

## 6. Dance company outputs and results

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### 6.1 Introduction

This study focuses on 12 dance companies which have been consistently funded by the Dance Board of the Australia Council in recent years, supplemented by analysis of 13 additional, project-funded, companies.

Alongside the MPAB companies, the consistently-funded companies provide a significant proportion of Australia's professional dance activity.<sup>12</sup> Although most of the companies aim to maintain ensembles, full ensemble working is the exception, primarily for financial reasons, but in some cases for artistic reasons.

Only two of the companies have full-time dedicated marketing positions, and there appears to be a high turnover of general managers—one third having been in post less than a year, and more than a half for less than three years. While time invested in rehearsal and creative development has grown in recent years audiences have declined significantly. Excluding Chunky Move, box office income has declined by 2% for the remaining companies—after allowing for inflation this represents a 'real' decline of 21% over seven years. Investment in production costs has declined by 19% in the last seven years; by 37% when Chunky Move is excluded—and by 56% after allowing for inflation.

The companies achieved a small accumulated surplus over the last six years, but this represents only 1% of consolidated expenditure; several of the companies are in a vulnerable financial position. Given their very limited human and financial resource base it is difficult to see how the recent decline in audience numbers can be reversed without additional investment in the companies' infrastructure and marketing activities, and a sustained approach to audience development which is coordinated with venue-partners and funding agencies.

The dance companies' analysis was extended to a further group of 13 companies which have secured project funding from either the Australia Council or states and territories. These project-based companies represent another significant component of Australia's dance ecology, are highly flexible, and some are especially active as artistic innovators, exploring new dance forms.

Only two of the project-funded dance companies had paid full or part-time employment positions. Seven of the companies were being operated from a home base, although eight of the 13 had been engaged in international touring. The overseas market was seen as essential to maintain viability, given the limited scale of the Australian market.

Interviewees were concerned at an increasing range of non-artistic pressures and demands, and especially on the time and effort that was involved in the process of applying for funding, when there was a low success ratio. These views reflected closely the concerns expressed by the choreographers interviewed.

While all the project-funded companies reported small surpluses (for 2001), the companies are heavily subsidised by free time given by their artistic directors. Interviewees commented on the lack of affordable venues for rehearsal and performance as a significant barrier to realising their work, and on the need for support and advice in marketing and administration.

The degree of discontent expressed and pressure felt by both the project-based companies and the (overlapping) field of independent choreographers raises serious questions over the sustainability of

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<sup>12</sup> The Dance Board has also provided consistent funding to Ausdance National and to the Australian Choreographic Centre (ACC). However, these are not producing dance companies, although active contributors to professional dance activity.

the present situation in Australian dance. While there may continue to be a supply of willing young industry entrants prepared to invest extraordinary effort for very modest returns, if a significant proportion of Australia's more experienced dance talent quits the sector or works largely overseas, there is a danger that the quality of new work in Australia will progressively decline. Conversely, it may take relatively little investment to address the causes of these sectoral pressures.

## **6.2 Companies consistently funded by the Dance Board**

The 12 companies in the 'consistently-funded' sample were:

- Australian Dance Theatre
- Buzz Dance Theatre
- Chunky Move
- Dance Exchange
- Dance North
- Dance Works
- Expressions Dance Company
- Leigh Warren and Dancers (LWD)
- One Extra Dance Company
- Restless Dance Company
- TasDance
- Tracks Inc.

While the companies include a diverse range of practice, including contemporary dance and youth dance, there are no Indigenous dance companies funded by the Dance Board operating at this level<sup>13</sup>.

The inclusion of these 12 companies was partly because collectively they constitute a significant proportion of the dance provision in Australia, alongside the MPAB companies; but also because it was possible to secure consistent financial data (audited accounts) for these companies over a seven-year period from 1996–2002, enabling reliable comparisons to be made and trends to be noted. Artistic and employment data was secured by means of a survey and telephone interview, covering a five-year period from 1997–2001. However, as it was not possible to secure such data from Dance Exchange, the (non-financial) results reported below include 11 of the 12 companies where noted.

### **6.2.1 Profile of sample<sup>14</sup>**

#### **6.2.1.1 Shared characteristics**

All the companies have operated for a minimum of seven years in their current form. The majority have operated more than 10 years. All (with the exception of One Extra who received one annual program grant in the five year period) have received multi-year Key Organisation program grants from the Australia Council during the sample period (1997–2001) and all have operated on a continuous basis.

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<sup>13</sup> The traditional Mornington Island dancers receive triennial funding from the ATSIA Board of the Australia Council

<sup>14</sup> If not stated then figures apply to 2001 sample year

All are professional full-time dance companies with at least 1.5 ‘full time equivalent’ (FTE) permanent positions. All have at least 0.8 FTE artistic director, and 10 of the 12 have at least 0.8 position for general manager or administrator (the exceptions being One Extra and Dance Exchange).

#### **6.2.1.2 Scale**

The companies range in annual turnover from less than \$100,000 to \$1.7m<sup>15</sup> with:

- paid annual audience numbers (2001) ranging from 1006 to 18,303
- numbers of performances ranging from 20 to 193
- FTE permanent staff (non dancers) ranging from 1.5 to 8.5

#### **6.2.1.3 Organisational model**

Seven companies stated that they maintained ensembles: ADT, Buzz, Dance North, Dance Works, Expressions, Leigh Warren & Dancers, TasDance. However, of these seven:

- only one (ADT) maintained year round employment for dancers
- only three provided over 40 weeks p.a (ADT and two in Queensland)
- two provided less than six months employment p.a.(TasDance and Dance Works). It is questionable if the term ‘ensemble’ is appropriate for this operating model.

Of the five non-ensemble companies, three were producing dance companies with a consistent group of dancers but a commitment to a project-style structure—these companies still maintained structures to encourage consistency and allegiance among their preferred dancers. One had varying dancers depending on the communities involved and encouraged change. One focused on production house relationships with varying choreographers, who brought their own creative teams.

#### **6.2.1.4 Physical infrastructure**

Most (with the exception of Restless and One Extra) have access to dedicated rehearsal space, and most have dedicated office space. Only two companies noted severe shortage of suitable space/infrastructure for current level of activity—Restless and Dance Works.

Several of the companies have benefited from substantial recent premises upgrades or provision of new premises. Chunky Move, ADT, Expressions and Tracks have all recently been provided with new premises. Dance Works and Buzz were provided with new premises a few years ago; and Dance North recently completed a long-term program of premises improvements.

More than half noted that whilst they have adequate space, they did not have adequate annual maintenance and assets management budgets.

### **6.2.2 Artistic outputs**

The following charts provide a snapshot of the combined total for selected artistic outputs for 11 of the 12 consistently-funded companies for the period 1997–2001.<sup>16</sup>

#### **6.2.2.1 Performances and Performance Weeks**

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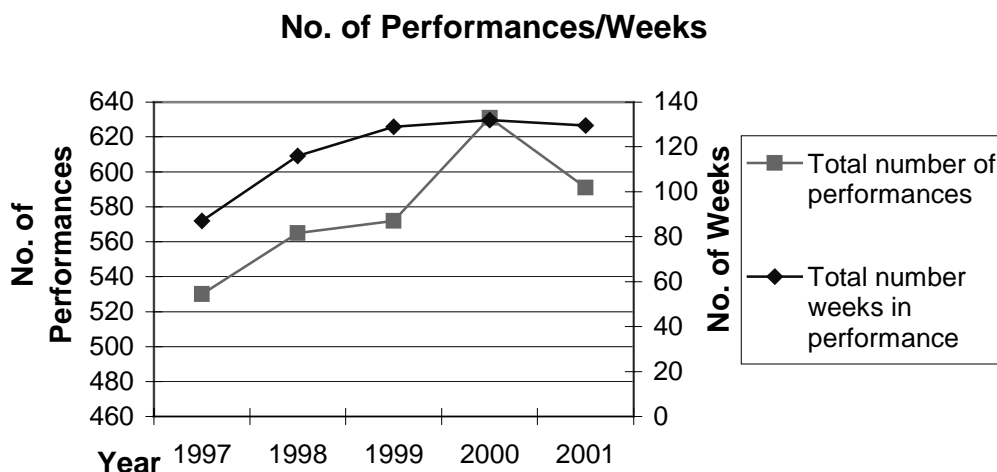
<sup>15</sup> Dance Exchange’s turnover was less than \$100,000 for two of the five years analysed; ADT’s turnover was over \$1.5 million for four of the five years

<sup>16</sup> Data not secured from Dance Exchange

The total number of individual performances delivered by the consistently-funded companies peaked at 631 in 2000, and declined to 591 in 2001. The average number of performances per company (per year) throughout the period was 53.

The total number of performance weeks delivered by the consistently-funded companies peaked at 132 in 2000. The average number of performance weeks per company (per year) throughout the period was 11.

**Chart 6.2.2.1a**      *Number of performances and performance weeks*



*n = 11*

The trend with regard to overall level of performance output was not consistent across all the companies. Buzz, TasDance and Dance North, for example, experienced a particular decline in output towards the end of the period, and it is understood that this trend continued in 2002. Restless, however, increased its overall performance output to a peak in 2001.

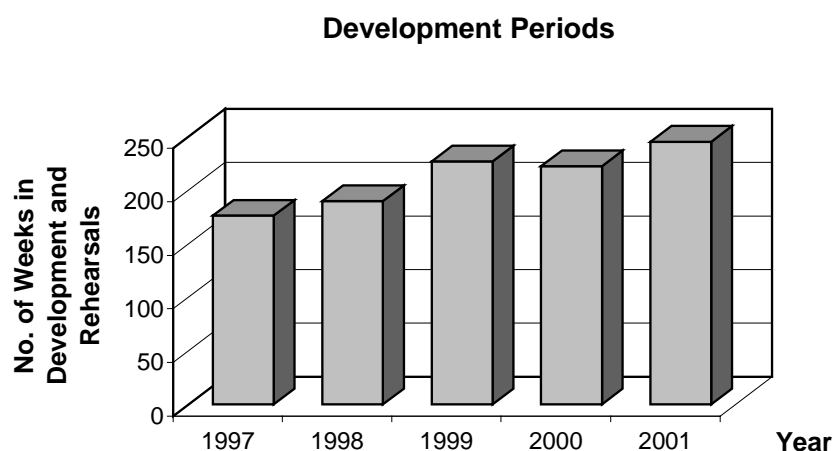
**6.2.2.2 Creative development**

The total number of weeks engaged in rehearsal or creative development rose throughout the period from 176 to 245, a rise of 39%<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Data was not available for Dance Works for 1997, but if Dance Works had undertaken a similar amount of creative development in 1997 to subsequent years, the consolidated pattern would be unchanged

Chart 6.2.2.2a Rehearsal and development periods



$n = 11$

Despite this increase in number of weeks devoted to rehearsal and development, the companies commented on the effect of working in discontinuous blocks—affecting the sophistication of choreography, and resulting in ‘generic’ works that can accommodate different dancers in and out over long gaps of time during creative development.

### 6.2.2.3 Touring

Venue caution was reported to have led to an increasing shifting of risk onto companies through sliding co-presentation arrangements. No companies felt confident to take the majority of financial risk on touring nationally, as they did not know the markets. A few mentioned that a touring producer service of some kind was necessary, whether based in a private sector or through a circuit of venues.

Most companies commented that they have to subsidise touring activity from core funding. Expressions, ADT and Chunky Move needed the budget to keep international representation, networking and business development happening, but indicated that international fees covered only the remount and most of the direct touring costs. Expressions, Dance North, Tracks, TasDance, Buzz and Leigh Warren & Dancers noted national and regional touring were not paying their way.

Three companies noted that regional and some capital city touring would benefit from ‘packages’ of workshops/forums/videos/teachers packs/residencies in institutions. TasDance, Tracks and ADT all noted that it was much easier to get touring bookings and better fees if this kind of ‘value add’ was offered. Several companies considered greater penetration of the education market as an important audience growth opportunity.

### 6.2.2.4 Partnership arrangements

Links with independent choreographers tend to follow one of two models:

1. Production House: six companies stated that they have or are intending to auspice grants and provide in-kind production house support for independent and/or young and emerging choreographers to generate work using the company’s infrastructure. The most developed example is MAXIMISE from Chunky Move.
2. Commissions: a larger number noted that they occasionally commissioned works from independent and/or young and emerging choreographers to add to their program.

A small number of companies mentioned that the works from project-based companies and independent practitioners are often not as developed or as professional as they should be, and they partially attributed the changing attitudes of audiences and venue away from contemporary dance to the prevalence of works of this kind.

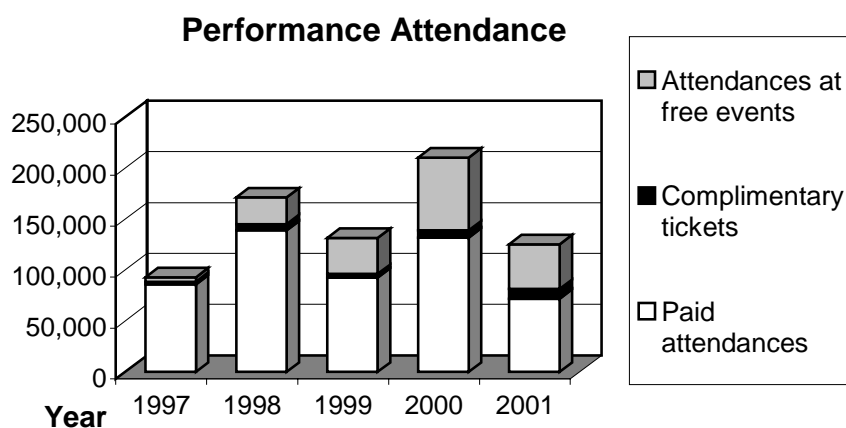
Ten out of the 12 companies mentioned better links between companies and independent practitioners as a priority issue.

## 6.2.3 Audience development

### 6.2.3.1 Declining attendances

Despite the increase in number of works and performances, the 10 companies providing audience data reported a decrease in paid attendances of 48% over the four years from 1998, from 138,888 to 71,746. The decrease in paid attendances is further evidenced by the small growth in box office income and contracting fees over the period.

*Chart 6.2.3.1a Audience attendances*



*n = 11*

In the case of Buzz and Dance North there has been a significant shift from paid attendances to attendances at free events, reflecting a change in performance patterns rather than a decline in popularity.

For the 11 companies providing data, there was a decline in *average* attendance per performance from 303 to 212 from 1998 to 2001<sup>18</sup>. More notably, during the same period there was a decline in average *paid* attendances per performance from 246 to 121.

*Table 6.2.3.1b Average audience attendances*

	1998	1999	2000	2001
Average audience per work	3804	1253	2104	1489
Average audience per performance	303	230	333	212
Average paid attendance per performance	246	162	209	121

<sup>18</sup> Audience data not available for Chunky Move for 1997

### 6.2.3.2 Audience development strategies

Most of the companies felt inadequately resourced to initiate audience development activities beyond their routine publicity and promotions, and several felt unreasonably ‘pressured’ by the Australia Council to respond to a policy which required greater resources.

All the companies referred to programming strategies as a primary way to address audience development. It was assumed that the engagement of new or young artists would enhance the appeal to new audiences, although this was an unproven assumption.

The educational market was seen by many as the most important untapped audience, and development of ‘packages’ was seen as the best tool to access this market. Other potential audience development strategies noted by several companies included:

- Lengthening/deepening audience points of contact with work, through forums, showings
- More audience-friendly venues—bars, music in interval, not formal theatre style
- shorter works
- Open Classes/Open rehearsals, listed by many as both audience and artists development strategy.

The study was not able to explore the demographic composition of the audiences of individual dance companies. Given the earlier comments on the evidently low proportion of non-English speaking background (NESB) audience members for contemporary dance overall, this is an area which merits further consideration, and may represent an opportunity for both product and audience development. This would be consistent with the Australia Council’s policy goal in relation to Arts in a Multicultural Australia.

Three companies mentioned rising expectations of professionalism in marketing by both audiences and the industry, but an inability for the companies to afford a proper response to this.

### 6.2.4 Human resources

In 2001, the companies reported full time employment positions of 55, part-time positions making up 21 ‘full time equivalent’ (FTE) positions, with 297 individuals engaged on a contract basis<sup>19</sup>. For the previous four years the same companies reported 52 or 53 full time positions, although part-time positions ranged from 9 to 11 during this period—that is, there had been a significant increase in part-time employment during 2001. In simple terms, there was an average per company of six to seven full time positions (or FTE positions) for the five years to 2001.

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<sup>19</sup> Excluding Dance Exchange, for which data was not available

It appears that with the steady rise in salaries and on-costs, companies are attempting to save monies by increasingly contracting workers as needed and not committing to more permanent employment:

*Table 6.2.4a Employment data*

<b>Employment Data</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>
No. of full-time employment positions	53	52	53	53	55
No. of part-time employment FTE positions	9	11	11	10	21
<b>No. of FTE employment</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>76</b>
Total Contracted (no. of individuals)	172	214	245	365	297

$n = 11$

Artistic directors range in tenure in current post from 1–18, but only two have been in post for more than seven years, and half have been in post between 5–7 years.

General managers range in tenure from one month (at the time of interview) to 18 years. However, only two have been in post for more than five years, and one third have been in post less than 12 months.

Less than half of the consistently-funded companies have a part-time publicist, and only two (Chunky Move and ADT, the two best-resourced companies) have dedicated marketing positions. In view of the audience development challenges facing contemporary dance, this would appear to be an area which requires higher priority for investment.

Four companies have Rehearsal Directors or equivalent. All support trainees, most at least three secondments per year.

Ensemble working creates unique management demands for dance, compared with other performing arts organisations. There is often the same basic staff structure in office/production as a theatre company, but with up to 10 FTE personnel more to manage. This is perhaps why all consistently-funded dance companies interviewed, including two non-ensemble, emphasised that the position of rehearsal director or assistant director is so important (but difficult to fund).

#### **6.2.4.1 Artist/Professional development**

All companies responded to questions on professional development primarily by noting strategies and outcomes that took place within class and rehearsal. The two or three larger companies had strategies outside that context. The most common response was to note the diversity of class experience, and that class was generally provided above award requirements, i.e. more classes, more diverse, including diverse teachers, diverse physical training styles.

Only one company had formalised an ongoing mid-career professional development program; one other offered masterclass or choreographic labs intermittently depending on special funding. One Extra indicated that they had recently committed their next three year phase of operation primarily to supporting selected mid-career dancers through producing those dancers' work. Two companies mentioned they were increasingly unable to afford to employ mid-career dancers as they were too expensive under the Award, and that funding levels did not allow for that.

## 6.2.5 Financial Results

The following is based on an analysis of the consolidated results of the 12 dance companies over seven years from 1996 to 2002.

### 6.2.5.1 Income

Some elements of the combined income and expenditure analysis are somewhat skewed by the establishment of Chunky Move as a major Melbourne-based company part way through the period analysed (with its state funding, for example, rising from c.\$13,000 to \$800,000 between 1996 and 1998).

Total income for the 12 companies increased 36% over the seven years from 1996 to 2002, largely due to an increase of 41% in total government funding, representing around 75% of total income. However, when Chunky Move's income is excluded, the income of the remaining 11 companies only increased 15% over the seven years to 2002 representing an inflation-adjusted decrease in income of 4%.

The companies' combined *earned* income (the remaining 25% of total income) increased 19% over the period to 2002—after adjusting for inflation this represents a standstill in earned income. Excluding the results of Chunky Move, the remaining companies reported a 4% increase in earned income—after adjusting for inflation, a real decline of 15%.

While sponsorship and philanthropy income increased 30% (in real terms) over the period, it continues to represent only around 4% of total income (compared with 11–12% for the MPAB companies). Sponsorship was regarded by most companies (with the exception of Chunky Move) as not worth the investment of time and resources. It is difficult to assess whether this negative view of sponsorship is a result of lack of expertise (or time) having produced poor results, which in turn has convinced the companies not to pursue sponsorship further; or whether some of the companies have made a concerted, professional effort, but still not achieved a good return.

There has been a decrease in funding by the Australia Council of the 12 companies over the seven years. This has been largely offset by an increase in state government funding, although a substantial proportion of this is attributable to Victoria's funding for Chunky Move. Of total funding received by the 12 companies over the seven years to 2002, 32% was funded by the Australian Government and 65% from the state governments. After inflation is taken into account, there has been a 23% real decrease in Australian Government funding and a 63% real increase in state government funding for the 12 companies. With the exception of Chunky Move, the remaining 11 companies have reported a real decrease of 1% in overall funding over the seven years—that is, the funding increases over the period have not kept up with inflation.

### 6.2.5.2 Expenditure

Consolidated expenditure increased 35% over the seven years to 2002 largely due to an overall increase of 46% in salaries and wages and, specifically, the significant increase in expenditure by Chunky Move from 1998. Excluding Chunky Move, the remaining companies consolidated expenditure only increased 13% over the same period—in fact negative growth of 7% after taking into account inflation over the period.

Of total expenditure, 64% was spent on salaries and wages in 2002—a steady increase over the period from 59% of total expenditure in 1996. This increase can largely be attributed to the increase in dancers' awards over the period and the superannuation levy guarantee increase (from 6% in 1996 to 9% in 2002).

Production costs have decreased 19% over the period representing around 15% of total expenditure in 2002—a decline from representing around 25% of total expenditure in 1996. When excluding Chunky Move production expenditure, the remaining companies have reduced their

production costs by a substantial 37%. That is, after inflation, 11 of the companies experienced a real decrease of 56% in production expenditure over seven years.

While marketing and promotional costs have increased 67% over the period, such expenditure comprises only around 5–7% of total expenditure. Administration costs have increased 86% over the period (67% after adjusting for inflation) and generally comprise 11–13% of total expenditure. Significant increases in public liability insurance premiums over the past few years may have contributed to the increase in administration costs since 1996.

### **6.2.5.3 Current financial position**

For the 2002 fiscal year, the companies achieved a combined operating surplus of \$203,000. For two of the previous six years the companies had generated net operating deficits.

The cumulative operating surplus for the 12 companies over the seven years to 2002 represented 1% of consolidated income. Most of the companies have managed minor operating surpluses that, in many cases, have offset a couple of years of minor operating deficits.

At the end of 2002, consolidated cash reserves of the 12 companies amounted to around \$910,000 representing 12% of total income or expenditure. The measure of the percentage of cash reserves held against annual expenditure illustrates the very tight ‘margins for error’ the companies are operating under. This is more acute in the light of the fact that about 90% of the cash reserves are held by three of the companies.

Three of the companies are currently in a healthy financial position, four are in an acceptable position with no immediate danger, but a further four are in a weak or very vulnerable financial position.

## **6.3 Other funded companies**

Alongside the MPAB and other consistently-funded companies, there is a range of project-funded companies, typically constructed around the talent of a key creative individual. This broader group of companies also makes a significant contribution to professional dance activity in Australia. A group of 13 of the companies, all of which have received some funding, were interviewed, including:

- Balletlab
- Bonemap
- Canberra Dance Theatre
- De Quincey Company
- Diana Reyes Flamenco
- Igneous Inc.
- Janganpa
- Kage Physical Theatre
- Lingalayam Dance Company
- Lucy Guerin Inc.
- Stompin Youth Dance Company
- World Dance Company
- Wu Lin Dance Company

Also included were two organisations closely involved in supporting dance: Dancehouse in Melbourne, and PICA in Perth.

### 6.3.1 Profile of sample

The companies interviewed comprised companies and venues based in Victoria (5), NSW (3), Queensland (3), WA (1), Tasmania (1), ACT (1) and NT (1). Of the 13 producing dance companies, eight were established less than seven years ago with the remaining five companies having a history of over 10 years<sup>20</sup>.

The work performed by the companies is largely contemporary with a number of companies including more hybrid works and arts practices (e.g. multimedia and physical theatre). The work of four of the dance companies' is based on traditional dance practices including flamenco, Indian, and Indigenous.

The dance companies interviewed were smaller companies operating on project funding, some with modest state annual funding, and with full-time but unpaid artistic directors. Only two of the dance companies had paid full or part-time employment positions. In all cases, the artistic director was interviewed, largely comprising more experienced performers and choreographers who have worked nationally and internationally.

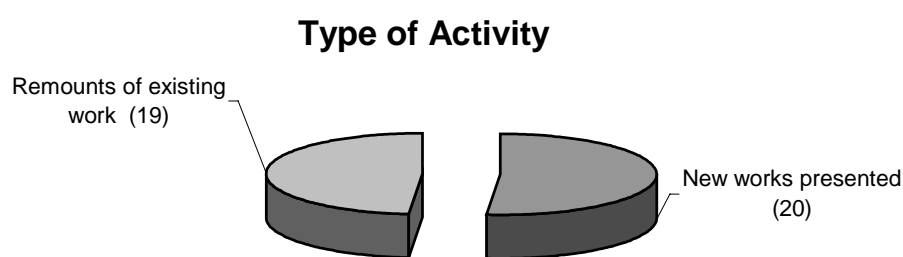
Seven of the 13 companies were being operated from a home base, although eight of the 13 had been engaged in international touring.

### 6.3.2 Artistic outputs

Financial and artistic data was gathered for the 2001 year only, primarily in recognition of the burden which additional data gathering would place on the unpaid company leaders. The following charts highlight key outputs of the companies during 2001.

There was an almost equal division between new work and remounts of existing work:

**Chart 6.3.2a Remounts and new work**



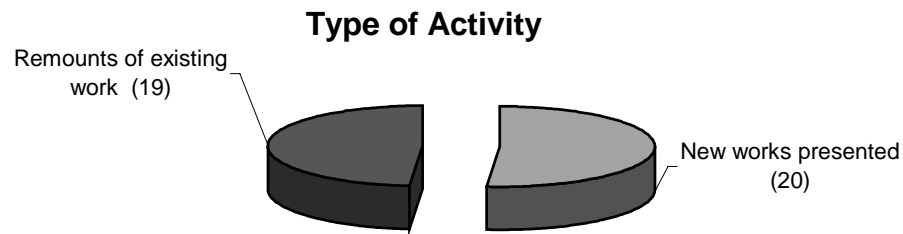
$n = 10$

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<sup>20</sup> During 2001 the artistic director of World Dance Company spent time travelling internationally with the benefit of an Australia Council Fellowship. No project funding was secured that year, and the company's activities were dormant. Income and expenditure data and other outputs for World Dance Company are therefore missing from the analysis below. Additionally, Lucy Guerin's work was commissioned and presented by other dance companies.

However, the proportion of existing work was boosted by Janganpa's output. Excluding this, the remaining companies reported that 83% of their output was new work.

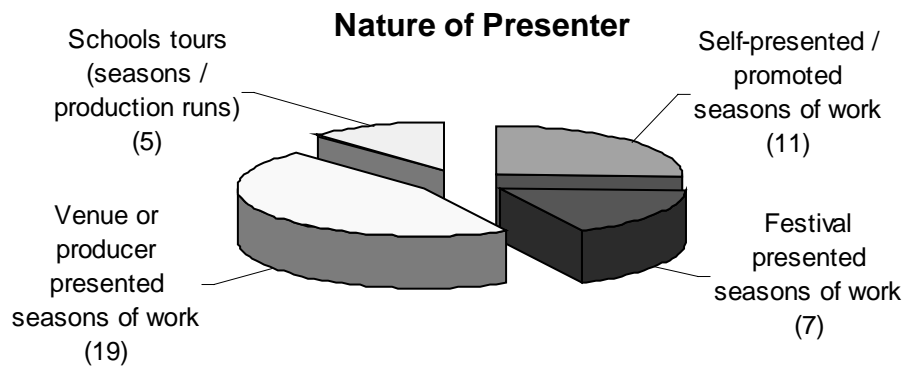
**Chart 6.3.2b Remounts and new work**



$n = 9$

25% of the work was self-presented, with the remainder being presented by venues, festivals, other presenters, or in a schools context:

**Chart 6.3.2c Nature of presenter**

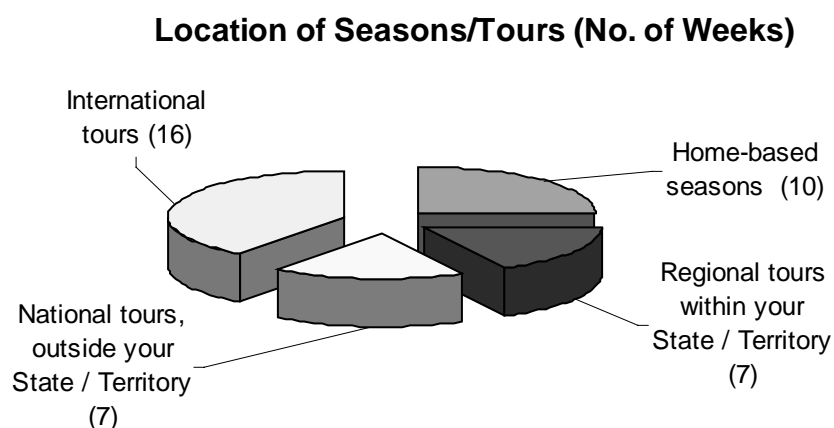


$n = 10$

Again, the high proportion of venue-presented work reported by Janganpa influences this result. Excluding Janganpa, the remaining companies reported only nine seasons of venue or producer-presented seasons.

Seven of the companies recorded overseas touring during the year—as many as produced home-based seasons. The total number of weeks presenting work abroad was 16 weeks, compared with 24 weeks presenting work in Australia:

**Chart 6.3.2d Nature and duration of seasons**



*n* = 10

The total number of performances in 2001 was 98<sup>21</sup>, with an average of 10 for each of the 10 companies which provided data. The total number of weeks in performance in 2001 was 40 with an average of four for each of the 10 companies.

### 6.3.2.1 Development periods

The number of weeks in creative development and rehearsals in 2001 was 85, although this figure was for seven companies only, with an average of 12 weeks for each company.

Interviewees commented on the lack of development support (that is, finance) resulting in less quality dance work being produced—not allowing the work’s full potential to evolve; on the lack of professional training and development of artists (including ‘classes’); and on less development time being funded with expectations on companies to produce quick ‘hits’. Overall, there was a perception that they have less time now for creative development—whether funded or not—and that there are increasing non-artistic pressures and demands.

### 6.3.3 Human resources

Interviewees commented on the sense of professional isolation which characterised work with smaller, project-based companies, and on the fact that the artistic directors were ‘drowning’ in multi-tasking.

*Creative work suffers from a lot of role-playing—where the artistic director also has to manage, market and administrate.*

Only one paid full-time member of staff was recorded by the dance companies, with 159 contract staff (95 performers) and 93 unpaid staff (58 performers)<sup>22</sup>. Concern was expressed that dancers were only contracted on a project basis, when the companies were able to afford

<sup>21</sup> Excluding performances of Lucy Guerin’s work by other companies which had commissioned her

<sup>22</sup> Dancehouse and PICA recorded 2.8 and 6 full-time respectively

it, with very little full-time or continuing part-time employment. The lack of employment opportunities for choreographers, dancers and other arts workers was believed to be leading to a loss of talent overseas.

The absence of long-term training, mentoring and development of young dancers and arts workers was articulated.

### 6.3.4 Distribution and audiences

**Venue caution:** the companies felt there was a lack of affordable venues for rehearsal and performance, and a lack of festivals and contexts to showcase work, especially in Sydney. Presenting venues were believed to be reluctant to take risks, and were able to provide little support with audience development.

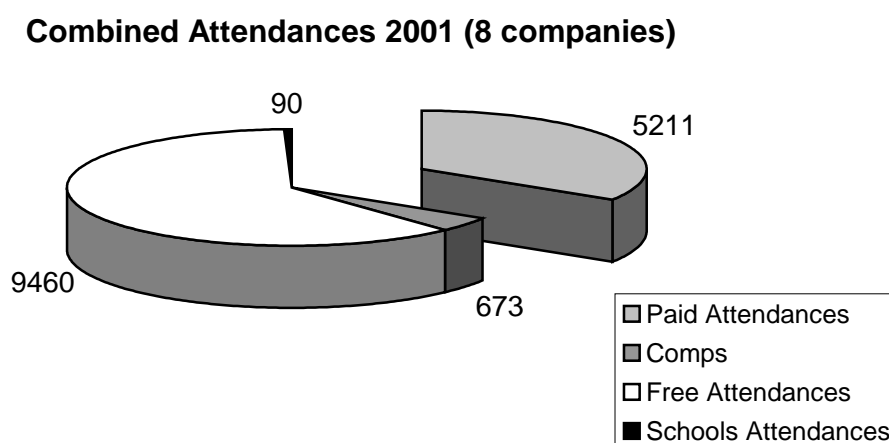
**Greater opportunities needed to sell works:** the companies commented on the lack of producers in the dance sector; and on the lack of resources and ‘power’ to seek and secure partnerships with other sectors, including business, local government, venues and festivals.

**Lack of support for touring:** a national touring circuit or network was needed for smaller dance companies, and enhanced support for international touring. The overseas market was seen as essential to maintain the viability of dance.

**Small audiences:** poor audience development was attributed to lack of expertise and resources. Greater investment was needed to develop markets and to stimulate consumer interest in the sector. This should be supplemented by developing quality dance education programs and materials.

A total of 15,434 attendances were recorded by eight companies able to provide data, with 5211 being paid attendances. This represents an average attendance level of 241 per performance, and paid attendances of 81 per performance<sup>23</sup>.

**Chart 6.3.4a Audience attenders: project companies**



*n* = 10

<sup>23</sup> The audience results exclude Balletlab and World Dance (no 2001 during activity), Lucy Guerin (work presented by other companies during 2001) and Janganpa (no data available), and are therefore understated.

### 6.3.5 Financial data

Financial details were not complete for three of the companies which were not maintaining full financial statements, as they tracked their finances by projects<sup>24</sup>.

- The companies are primarily reliant on project funding. In 2001, only four of the dance companies received core funding and only one of those from the Australia Council Dance Board (Stompin Youth Dance Company)
- As a number of companies do not record contra or in-kind goods and services, total 'revenue', sponsorship revenue and total expenditure are expected to be understated. One company indicated an in-kind sponsorship valued at c.\$80,000.
- Earned income at 25% of total income includes significant performance fees and commissions for two of the dance companies: Janganpa and Lucy Guerin. Without these, earned income declines to 14% of total income for the remaining companies.
- While all dance companies recorded small surpluses in 2001 these results do not reflect the fact that 'expenditure' is significantly understated as none of the artistic directors of the 13 dance companies are paid on a full-time basis. Generally, the artistic directors receive irregular performer fees for projects and other activities such as classes.
- The highest level of cash reserves was \$25,000, but most of the companies held less than \$10,000 in cash reserves.

Despite the constraints of this single year 'snapshot', it is clear that the expenditure and income results are undervalued due to the unpaid labour contributed by the artistic directors and the receipt of in-kind goods and services not accounted for. That is, while all companies have reported small surpluses suggesting a positive financial result, the reality is that the dance companies are heavily subsidised by their artistic directors and, probably to a lesser degree, by others.

Combined operating results for the dance companies, and for the two venues, were:

**Table 6.3.5a Summary 2001 financial performance**

2001 Financial performance	12 Dance Companies	% of total income	Total of 14 Companies	% of total income
Earned income	\$194,239	25%	\$355,365	20%
Sponsorship	\$18,065	2%	\$152,354	9%
Core funding	\$137,039	18%	\$624,039	36%
Project funding	\$422,490	55%	\$615,654	35%
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$771,833</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$1,747,412</b>	<b>100%</b>
Expenditure	(\$730,069)	95%	(\$1,718,841)	98%
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$41,764</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>\$28,571</b>	<b>2%</b>

### 6.3.6 Funding

More than any other issue, the interviewees in the 'broader' sample commented on the scarcity of funding, on the time and effort that was involved in the process of applying for

<sup>24</sup> 2001 was cited as a 'quiet year' by a number of the companies, for a variety of reasons

funding, and on the de-motivating awareness that there was only a one in five chance of securing support (as they perceived it). Comments included:

- stagnant funding but increasing costs and competition
- artistic directors exposed to unreasonable personal financial risk
- effective lobbying and advocacy not possible because of the diverse and scattered nature of dance companies
- different application process for state and Australian Government, for the same project—too time-consuming

*It is the lack of continuity in funding that completely disables and has the capacity to destroy the extensive potential built up over many years.*

Regular funding was believed to be necessary to ensure adequate infrastructure, long-term development, retention of performers/arts workers, mentoring and training for young performers and arts workers, and audience development.