# Museum Victoria Policy Statement

# Collection Access, Loans and Use Policy

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| Policy Register Number | DOC/16/7827 |
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| Responsibility | Director, Collections, Research and Exhibitions |
| Review Cycle | Five-yearly |

## 1 Policy Objective/Intent

The *Museums Act 1983* states that it is the function of the Board:

(b) to develop and maintain the State collections of natural sciences, indigenous culture, social history and science and technology

(c) to exhibit material from those collections for the purposes of education and entertainment

(d) to promote use of those collections for scientific research

(e) to promote the use of the Museum's resources for education in Victoria

(f) to research, present and promote issues of public relevance and benefit in the following fields-

(i) the origins, development and diversity of cultures in Australia and adjacent lands

(ii) the natural environment

(iii) science and technology and their applications to the development of society

[Section 23 (b-f)]

This policy sets a framework for:

* providing access to and use of Collection items
* lending and borrowing collection items
* Sampling and Destructive testing of collection items
* managing risk in providing access to and use of collection items and
* ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and conventions.

## 2 Policy Statement

Museum Victoria is responsible for the development, care and preservation of Victoria’s State collections. Both national and international in focus, the collections include some of the most significant Australian and Pacific Indigenous material culture in the world, extensive natural science material with a particular strength in south-eastern Australia and surrounding waters, and a unique collection representing Victoria’s historical and technological developments.

Museum Victoria encourages and facilitates access to and sharing of the Collections for public benefit and understanding. It also borrows items from other museums, institutions and individuals for similar purposes. It is committed to evaluating and considering ethical and legal risks for collection items that it acquires and borrows or lends for exhibition or research.

## 3 Key Policy Principles

## General Principles

Museum Victoria:

3.1 willingly and fully promotes and enables public access to and use of the collections, for public good, in balance with preservation, legal, ethical and other professional requirements, and to the extent that available resources permit.

3.2 is a key partner in a network that shares an internationally distributed collection and participates willingly and fully in national and international scientific and cultural research, exhibition and lending programs.

3.3 respects and acknowledges that cultural and community sensitivities and protocols may apply to Indigenous Cultural Heritage and its use, and will consult and collaborate with Traditional Owners, or their authorised representatives, as outlined in the Indigenous Cultural Heritage Policy.

3.4 employs a recommendation and approval process for loans based on the *ethical and legal risk rating* (regardless of the associated costs or financial value of the proposed loan), as described in the Provenance and Due Diligence Worksheet. Low risk items may be approved by curators and/or collection managers and/or exhibition managers as part of their regular responsibilities. Proposed loans identified as medium risk also require recommendation by the relevant Department Head, for approval by the Director, Collections Research and Exhibitions. Proposed loans identified as high risk also require recommendation by the Chief Executive Officer, for approval by the Museums Board of Victoria. See Section 8: Examples of high-risk categories of collection items.

3.5 will retain all documents and administrative records relating to provenance checks and loan agreements and management of borrowed items in accordance with the Information and Records Policy.

## Principles of Access and Use

Museum Victoria:

3.6 distinguishes six main categories of external users of the collections to which it may give priority access (other than access through the Museum’s public programs), as follows:

(a) the source community group, depositor or donor (Museum Victoria applies specific, appropriate community cultural protocols for access to Ancestral Remains and Secret-Sacred items)

(b) bona fide researchers via research institutions

(c) special interest groups

(d) education, cultural or arts entities

(e) media and promotional entities

(f) commercial entities.

Museum Victoria recognises these users may request access for a range of commercial and non-commercial uses.

Museum Victoria also recognises those with informal personal interests in the collections; however, in the event where priority for collection access needs to be determined due to limited resources, the users identified above will be given priority over those with informal personal interests.

In the case of competing requests for access to the same collection items, Museum Victoria will resolve precedence of access on a case-by-case basis.

3.7 determines the type and level of external access according to the significance/and or cultural sensitivity of collection items, their preservation status and needs, and whether access is required to the collection items themselves or the information they contain, and/or the associated data.

3.8 reserves the right to decline external requests for access to the collections where:

* + the request contravenes relevant national and international legislation and conventions
	+ the request will bring Museum Victoria or other rights’ holders into disrepute, or is contrary to the values of Museum Victoria
	+ cultural and community sensitivities and interests cannot be satisfied
	+ security and safety issues cannot be adequately addressed
	+ preservation issues cannot be adequately addressed
	+ the request is considered unreasonable (for example, regarding scale, timing or resourcing implications of request)
	+ the applicant cannot demonstrate sufficient capacity and/or expertise to undertake the proposed research
	+ there are insufficient resources to appropriately service the request
	+ the collection items or associated data are in any way embargoed, confidential or private, or where there is a particular sensitivity regarding intellectual property, environmental conservation imperatives, and/or cultural considerations.

Museum Victoria will fully document decisions for requests for access. People requesting access may seek reconsideration of decisions through the Director, Collections, Research and Exhibitions.

3.9 in some instances, places special conditions and fees on access to and use of the collections and associated information.

3.10 by agreement, may undertake research on the collections on behalf of users on a fee-for-service basis, where the user is unable to undertake their own research, and where Museum Victoria’s resources allow.

3.11 makes all reasonable efforts to supply users of the collections with accurate identification of collection items and associated data.

3.12 activates certain collection items for use in exhibitions and other public programs, in order to best realise their public value. In carrying out these tasks, Museum Victoria will:

* + only activate those collection items where there is deemed exhibition, historical, scientific or cultural value in activation
	+ undertake the action with advice from conservation staff about the best methodologies to preserve the integrity of the collection items and
	+ thoroughly document the actions for future uses and users of the collections.

3.13 ensures that all biological items are collected within ethical, humane and legal frameworks, including adherence to the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*, the associated *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2008*, Animal Ethics Policy, Scientific Code of Conduct and Standard Operating Procedures for Animal Handling and Collection.

## Principles of Lending and Borrowing

Museum Victoria:

3.14 lends collection items to legally-constituted entities only; it will not lend collection items to individuals.

3.15 declines requests to borrow collection items where the material is unavailable for loan, and/or under the circumstances outlined in other principles in this policy that require requests for access to be denied.

3.16 fully documents decisions for requests for loan. People requesting loans may seek reconsideration of decisions through the Director, Collections, Research and Exhibitions.

3.17 in the event of competing internal collection access needs and external loan requests, protects the interests of its staff, students, and associates for priority access to the State collections and associated data, providing they can demonstrate they are part of an active research project/program and are publishing on these collections.

3.18 undertakes and documents Due Diligence research to verify the provenance, ethical and legal acquisition and authenticity of items considered for loan, as both a borrower and a lender. This may involve Publication of items proposed for loan and appropriate consultation with the relevant source community group, depositor or donor.

3.19 only lends to or borrows collection items from overseas entities in compliance with requirements in respect of Class A and Class B Australian protected objects as prescribed in the *Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1986*.

3.20 checks international databases and registers of stolen items and will not borrow or lend an item if it suspects that the item was stolen, illegally exported or imported.

3.21 lends collection items where it is satisfied that the borrower can appropriately safeguard the material and where the items do not present an unreasonable risk to the health and safety of personnel in borrowing organisations or to the public. Museum Victoria will convey information about hazardous substances in collection items and make handling and display recommendations to borrowers.

3.22 requires at least six months between receipt of a formal written loan request for collection items for exhibitions and the date by which the collection items are required.

3.23 expects requests to borrow collection items for research purposes to be submitted in a timely manner. Timeframes will be negotiated with the borrowers.

3.24 as a lender and borrower, outlines the obligations, responsibilities and rights of both parties in a legal agreement supporting each loan prior to the dispatch of collection items to the borrower.

3.25 lends or borrows collection items for specified purposes only and for fixed, specified periods of time. Museum Victoria will not lend or borrow collection items for indefinite periods of time.

3.26 subjects requests for the renewal of loans to the same processes applied to new loan requests.

3.27 lends collection items for exhibition to Aboriginal cultural organisations and collecting and exhibiting institutions in Victoria free-of-charge, with the exception of lender’s insurance and freight costs and where Museum Victoria’s available resources permit. Museum Victoria may seek to recover costs by agreement where there are exceptional lending costs.

3.28 with the exception of borrowers outlined in Principle 3.26, ensures borrowers of collection items for exhibition assume responsibility for all cash and in-kind costs incurred in administering, preparing, conserving, insuring, packing, transporting, couriering, storing, handling and displaying collection items, including the inspection by Museum Victoria staff of borrowing venues and collection items on loan.

3.29 may assume responsibility for costs associated with preparing and issuing research loans, on the basis that Museum Victoria is a key partner in an international research network, and collection material is customarily lent on a quid pro quo basis and the borrower returns additional collection data to Museum Victoria.

3.30 reserves the right to recall collection items on loan, prior to the expiration of the loan agreement, if it has a concern that contractual arrangements have been breached.

3.31 will commit to borrow an item only if it is satisfied that:

* + the lender is reputable
	+ the entity offering the item for loan has legal title or has the legal authority to lend it
	+ there are no outstanding or current third-party claims on the item
	+ all relevant collection and/or export licences and/or permits have been or will be obtained
	+ the item has not been illegally exported from country of origin or any intermediary country
	+ there is no suspicion that the item was obtained through unauthorised or unscientific collecting, including excavation, destruction or defacing of ancient monuments, historic places or buildings, or theft from individual museums or other repositories or
	+ the item can be borrowed without contravening national or international convention, treaties and laws which control the movement of cultural and natural heritage.

## Principles of Scientific Research Lending and Use

Museum Victoria:

3.32 will endeavour to conform to best current and emerging practices regarding the *Nagoya Protocol 2014*.

3.33 will not lend biological items collected after 28 October 2014 under permit from other Nagoya Protocol signatory and/or source nations to a third party without a benefit-sharing agreement between the signatory and/or source nation and the third party.

3.34 will only borrow biological items collected after 28 October 2014, where it is satisfied they have been acquired under appropriate permits and conditions from a relevant government authority as designated through the *Nagoya Protocol 2014*.

3.35 reserves the right to embargo external release of items where those items have been collected exclusively for specific Museum Victoria research projects. Unless otherwise stipulated in collecting permits, items can be embargoed for a period of seven years from their time of collection. After expiration of the embargo period, Museum Victoria will provide clear evidence that staff and/or other interested researchers are continuing active research on these specimens, in order to decline external loan requests.

3.36 only permits testing of collection items for research purposes, where:

* + the items in question or parts thereof are considered to be appropriate for sampling
	+ the nature of the requirement is specified
	+ it is satisfied that sampling is the most appropriate method of obtaining the data required
	+ it is satisfied that the applicant has the appropriate expertise and methodologies to undertake the sampling
	+ it is satisfied that the sampling meets cultural and community sensitivities and interests and legislative requirements
	+ the application is from a bona fide researcher or
	+ it is satisfied that the borrower will make available resulting data with the appropriate recording body (e.g. non-human DNA sequences with GenBank).

3.37 permits sampling and not full destructive testing of scientific Holotype specimens only in exceptional circumstances, and only where such testing will not significantly compromise the integrity of the specimen.

3.38 may allow sampling and not full destructive testing of other scientific Type specimens after consideration of the research value of the action and only when it is satisfied that all other avenues of obtaining alternative material have been exhausted.

## Principles of Consultation

Museum Victoria:

3.39 where relevant, will meet the consultation, publication and claims handling requirements in accordance with the *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Act 2013 and Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Regulation 2014*.

3.40 will undertake consultation, on an individual item level, for loans from overseas prior to import into Australia on each borrowing occasion of the item.

3.41 will, where the item is, or incorporates, Indigenous cultural or intellectual property, consult and collaborate with the relevant Traditional Owners, or their authorised representatives, to provide information about the item and the context of the loan prior to finalisation of the loan agreement or contract. This will be done in accordance with the Indigenous Cultural Heritage Policy.

3.42 will assess whether an item proposed for loan from overseas relates to a particular Australian individual, group or community, considering the following factors:

* + the item is of historical significance to a particular person, group, event, place or activity, for example it is associated with an important historical event or the ownership changed hands during a time of conflict
	+ there are specific family associations with the item
	+ the item has social or spiritual significance to specific communities in Australia and there is a demonstrated contemporary attachment between the item and the community
	+ the item embodies beliefs, ideas, customs, traditions, practices or stories that are important for a particular community in Australia or
	+ and will, where a relationship is established, undertake appropriate and respectful consultation with Australian individuals, family groups or communities and state or territory archives.

3.43 will undertake consultation that is respectful and meaningful to the individual, group or body being consulted.

3.44 will ensure that adequate notice and time is provided to the individual, group or body being consulted to comment and for follow up as required.

3.45 will appropriately investigate concerns raised during consultation as outlined in the Collections Provenance and Legal Title Claims and Enquiries Procedure.

3.46 may consult with relevant experts to determine whether the loan should proceed, if the origin of an item or the relevant community for an item is unknown.

3.47 acknowledges that in some situations it may be difficult or impossible to identify or contact appropriate or active community groups, despite best and repeated efforts, the risk of which it will consider to proceed with the loan in accordance with the Risk Management Policy.

3.48 will, in providing and gathering information during the consultation process, ensure that there is a common understanding of the issues and that there are appropriate opportunities for input and the reflection of community views.

3.49 will provide appropriate acknowledgement and recognition to the information provided in the community consultation process in exhibition material such as catalogues and in media coverage.

3.50 where relevant, will consult with bodies responsible for state or territory archives to ensure that there is an avenue for the identification of any issues or concerns regarding items that may be state records which have left the custody of the state.

3.51 where relevant, will determine which state archival bodies to consult and ensure relevant information is considered as part of the decision process for proceeding with a loan.

3.52 will promptly investigate any enquiry or claim about an item subsequent to it having been borrowed or lent in accordance with the Collections Provenance and Legal Title Claims and Enquiries Procedure.

## Principles for Opting out of the *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Act 2013*

When borrowing items from overseas, Museum Victoria:

3.53 recognises that in some situations neither it nor the lender may consider the risk of legal action in respect of the item to be very high, in particular where Museum Victoria is borrowing an item directly from its creator.

3.54 will only Opt out of the statutory protections if the lender consents to this (including by acknowledging in a written loan agreement that the Museum may opt out of the statutory protections in respect of the item).

3.55 will give written notice of their intention to opt out of protection to the Minister for the Arts or the Minister’s delegate four weeks prior to importation of the item into Australia.

## Principles of Custodianship

Museum Victoria

3.56 will accept temporary custody and control of Australian items without acquiring legal title only:

* + for items transferred as a consequence of statutory requirements and where state heritage legislation dictates that an institution is a state repository for archaeological, cultural and scientific material or
	+ at the request of traditional owners or their representatives.

3.57 will accept temporary custody and control for short-term safekeeping of foreign items without acquiring legal title only:

* + for items transferred as an ‘Emergency loan’ for safekeeping where it is not safe in its own country during times of conflict or social upheaval or
	+ with the authority and agreement of the international community such as UNESCO, ICOM or the government of the country from which the item has been removed.

## Principles of Compliance with Policy

Museum Victoria:

3.58 will make staff aware of all relevant policies and procedures to which it requires adherence.

3.59 may implement disciplinary action for failure of any staff member to comply with relevant policies and procedures in accordance with the Discipline and Unsatisfactory Work Performance Policy.

## 4 Key Definitions

4.1 ‘Access’ is viewing and using the collections via the following means: exhibitions, including internally-developed and outward-travelling; online; mobile applications; loans and access for research; loans for exhibition; publications; educational and community programs; provision of access to collection stores and associated facilities, managed by Museum staff; access via fee-for-service activities and commercial sales.

4.2 ‘Acquisition’ is to formally acquire an item and its legal title into the State collections. It refers to the approval process and associated documentation trail by which collection items are obtained. Acquisition may be by donation, bequest, purchase, field collecting, or transfer of assets from other Commonwealth agencies.

4.3 ‘Ancestral Remains’ are human remains that demonstrably have a shared group identity with an existing Indigenous peoples. Ancestral remains does not include an object made from human hair or from any other bodily material that is not readily recognisable as being bodily material.

4.4 ‘Bona fide researcher’ is a researcher who can provide evidence of their formal research endeavours under the auspices of a recognised and legally-constituted research body.

4.5 ‘Collections’ – see State collections.

4.6 ‘Destructive testing’ is any analysis which will result in whole or part destruction of the collection item (e.g. tissue samples used in DNA studies) or in which the specimen is permanently altered, for example, sectioning of a tooth or rock.

4.7 ‘Documentation’ refers to all documents and administrative records relating to collections and items and their management that provide evidence of a transaction, action, decision or event relating to the Administrative and Core Functions of Museum Victoria, regardless of format.

4.8 ‘Due diligence’ is a term used to describe the steps involved in conducting a comprehensive assessment of an item in order to verify and document its ownership information and provenance, including identification of any gaps and uncertainties. Due diligence is undertaken before deciding on a course of action—for example the decision to acquire, deaccession or lend the item.

4.9 ‘Emergency loan’ refers to occasions when an Australian institution may hold foreign cultural material as an ‘emergency loan’ for safekeeping where it is not safe in its own country. For example, where a country is experiencing conflict, social upheaval or has been affected by a natural disaster a collection may be moved to an Australian institution for short-term safekeeping. This should only take place with the authority and/ or agreement of the international community, for example, UNESCO, ICOM or the government of the country from which the object has been removed. These activities may be governed by the principles of the Hague Convention. In holding foreign cultural material, institutions must not use it for commercial use. They should properly preserve the material, and when safe to do so must return it to the country from which it was removed.

4.10 ‘Holotype specimen’ is a single, original and unique collection item of an organism, known to have been used when the species (or lower-ranked taxon) was formally described.

4.11 ‘Indigenous Cultural Heritage’, for Museum Victoria purposes, includes artefacts, images, archives, traditional knowledge, language and forms of cultural expression in the cultural and scientific collections that form elements of the State collections and collections on loan to the Museum.

4.12 ‘Item’ is any item officially lodged in the collections, including specimens and voucher specimens, three-dimensional items, images, sound, documents, and digital formats.

4.13 ‘Legal title’ is the right to ownership of property in the country concerned. In certain countries this may be a conferred right and insufficient to meet the requirements of a due diligence research.

4.14 ‘Loan’, whether inward or outward, is the temporary physical transfer of items to or from Museum Victoria for research, exhibition or identification purposes. There is no transfer of ownership or legal title.

4.15 ‘Opt out’ may be considered for a particular item or an entire exhibition. This can be used if an approved borrowing institution is borrowing an item directly from the artist, and the institution and the lender consider the risk of a claim is very unlikely.

4.16 ‘Provenance’ is the full history and chain of ownership of an item from the time of its creation or discovery through to the present day, from which authenticity and legal ownership is determined.

4.17 ‘Publication (or Publish)’ is the publication of descriptive and provenance information to enable items to be identified in a freely accessible location on Museum Victoria’s website.

4.18 ‘Risk management’ is the coordinated program of activities and processes that ensures the appropriate consideration and mitigation of risk.

4.19 ‘Sampling’ is the removal of a portion of a collection item for analytical purposes. Sampling will result in minor modification of the collection item.

4.20 ‘Secret-Sacred Items’ are restricted ceremonial items of contemporary religious and ceremonial significance to Indigenous peoples.

4.21 ‘Staff’ are people whose place of work is at the Museum, whether directly employed by the Museum itself, other public agencies or the private sector. For the purposes of this policy, this term also applies to volunteers, Honorary Associates, Research Associates, Curators Emeritus, Fellows and the members of the Museums Board of Victoria.

4.22 ‘State collections’ are the collections of items formally acquired under the *Museums Act 1983* (Vic.) Section 26 (1), including specimens, voucher specimens, three-dimensional material, images, moving images, sound, documents, and digital formats, along with their associated data. The State collections may include both registered and unregistered items.

4.23 ‘Traditional Owners’ are the people and their authorised representatives entitled by custom and tradition to be recognised as the rightful owners.

4.24 ‘Type specimen’ is a zoological, geological or palaeontological specimen used as the basis for the scientific description of a new taxon, to which the scientific name of a particular that organism is formally attached.

4.25 ‘Voucher specimen’ is any specimen that serves as a basis of study and is retained as a reference as part of a collection.

## 5 Related Policies

* Archives Policy
* Collection Care and Preservation Policy
* Collection Deaccession Policy
* Collection Development Policy
* Collection Provenance and Legal Title Enquiries and Claims Policy
* Discipline and Unsatisfactory Work Performance Policy
* Firearms Policy
* Fraud Control Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Information and Records Management Policy
* Privacy Policy
* Repatriation of Indigenous Cultural Property Policy
* Research Policy
* Risk Management Policy

## 6 Associated Documents, Guidelines and Procedures

## 6.1 Museum Victoria Documents

* All memoranda of understanding between Museum Victoria and other research institutions (universities, government departments)
* Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference 2015
* Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2010
* Collection Management Procedures (various)
* Collection Plans 2013–18
* Collection Strategy 2014–19
* Collection Strategy Action Plan 2014–19
* Community Engagement Framework 2009
* Community Engagement Handbook 2014
* Hazardous Substances in Collections Procedure
* Inward and Outward Loans Procedure 2016
* Managing Access to Collection Stores Procedure 2016
* Museum Victoria Service Charter
* Overview for Working Safely with Collections Containing Hazardous Substances (and relevant Safe Handling Procedure)
* Partners in Reconciliation Statement 2004
* Procedures and Protocols for Managing and Providing Research Access to the State Collections
* Research Strategy 2012–17
* Strategic Plan 2013–18

## 6.2 External Documents

* Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material, Commonwealth of Australia, 2014
* Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia, 2007
* Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 2004
* Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (Amendment), 1979
* Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees No. 1 – 2007
* Code of Ethics for Museums, International Council of Museums (ICOM), 2013
* Code of Ethics, Museums Australia, 1999
* Continuing Cultures Ongoing Responsibilities: Principles and guidelines for Australian museums working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, Museums Australia, 2005
* Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (Amendment), 1979
* Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, United Nations, 1970
* Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, United Nations, 2007

## 7 Legislation

* *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*
* *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic.)
* *Antarctic Marine Living Resources Conservation Act 1981*
* *Arts Institutions (Amendments) Act 1996* (Vic.)
* Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes
* *Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989*
* *Copyright Act 1968*
* *Customs Act 1901*
* *Dangerous Goods (Amendment) Act 2000*
* *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* (Vic.)
* *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
* *Excise Act 1901*
* *Firearms Act 1996* (Vic.)
* *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic.)
* *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* (Vic.)
* *Heritage (Amendment) Act 1997* (Vic.)
* *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*
* *Human Tissue Act 1982*
* *Museums Act 1983* (Vic.)
* Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, United Nations, adopted 2010 and entered into force in 2014 (supplementary agreement to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity)
* *Native Title Act 1993*
* *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic.)
* *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* (Vic.)
* *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic.)
* *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Act 2013*
* *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Regulation 2014*
* *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986*
* *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic.)
* *Quarantine Act 1908*
* *Reference Areas Act 1978* (Vic.)
* *Western Australian Museum Act 1969* (WA) (Meteorites)
* *Wildlife Protection (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1982*
1. **Examples of High-Risk Categories of Collection Items**

The Museum pays particular attention to the associated provenance information when acquiring, deaccessioning, lending, borrowing or exhibiting (in museums or online) categories of collection items it deems to be high risk. Some item categories on this list are more likely to have been traded illegally at some point in their past. Other categories are not necessarily more likely to have been traded illegally but the consequences to the Museum if they were would be more severe (e.g. relationship and reputational damage). Outlined below are some of the main examples of categories of items that would be deemed to be high risk:

All

* items from countries or regions with similar items on ICOM’s Red Lists (see http://icom.museum/programmes/fighting-illicit-traffic/red-list/)
* items listed as Class A on the Australian Government’s Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Schedule (see http://arts.gov.au/movable/export/list)
* items originating from conflict zones or traded/seized during periods of conflict, historic or current (e.g. Europe 1933–45, Syria 2015–16)
* items valued at or above $500,000
* items in which there is a very strong and active (licit or illicit) international trade and market (e.g. International artworks, rhinoceros horn)
* items that are gazetted material from overseas countries, where countries are not signatory to Conventions
* human remains in any form, including modified human remains

Natural

* endangered species as identified by the CITES convention
* items from countries or regions where such items are considered the property of the state, or where they are subject to export bans or other strict export legislation (e.g. protected fossils, meteorites and biological material)
* items from countries or regions with similar items on lists of stolen items appearing on relevant disciplinary international discussion lists (e.g. http://www.mineral-forum.com/message-board)

Cultural

* Indigenous items where there is a known, deceased maker and descendants can be identified
* Secret-Sacred Items and Sensitive Items
* mourning items, Grave Goods, or items associated with burial grounds or ceremonial grounds
* exceedingly rare or unique items or items which have special cultural or historical sensitivities
* items including material from endangered species as identified by the CITES convention (e.g. ivory)

It is possible further categories of items may warrant inclusion in this list over the time-frame of this policy. Staff undertake to keep abreast of developments in their relevant areas of specialisation.