

## Dr Don McMichael's testimony

### For outstanding individual achievement

Dr Don McMichael is an outstanding example of individual achievement in international relations, undertaking sustained international work over a long period. He has consistently shown an international awareness and commitment in the many significant roles he has held.

Dr McMichael started his career as an Assistant Curator at the Australian Museum, then received a Fulbright Travelling Scholarship to undertake a PhD at Harvard University in 1953-55. On his return he became Curator of Molluscs, then Deputy Director, of the Australian Museum. Following directorships of the Australian Conservation Foundation and National Parks & Wildlife Service, NSW, he became the first Secretary of the Department of Environment under Minister Moss Cass in the first Whitlam Government; later he was appointed Secretary, Department of Home Affairs and Environment; and in 1981 he received a CBE for his service to the public. He then served as first Director of the National Museum of Australia from 1984 to 1989, becoming an ardent and passionate advocate for the museum.

Dr McMichael has served in a range of other significant roles, including Chair of the Commonwealth Government's Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme Committee; Senior Consultant to the Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme; Chair of the Commonwealth Biological Diversity Advisory Committee; member of the inaugural ACT Heritage Council; Chair of the Heritage Objects Standing Committee of the Council; Chair of the University Museums and Collections Review Committee; Publications Officer for Museums Australia; and Deputy Chair, Land and Planning Appeals Board. He has also been very active in international affairs involving the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the World Wildlife Fund.

Dr McMichael's involvement with ICOM extends from the time Australia was first invited to an international meeting. In 1987 he was elected Chair of the ICOM Australia National Committee, and in 1992-95 served on the (international) Executive Council of ICOM. In the early 1990s, Dr McMichael, Dr Des Griffin, Ms Bernice Murphy and others formed the idea of Australia hosting the triennial ICOM conference, and made a successful bid to the ICOM Executive Council. Dr McMichael spearheaded the formation of a company to manage ICOM 98 in Melbourne with Senator John Button as chair; served as Director and Secretary of the ICOM 98 Company; and worked in a highly effective team to guide the whole project through to a successful conclusion - intellectually, organizationally and

financially. In 2001 he attended the 98th session of the ICOM Executive Council, in Barcelona, Spain, as an observer; and in 2004 was part of the ICOM Working Group on Statutes. He has recently concluded a six-year term as Membership Secretary, and also recently served as Treasurer, of ICOM Australia. Dr McMichael has developed an exceptional knowledge of ICOM internationally and nationally - and has continued to remain well connected internationally. The latter continues to be of great benefit to the Australian museum sector.

Dr McMichael has worked hard over many years to ensure Australia was actively part of the international museum community and has been represented in key discussions and decision-making. He has also gracefully supported the coming generation by passing on his knowledge and ensuring others have access to development opportunities.