Formation
The NSC-ICH was established following AI Executive Committee (AIEC) approval in May 2014. An inaugural meeting of the new NSC occurred on 19 October 2014 in Melbourne, appointing a coordinating committee. The primary objectives of the NSC were to consider, explore and develop recommendations to guide an AI approach, consistent with the Burra Charter, on 'intangible cultural heritage'. The NSC’s Terms of Reference are on the About Us page of our website. (http://australia.icomos.org/get-involved/national-scientific-committees/nsc-intangible-cultural-heritage/).

That first meeting confirmed and developed a forward programme which included developing an outline for an AI ICH Practice Note and a framework for an AI ICH Toolkit. An ICH Toolkit Working Group was established. Strategies were also considered on how to make our NSC communication’s effective.

Membership
The current Coordinating Group (CG) comprises Co-convenors Richard Morrison (ACT) and Chris Johnston (Vic), Communications Natalia Antiqueira (Vic) appointed in May 2019 (following the resignation of Abi Belfrage (Vic) in October 2018 and the resignation of Lucy De Kretser (Vic) in the same month), Membership Lisa Sturis (WA), and Lance Syme (NSW).

Nominations for new Coordinating group members have been invited and the make-up the Coordinating Group for 2020 onwards will be announced at our annual meeting.

Presently, membership comprises 50 members and 2 affiliates, with 180 subscribers to our newsletter. The NSC-ICH has 11 members/affiliates who are also on the International Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICICH).

Since the last Annual Meeting in October 2017, 10 new members/affiliates have been accepted into the NSC.

ICH in Practice Note
The AI Practice Note Intangible Cultural Heritage and Place was approved by AIEC in October 2017 and launched by the NSC at our November 2017 ‘Intangible & Invisible’ workshop in Canberra. It sits alongside the other Practice Notes for use by the wider AI membership and heritage community. The NSC has now completed a Background Note (released July 2019) presenting the work behind our Practice Note; its is on the ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage in Practice’ page of our website.

The NSC is currently inviting feedback on the Practice Note through an online survey and workshop as part of the Heritage of the Air Conference.

In August 2018, Richard Morrison (Co-Convenor) delivered advice to the AI EC on an AI strategy in the absence of Australia’s ratification of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
Symposia, workshops and general and annual meetings
These achievements have been capped by being able to mount more than one event every year since the NSC’s establishment – eight events in total - including the Lost or found? Intangible cultural heritage workshop and an ICH paper session, both at the Heritage of the Air Conference.

Our events have been initiated through our Coordinating Group, a small committee of volunteers, in conjunction with other NSC members and

Chris Johnston, one of our Co-convenors, was involved in a ‘knowledge café’ in the Nature Culture session of the ICOMOS GA in Delhi (December 2017), widening an understanding of ICH to all ICOMOS members as core business, and also presented at the Delhi ICICH meeting on our Practice Note.

The successful AICOMOS Suva conference ‘Culture: Conserving it together’ (October 2018) offered a significant opportunity for ICH to feature and to highlight our Practice Note. One conference theme focused on ICH, and Chris Johnston was involved in paper selection and in the final Conference plenary reporting on the ICH theme. Chris also had a key role in the Levuka Workshop on a Pasifika Charter, in which intangible heritage was a key element.

Communications
Our website is a well-designed and informative resource for members and others, and serves as a our information hub: https://australia.icomos.org/get-involved/national-scientific-committees/nsc-intangible-cultural-heritage/

News posts are sent via emails to members and subscribers. There have been numerous posts and (twelve) e-newsletters since our 2017 report, informing members and subscribers of our events/activities, notices, resources, publications, and other ICH news, both domestic and international.

Papers and/or reports from our various events are added to on our website. A flyer on the NSC (also on the website) was produced as a means of communicating with national and international colleagues and with potential members.

Finances
The activities of the NSC since establishment have been revenue neutral wherever practicable. However, some key events and activities have been made possible through a combination of self-funding, generous external sponsorship, loans from AI and the creation of a surplus from the joint Port Fairy event with the NSC-CLCR in 2015. These surplus funds currently stand at $2,867.87 having only been drawn upon within the reporting period for costs over income related to our 2017 workshop and annual meeting of $285.22.

We have been greatly assisted by the AI EC continuing to fund our tele- and video-conferences to preparation of our various events and meetings of our coordinating group. These have been critical because of the spread of this group’s members across Australia.

Our 2019 Annual Meeting received sponsorship in-kind from the Heritage of the Air Conference.

Administrative
In April 2018 we began the required three-year review of our Terms of Reference (ToR), under the AI NSC Policy. This resulted in a series of recommendations, some of which related to the guiding NSC Policy. Recently, all but one of these recommendations have been accepted by the AI EC and when this new version of the Policy has been received our ToR will be revised. These positive changes will also have implications for all AI NSCs.

Future activities
In 2020, the NSC will be:
- considering feedback on the ICH Practice Note
- shaping our contributions to GA2020, including a joint activity with ICICH, offering a conference session and a Victorian tour of national landscapes and cultural heritage places for conference delegates, presented jointly with Parks Victoria, and the NSC-CLCR.

Contact the NSC-ICH by email: nsc.ich@gmail.com or through our website