A. Land and Buildings</b>		
Building - National Science and Technology Centre		
- at valuation (a)	23,275	23,275
Accumulated depreciation	(2,937)	(2,228)
	<b>20,338</b>	<b>21,047</b>
Building Additions - National Science and Technology Centre - at cost		
Accumulated depreciation	2,133	-
	(15)	-
	<b>2,118</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Land and Buildings</b>	<b>22,456</b>	<b>21,047</b>

- (a) The Centre's land and building were valued as at 30 June 1998 by the Australian Valuation Office based on the depreciated replacement cost. The land under the building is recognised as an Administered asset by the National Capital Authority.

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000
<b>14 B. Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment and Exhibitions</b>		
Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment and Exhibitions		
- at valuation (b)	15,434	16,469
Accumulated depreciation	(7,288)	(5,544)
	8,146	10,925
Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment and Exhibitions		
- at cost	4,812	-
Accumulated depreciation	(67)	-
	4,745	-
Total Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment and Exhibitions	12,892	10,925

(b) The Centres assets were revalued as at 30 June 1999 by Edward Rushton Australia Pty Ltd using the deprival value method. The increments recognised amounted to \$7,984,078. The infrastructure, plant and equipment and exhibitions were relifed as at 1 July 1999. The resulting decrement amounting to \$1,481,673 was offset against the previous revaluation increments.

### 14 C. - Analysis of property, infrastructure, plant, equipment & intangibles

**Table A - Movement summary for 1999-2000 for all assets irrespective of valuation basis**

Item	Buildings \$000	Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment & Exhibitions \$000	Intangibles - Computer software \$000	Total \$000
<b>Gross value as at 1 July 1999</b>	23,275	16,469	221	39,965
Additions	2,133	4,812	48	6,993
Revaluations	-	(459)	-	(459)
Disposals	-	(576)	-	(576)
<b>Gross Value as at 30 June 2000</b>	<b>25,408</b>	<b>20,247</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>45,924</b>
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation as at				
1 July 1999	2,228	5,544	35	7,807
Charge for assets held at 1 July 1999	580	1,389	44	2,012
Charge for additions	15	67	4	86
Adjustment for revaluations	130	893	-	1,023
Adjustment for disposals	-	(538)	-	(538)
<b>Accumulated depreciation/amortisation as at 30 June 2000</b>	<b>2,952</b>	<b>7,355</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>10,390</b>
<b>Net book value as at 30 June 2000</b>	<b>22,456</b>	<b>12,892</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>35,534</b>
<b>Net book value as at 1 July 1999</b>	<b>21,047</b>	<b>10,925</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>32,158</b>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

**Table B - Summary of balances of assets at valuation as at 30 June 2000**

Item	Buildings	Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment & Exhibitions	Intangibles - Computer software	Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
<b>As at 30 June 2000</b>				
Gross value	23,275	15,434	221	38,930
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(2,937)	(7,288)	(79)	(10,304)
Net book value	20,338	8,146	142	28,626
<b>As at 30 June 1999</b>				
Gross value	23,275	16,469	221	39,965
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(2,228)	(5,544)	(35)	(7,807)
Net book value	21,047	10,925	186	32,158

1999-00	1998-99
\$000	\$000

### 14 D. - Intangibles

#### Computer software

Purchased (including any modification cost)	269	221
less: Provision for amortisation	(83)	(35)
Total	186	186

### 14 E. - Inventories

#### Current

#### Inventories held for sale

Finished goods	131	178
less: Provision for irrecoverable stock	(12)	-
	118	178

#### Inventories held not for sale

Store holdings-consumables	-	83
less: Provision for obsolete stock	-	(43)
	-	40
Total	118	218

### Note 15 - Other non-financial assets

#### Current

Prepayments	60	450
Total	60	450

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

	1999-00	1998-99
	\$000	\$000
<b>Note 16 - Debt</b>		
Loans from Government	2,712	-
Total	<u>2,712</u>	<u>-</u>
Maturity schedules for loans		
Payable: within one year	1,660	-
in one to two years	<u>1,052</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>2,712</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Note 17 - Provisions and payables related to employees</b>		
Salaries and wages	110	69
Leave and other entitlements	953	920
Superannuation	14	10
Total	<u>1,077</u>	<u>999</u>
<b>Note 18 - Provisions and payables related to suppliers</b>		
<i>Current</i>		
Trade creditors	726	425
Other creditors	1	221
Total	<u>728</u>	<u>646</u>
<b>Note 19 - Other provisions and payables</b>		
Unearned income	708	1,042
Total	<u>708</u>	<u>1,042</u>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

### Note 20 - Equity

Item	Capital		Accumulated results		Asset revaluation reserve		Total equity	
	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000
Balance at 1 July 1999	1,000	-	16,072	20,184	16,572	8,588	33,644	28,772
Operating result	-	-	264	(612)	-	-	264	(612)
Net revaluation decreases								
- review of useful lives	-	-	-	-	(1,482)	7,984	(1,482)	7,984
Change in accounting policy - transfer of Land	-	-	-	(3,500)	-	-	-	(3,500)
Equity injection	1,930	1,000	-	-	-	-	1,930	1,000
Capital use charge	-	-	(744)	-	-	-	(744)	-
							-	
<b>Balance 30 June 2000</b>	<b>2,930</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>15,592</b>	<b>16,072</b>	<b>15,090</b>	<b>16,572</b>	<b>33,612</b>	<b>33,644</b>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

### Note 21 - Cash flow reconciliation

	1999-00	1998-99
	\$000	\$000
<b>Agency Reconciliation</b>		
Reconciliation of operating surplus to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Operating surplus (deficit) before extraordinary items	264	(612)
Extraordinary item	-	(3,500)
Net surplus (deficit)	264	(4,112)
Add:		
Depreciation / Amortisation	2,099	1,656
Net gains/losses on disposal of assets	(23)	3
Reversal of previous asset write-down	-	(3)
Transfer of building from agency to administered	-	3,500
Fixed asset additions, non-cash	(180)	-
Movement in receivables related to capital injection	(1,000)	-
Write-down of Infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	50
Movement in receivables related to asset sales	31	-
Change in assets and liabilities		
Decrease (Increase) in Receivables	986	(733)
Increase (Decrease) in Provision for doubtful debts	-	(10)
Decrease (Increase) in Inventories	73	(85)
Increase in Provision for Obsolete Stock	43	39
Decrease (Increase) in Other Non-financial Assets	380	(459)
Increase (Decrease) in Provisions and Payable for suppliers	82	141
Increase (Decrease) in Provisions and Payable for employees	79	41
Increase in Other Provision and Payables	(334)	1,043
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>2,497</b>	<b>1,072</b>

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

### Note 22 - Special Accounts

#### National Science and Technology Centre

Contributions to the National Science and Technology Centre

	1999-00
	\$000
Balance as at 1 July 1999	2,139
Add: Receipts from appropriations	0
Receipts from other sources	670
	2,809
Less: Expenditure in 1999-00	2,088
Balance as at 30 June 2000	720

### Note 23 - Appropriations

#### Annual appropriations for National Science And Technology Centre outputs

	1999-00
	\$000
Balance available at 1 July 1999	-
Add: Appropriation Acts No 1 & 3 credits:	
Section 6 - Act 1 - basic appropriations (budget)	7,028
Add: FMA Act	
s31 Appropriations	5,219
Total appropriations available for the year	12,247
Expenditures during the year	12,727
Balance of appropriations for outputs at 30 June 2000	(480)

#### Annual Appropriations for National Science and Technology Centre non-revenue items

	Equity Injections	Loans	Carryovers
	1999-2000	1999-2000	1999-2000
	\$000	\$000	\$000
Balance available at 1 July 1999			1,000
Add: Appropriation Act No 2 (Budget)	1,930		
Add: Advance to the Finance Minister			
Add: FMA Act s30 appropriations			
Add: Appropriation Act No 4			
Total appropriations available for the year	1,930	-	1,000
Expenditure debited during the year	1,930		1,000
Balance of appropriations for capital at 30 June 2000	-	-	-

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

	1999-00	1998-99
<b>Note 24 - Executive Remuneration</b>		
The number of executive officers who received or were due to receive remuneration of \$100,000 or more:		
	Number	Number
\$110,001 to \$120,000	1	1
\$140,001 to \$150,000		1
\$160,001 to \$170,000	1	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
The aggregate amount of remuneration of executive officers shown above:	\$278,990	\$266,421
The aggregate amount of performance pay paid during the year to officers shown above:	-	-
The aggregate amount of separation and redundancy packages paid during the year to officers shown above:	\$106,125	-

### Note 25 - Average staffing levels

The average staffing level for the centre in 1999-00 was 91 (1998-99 72)

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

### Note 26 - Financial Instruments

(a) Terms, conditions and accounting policies

<b>Financial Instrument</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Accounting Policies and Methods (including recognition criteria and measurement basis)</b>	<b>Nature of underlying instrument (including significant terms that may affect the amount, timing and certainty of future cash flows)</b>
<b>Financial Assets</b>		<i>Financial assets are recognised when control over future economic benefits is established and the amount of the benefit can be reliably measured.</i>	
Cash	12	Cash is recognised at its nominal amount.	Interest is credited as revenue credited when it is earned
Receivables for goods and services	13	These receivables are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any provision for bad and doubtful debts. Collectability of debts is reviewed at balance date. Provisions are made when collection of the debt is judged to be less rather than more likely.	Credit terms are net 30 days (1998-99: 30 days)
Accrued revenue		Accrued revenue relates to interest earned but yet to be credited and other earnings that are not yet due to be invoiced.	Interest is credited to accounts either monthly or quarterly and other revenue is due 30 days from invoice date and will be invoiced within the next twelve months
Other - Capital use charge		The capital use charge is levied on the net assets at the end of each financial year at 12 %. The financial asset at 30 June represents the net amount due to be received over the estimate paid in June.	The refund of overpaid capital use charge is due to be received in the October following year end.
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>		<i>Financial Liabilities are recognised when a present obligation to another party is entered into and the amount of the liability can be reliably measured.</i>	

Loan Payable	19	Loan balance are recorded at the amount of the loan advanced. No interest is payable on the loan which is an advance of future equity injections.	The loan is due to be repaid in the 2001-02 financial year with \$1,660,000 due within twelve months.
Trade Creditors	21	Creditors and accruals are recognised at their nominal amounts, being the amounts at which the liabilities will be settled. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods and services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced)	Settlement is usually made net 30 days.

## Note 26 - Financial Instruments

### (b) Interest Rate Risk: Agency

Financial Instrument	Notes	Floating Interest Rate		Non-Interest Bearing		Total		Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate	
		1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000	1999-00 \$000	1998-99 \$000	1999-00 %	1998-99 %
<b>Financial Assets</b>									
Cash	12	2,736	2,139	32	32	2,767	2,171	5.2%	4.6%
Receivable - Goods and Services	13	-	-	325	1,310	325	310	n/a	n/a
Accrued revenue		-	-	33	23			n/a	n/a
<b>Total Financial Assets (Recognised)</b>									
		2,736	2,139	390	1,365	3,092	2,481		
<b>Total Assets</b>						38,837	36,331		
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>									
Loan Payable	19			2,712	-	2,712	-	n/a	n/a
Creditors	21			728	646	728	646	n/a	n/a
<b>Total Financial Liabilities (Recognised)</b>									
		-	-	3,440	646	3,440	646		
<b>Total Liabilities</b>						5,225	2,687		

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

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### **Note 26 - Financial Instruments**

#### **(c) Net Fair Values of Financial Assets and Liabilities (cont.)**

##### ***Financial Assets***

The net fair values of cash and non-interest-bearing monetary financial assets approximate their carrying amounts.

The net fair value of the term deposit is based on the short term nature of the investment and is approximated by the carrying amount.

##### ***Financial Liabilities***

The net fair values for trade creditors are short term in nature and approximated by their carrying amounts.

#### **(d) Credit Risk Exposures**

The Centre's maximum exposures to credit risk at reporting date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

There are no significant exposures to any concentrations of credit risk in relation to the Centre's receivables.

# NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

### (d) Net Fair Values of Financial Assets and Liabilities

	Notes	1999-00		1998-99	
		Total carrying amount \$000	Aggregate net fair value \$000	Total carrying amount \$000	Aggregate net fair value \$000
<b>Financial Assets</b>					
Cash on hand and at bank	12	2,767	2,767	2,171	2,171
Receivables - Goods and Services	13	325	325	310	310
Accrued revenue		33	33	23	23
Total Financial Assets		3,125	3,125	2,505	2,505
<b>Financial Liabilities (Recognised)</b>					
Loan Payable	19	2,712	2,712	-	-
Creditors	21	728	728	646	646
Total Financial Liabilities (Recognised)		3,440	3,440	646	646

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## GLOSSARY

3SCWC – Third Science Centre World Congress
AIS – Australian Institute of Sport
ANU – Australian National University
ASF – Australian Science Festival
ASTC – Association of Science and Technology Centres
ASTEN – Australasian Science and Technology Exhibitors' Network
ATP – Australian Technology Park
AWOS – Amazing World of Science
CPAS – Centre for Public Awareness of Science
CTEC – Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation
EEO – Equal Employment Opportunity
ICEE – International Committee of Exhibition Exchange
ICOM – International Council of Museums
ID – Industrial Democracy
NAME – Network of Australian Museum Exhibitors
NIG – National Institutions Group
OH&S – Occupational Health and Safety
SHFA – Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority
SMEC – Science Maths Education Centre
STEP – Science and Technology Education for Progress
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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