

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon Peter Garrett MP
Australian Minister for the Environment,
Heritage and the Arts



Ms Michelle O'Byrne MP
Minister for Environment, Parks,
Heritage and the Arts

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BOOST FOR WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION OF AUSTRALIAN CONVICT SITES

The Australian Government's nomination of the Australian Convict Sites to the World Heritage List has received a significant boost, with Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett saying today that he has received formal notification the nomination will be assessed this year.

"This is good news as it means Australia's nomination is progressing to the next stage of the process and is now one step closer to a decision," Mr Garrett said.

"The World Heritage Centre has advised that the nomination will be forwarded to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) for evaluation.

"An initial assessment of the nomination will now take place, followed by an ICOMOS mission later in the year to assess the 11 sites included in the serial nomination. It is expected the assessment will be provided to the World Heritage Committee for a final decision in 2010.

"The progress of the nomination reflects the huge amount of work done to date by state and territory governments, property managers and local communities. I congratulate everyone who has been involved.

"The places included in the serial nomination are a tangible record of one of the greatest penal experiments in history—the transportation of more than 166,000 men, women and children to a vast and relatively unknown land," Mr Garrett said.

The Australian Convict Sites are:

- **Tasmania:** Port Arthur Historic Site (Tasman Peninsula), Cascades Female Factory (Hobart), Darlington Probation Station (Maria Island), Coal Mines Historic Site (via Premadegna) and Brickendon–Woolmers Estates (near Longford).
- **New South Wales:** Old Government House and Domain (Parramatta), Hyde Park Barracks (Sydney), Cockatoo Island Convict Site (Sydney) and Old Great North Road (near Wiseman's Ferry).
- **Norfolk Island:** Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area.
- **Western Australia:** Fremantle Prison.

These sites are already included in the National Heritage List and protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The Tasmanian Minister for Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts, Michelle O'Byrne, welcomed the news, saying this is an important step toward international recognition of Australia's convict heritage.

"It is extremely pleasing to reach this milestone and move closer to a prestigious World Heritage listing for our special convict places," Ms O'Byrne said.

"Like those of the other states and territories represented in the nomination, Tasmania's convict journey is a fascinating and very human tale. It is ultimately a tale of survival under extreme conditions and one that is deserving of the world's highest heritage honour."

For more information visit www.heritage.gov.au

Media contact: Contact for Mr Garrett's office, Ben Pratt, 0419 968 734
Contact for Ms O'Byrne's office, Rohan Wade 0417 051 255.