



THE HON BEN MORTON MP
ASSISTANT MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Reference: MS19-002328

The Hon Nick Minchin AO
Chair
Old Parliament House Board
PO Box 3934
MANUKA ACT 2603



Dear ~~Mr~~ Minchin, *Nick*

It is common for Ministers to provide Statements of Expectations to agencies within their portfolio setting out objectives and priorities. In line with this standard practice, I write to outline my expectations for the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at Old Parliament House (OPH) for the remainder of 2019-20 and 2020-21.

We live in a country and democracy that should fill every Australian with pride. MoAD plays an essential and critical role in educating and inspiring Australians about the strength of our democracy and importantly how individuals can play a more active part in it.

My expectation is that MoAD educate, inspire and engage.

There is a lot said and claimed about declining trust in our democracy. MoAD's central role in this debate should be to educate and promote the strength of our democracy and to drive engagement in it. MoAD should challenge perceptions that lead to disaffection with and alienation from, and encourage greater involvement and empowerment of individuals within our democratic system. Greater involvement in our democracy will further strengthen it.

There are many ways individuals can be more active in our democracy: for example becoming a more informed voter who better understands our electoral system; joining a political party or supporting local candidates for election; joining the Public Service; or by becoming a journalist holding politicians and Government to account. Visitors to MoAD should leave with a very clear understanding of how they can further engage in our democracy and be encouraged to do so.

I expect that MoAD will continue to perform its core function of preserving and presenting Old Parliament House and its collections, and promoting the successes and strengths of Australia's democratic heritage in doing so, I ask that MoAD focus on the following strategic priorities:

- Facilitating an engaging, educational and interactive visitor experience that encourages Australians to identify with their national story, illustrates Australia's remarkable Westminster democratic heritage and builds confidence and pride in our political system.

- Improving visitors' understanding of Australia's democratic system, leaving visitors educated and inspired about their agency in Australia's political system and how they can play a more active part in it.

In pursuit of these strategic priorities, I expect MoAD to:

- Develop visitors' understanding of the role that voters as individuals have and continue to play in Australia's democratic system. Australia's voting system has led the world and is a story that should be told further. MoAD should work with the AEC to facilitate the extension of their highly successful National Electoral Education Centre to offer a permanent walk up exhibition and extension of their schools program to other groups.
- Develop visitors' understanding of the role that political parties have and continue to play in Australia's democratic history and system. Our political parties have played an essential role in the strength and stability of our democracy. The role they play and the positive role that individuals can play in them should inspire visitors to get involved. Active participation in political parties should be encouraged, but to do so visitors need to understand parties' histories, values and achievements. MoAD should develop plans to ensure that the stories of individual political parties feature at MOAD as well as the contribution and role of independents in our parliaments.
- Develop visitors' understanding of the role that the Australian Public Service has and continues to play in Australia's democratic history and system. No democracy can function without a capable, competent and impartial Public Service. Service to the Australian people through the Australian Public Service is one key way that individuals can contribute to our democracy. MoAD should, by working with organisations such as the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) and the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), develop plans to tell the story of the Australian Public Service and how individuals can pursue their career within the Public Service.
- Enhance visitors' understanding of the importance of a free press and of journalism's role in Australia's democratic history and system. Journalists play an essential role in any democracy and the nature of their role historically and in a rapidly changing media landscape is worthy of greater focus.
- Share the stories, motivations and visions of those serving our democracy in different ways to inspire others to follow. This should encompass the diverse background, motivations and aspirations of those who serve in the Federal Parliament.
- Mark significant events and anniversaries in our democracy, including those pertaining to the parliament and Old Parliament House such as significant milestones for political parties and the opening of the old and new Parliament Houses.
- Mark significant anniversaries of general elections and referendums through temporary exhibitions, publications, lectures, debates and other events. Such activity should focus not only on the people, issues and results but also on the communications and campaigning tools used at that time.

In order to implement the above, I expect MoAD to:

- Collaborate with civics-focused national institutions to present a shared and consistent narrative of Australian democracy.

- Continue to increase own-source revenue and to further explore private sector support.
- Explore and prioritise the leasing of commercial and office areas to the Department of Parliamentary Services so that the Old Parliament House building can return to actively servicing and supporting our parliament.
- Explore and prioritise the leasing of commercial, office and learning areas with the Australian Public Service Commission for the purpose of showcasing the role the public service play in our democracy as part of their professional development programs.
- Continue to identify and implement operational efficiencies in line with the expectation that all departments and agencies assist the Government in its effective management of the Budget. This should include considering ways further operational partnerships can be developed with the Department of Parliamentary Services and other agencies.
- Continue to be a leader in preventive conservation approaches to heritage management.

As my expectation is that MoAD educate, inspire and engage, your success will be measured by the number of visitors leaving your institution having learned about the achievements and strength of our democracy and with a clear understanding of how they can participate further in a variety of ways.

I will be giving further consideration to the recommendations of the National Capital and External Territories Committee report on the inquiry into Canberra's national institutions '*Telling Australia's story - and why it's important*' and the administrative and operational issues and opportunities raised.

As MoAD continues to actively progress work across many of these areas, I encourage you and your staff to work cooperatively with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in achieving MoAD's stated purpose and objectives. I would be pleased to meet with you and your board to discuss my expectations further.

Consistent with current practice and good corporate governance principles, I expect this Statement of Expectations and MoAD's corresponding Statement of Intent to be made available on your website.

I look forward to working with the OPH Board and MoAD's Executive Team to continue to strengthen and encourage public engagement with Australia's democratic history.

Yours sincerely



BEN MORTON

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