



Department of Planning and Community Development

20 AUG 2007

1 Spring Street
Melbourne Victoria.3000
GPO Box 2392
Melbourne Vic 3001
Telephone: (03) 9208 3333
Facsimile: (03) 9208 3680

OPEN LETTER TO HERITAGE ADVISORS – CONTINGENCY PLANS CONTAINED IN CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Where there is no Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for an area, the Secretary of the department has the role of evaluating Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP) for that area. In evaluating these CHMPs Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) has identified that, in the absence of a registered Aboriginal party (RAP) for an area, some contingency plans refer to roles that are to be fulfilled by other existing Aboriginal organisations.

AAV has become concerned that contingency plans in CHMPs approved by the Secretary could provide a *future* role for an Aboriginal organisation, where that organisation may not be approved by the Aboriginal Heritage Council as the RAP for the area.

In response to this, AAV has developed a policy in relation to contingency plans in CHMPs that the Secretary receives for evaluation.

- As a general rule, CHMPs contingency plans should not include future actions or roles for Aboriginal organisations other than RAPs.
- If required (where there is no RAP), a contingency plan should allow for a cultural heritage advisor to be engaged to assist in facilitating an appropriate outcome for the contingency plan. (This should only apply to those contingency plans that do not already involve a cultural heritage advisor)
- CHMPs requiring approval by the Secretary may not be approved if they include actions or roles for representatives of Aboriginal organisations other than RAPs.

In exceptional circumstances, the specific contingency plan should be discussed with AAV prior to the lodgement of the CHMP for the Secretary's approval.

It is important to note that this relates only to contingency plans contained in CHMPs, and does not affect any arrangements you (or your sponsor) may have in place for the preparation of a CHMP.

Further information on Aboriginal cultural heritage issues in Victoria can be obtained at AAV's web site (www1.dvc.vic.gov.au/aav). Any enquiries about this matter should be addressed to Mr Jamin Moon, Senior Heritage Policy Officer on (telephone) 03 9208 3281.

Yours faithfully

IAN HAMM
Deputy Director
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria