

*Planning for the Future*

Statistical Profile:  
Dance

4 July 2000

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# Key points and contents

## Part one: Industry

### SUPPLY

- 4,200 people employed in dance occupations in 1996
- Employment in dance occupations is growing faster than total employment
- The median income of people in dance occupations was lower than other employed people in 1996
- Selected dance industry indicators 1997
- The number of dance organisations grew less than all performing arts and cultural organisations 1980-1991

### DEMAND

- Dance attendances declined 1991-99 while all cultural attendances increased
- Audience profiles
- Motivators and barriers to attendance

## Part two: Sector

- From 1990 to 1996, numbers enrolled in dance courses at vocational institutions decreased more than all arts enrolments

## Part three: Funding

- Dance was 12 percent of Australia Council funding to the arts in 1998-99

## Part one: Industry

### SUPPLY

#### Employment

##### *4,200 people were employed in dance occupations in 1996*

An estimate of the numbers of people employed as dancers and choreographers in 1996 is possible by using two data sources; the ABS census and Throsby (1994). The census underestimates actual numbers, primarily by recording main job only (defined by the level of financial remuneration). People employed as dancers and choreographers as a second job do not show up in census occupation data. Throsby (1994) provides a more accurate and reliable estimate of actual total numbers of people employed as dancers and choreographers. The data is, however, for 1992-93. Nevertheless, by comparing data between the two sources an estimate can be made that 1,473 people were employed as dancers and choreographers in 1996. The methodology is detailed in Appendix A. The data still does not count dance teachers employed in formal education institutions such as universities, TAFEs and schools.

Neither data source allows an accurate separation of dancers and choreographers for 1996. An estimate is, however, possible by applying the same ratio of dancers to choreographers in 1991 (approximately 1 choreographer to every 9 dancers). The estimates are summarised in figure D.1. The calculations are described in appendix A.

**Figure D.1: Estimates of employment in dance occupations, 1996**

|                                | Number employed |          |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
|                                | Actual          | Estimate |
| Dance teacher (private)        | <b>2,761</b>    | 2,761    |
| Dancer                         |                 | 1,344    |
| Choreographer                  |                 | 129      |
| Dancer/choreographer           | <b>1,027</b>    | 1,473    |
| <b>Total dance occupations</b> | <b>3,788</b>    | 4,234    |

*Sources: ABS Employment in selected culture/leisure occupations, Throsby and Thompson (1994)*

##### *Employment in dance occupations is growing faster than total employment*

Figure D.2 summarises census data for employment in dance occupations for 1986, 1991 and 1996. The data indicates that the rate of growth in employment in dance and choreography occupations was more than twice the rate of growth of total employment over the ten year-period 1986 to 1996. The 24.8 percent increase in employment in dance and choreography occupations between 1991 and 1996 is higher than other performing arts occupations (eg: instrumental musicians 7 percent; composers 20 percent; and singers 18 percent).

**Figure D.2: Employment in selected dance occupations 1986-96**

|                            | 1986 | 1991  | 1996  | Percent change |         |
|----------------------------|------|-------|-------|----------------|---------|
|                            |      |       |       | 1986-91        | 1991-96 |
| Dancers and choreographers | 679  | 823   | 1,027 | 21.2           | 24.8    |
| Dance teachers (private)   |      | 1,819 | 2,761 |                | 51.8    |
| Total of above             |      | 2,642 | 3,788 |                | 43.4    |
| All cultural occupations   |      |       |       |                | 24.4    |
| Total employment           |      |       |       | 9.1            | 5.6     |

Source: ABS Employment in selected culture/leisure occupations

*The median income of people in dance occupations was lower than other employed people in 1996*

Figure D.3 indicates that in 1996 median incomes of people employed in dance occupations tended to be lower than both all cultural occupations and all people employed. The exception was part-time dancers/choreographers. Trend income data for dance occupations is not available.

**Figure D.3: Incomes of dance occupations ,1996**

| Occupations                | Median income per annum, \$ <sup>1</sup> |           |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------|
|                            | Full-time                                | Part-time |
| Dancer/choreographer       | 24,596                                   | 17,136 +  |
| Dance teacher (private)    | 21,350                                   | 11,065    |
| Total cultural occupations | 32,331 +                                 | 15,406 +  |
| Total employment           | 29,424                                   | 14,777    |

<sup>1</sup>Full-time = 35 hours or more per week; + signifies if income is above average for total employment.

Source: ABS unpublished census data

## Organisations

### *Selected dance industry indicators 1997*

The ABS 1996-97 survey of the performing arts industries covers 36 dance organisations<sup>1</sup>. Selected industry indicators are set out in figure D.4. Dance businesses represented 4 percent of music and theatre production businesses and accounted for 9 percent of employment, 6 percent of income, and 4 percent of paid attendances of the music and theatre production industry. Dance businesses were larger on average: they employed more than twice the industry average and average business income was \$1m per annum compared to \$700,000 for the total industry. The average audience size of

<sup>1</sup> Dance organisations are defined to include 'ballet, classical, contemporary and modern dance, dance theatre, ethnic and folk dance companies.'

dance organisations was larger than the industry average. The proportion of dance industry income made up by government funding (35 percent) was higher than average for the total music and theatre production industry (30 percent).

Data on the performing arts industry is likely to be dominated by a small number of large companies. These indicators are, therefore, likely to be sensitive to different structures and business models across the larger performing arts companies. It may be, for example, that dance companies are larger than average in terms of employees due to a greater tendency for the larger dance companies to be run as ‘ensembles’ than the other large performing arts companies. The data cannot be disaggregated to determine any underlying structural issues such as these.

**Figure D.4: Selected industry indicators, dance 1997**

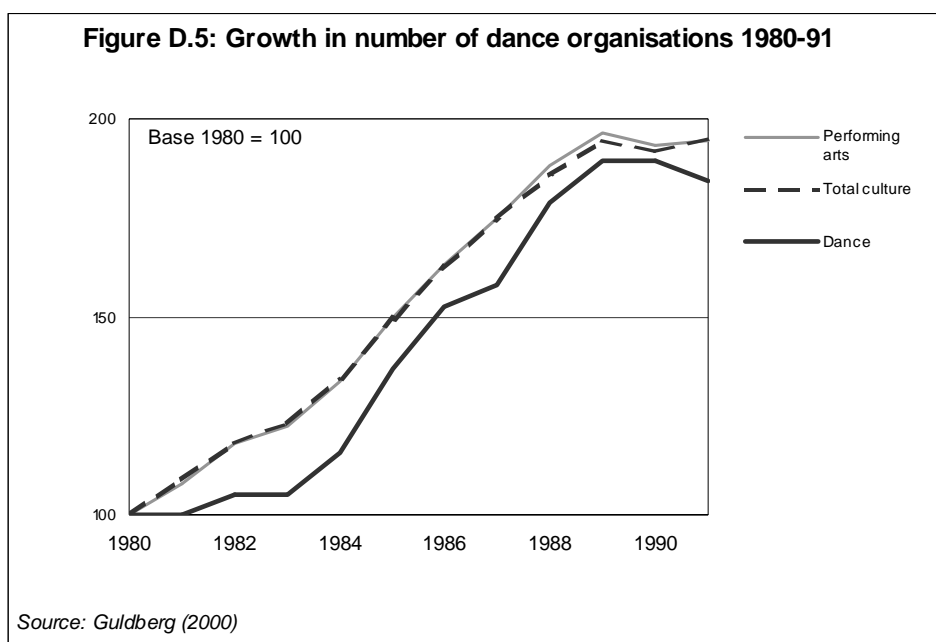
|                                   | Dance  | 1997<br>Music and<br>theatre<br>production | <i>Dance as<br/>percent of<br/>total</i> |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Businesses (no.)                  | 36     | 881                                        | 4                                        |
| Employment (no.)                  | 557    | 6,082                                      | 9                                        |
| <i>Percent full-time</i>          | 60     | 50                                         |                                          |
| FTEs                              | 446    | 4573.5                                     | 10                                       |
| FTEs per business                 | 12     | 5                                          |                                          |
| Income (\$m)                      | 34.5   | 594.3                                      | 6                                        |
| Income per business (\$m)         | 1.0    | 0.7                                        |                                          |
| Income per FTE (\$)               | 80,000 | 130,000                                    |                                          |
| Paid performances                 | 1,491  | 68,994                                     | 2                                        |
| Paid attendances ('000)           | 544    | 12,794                                     | 4                                        |
| Attendance/performance            | 365    | 185                                        |                                          |
| Government funding (\$m)          | 12.2   | 179.3                                      | 7                                        |
| Government funding/total industry | 35     | 30                                         |                                          |

Source: ABS *Performing arts industries 1996-97*

*The number of dance organisations grew less than all performing arts and cultural organisations 1980-1991*

Guldberg (2000) indicates that dance ‘organisations’ comprised around 9 percent of all performing arts organisations in 1991<sup>2</sup>. From 1980 to 1991 the growth in the number of dance organisations was less than for all cultural organisations (84 percent compared to 95 percent for all culture). Figure D.5 summarises.

<sup>2</sup> The data on ‘organisations’ is from ‘Ozarts’. For a detailed description, see Australia Council/Guldberg (1992) *Artburst!*, page 6.



## Products

In 1997 the dance organisations in the ABS' music and theatre production industry survey presented 1,491 paid performances. The majority (88 percent) of performances were presented by organisations receiving government subsidies. Government subsidised organisations presented on average 50 performances per organisation, other organisations 30 performances per organisation. Data from the Major Performing Arts Inquiry indicates that the average ticket prices for the dance organisations in the survey increased by 0.7 percent in real terms between 1992 and 1997.

## DEMAND

### Audiences

*Dance attendances declined 1991-99 while all cultural attendances increased*

Over 1.3 million people attended a dance performance at least once in 1999. This is 62,500 less than in 1995, which meant that the dance attendance rate dropped by one percentage point. Cultural attendance rates increased over the same period. Figure D.6 summarises. The 1995-99 decline continues on from a 1 percentage point decline between 1991 and 1995 (over a period when all cultural attendances declined by 0.3 percentage points). Data for 1991 is not presented due to differences in methodology (although the data have been reconciled by the ABS for the purposes of discerning trends in attendance rates).

**Figure D.6: Dance attendances 1995 to 1999**

|             | 1995             |                    | 1999             |                    | change in<br>attendance<br>rate 1995-99 |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|             | number<br>(‘000) | attendance<br>rate | number<br>(‘000) | attendance<br>rate |                                         |
| Dance       | 1,407.5          | 10.0               | 1,345.0          | 9.0                | -1                                      |
| All culture | 11,670.0         | 82.9               | 12,615.8         | 84.6               | 2                                       |

Source: ABS Attendance at selected cultural venues

### *Audience profiles*

The ABS’ attendance survey shows:

- Women have a higher attendance rate than men (11.2 for women, 6.8 for men), although the greater attendance rate for women is reflected across all the performing arts except popular music.
- The dance audience is skewed toward people with higher educational qualifications (eg 14.6 attendance rate for people with bachelor degree compared to 10.4 for people with a basic vocational qualification). The difference is less pronounced than for the other performing arts.
- Dance audiences tend to be low frequency attenders, with 58 percent attending once in 1999 and 8 percent attending 5 or more times. This is a less frequent distribution than for popular music, classical music and theatre and similar to opera or musical attendances. Australia Council (1999) shows the opposite; that dance audiences tend to be medium to high frequency attenders (although the reference period is two years compared to the ABS’ one year).
- The age profile for dance attendance rates differs from the other performing arts in that attendance is more pronounced among 35-54 age brackets (theatre is more evenly distributed across age brackets, classical music is skewed more to older people). Data also shows little change in the age profile of dance attendance rates between 1995 and 1999.

The Australia Council’s *Selling the Performing Arts* indicates that audiences can differ significantly across dance forms. A summary of audience profiles for 4 dance forms is attached. Modern dance was more likely to be attended by 40-54 year-olds (‘baby-boomers’) and by more open or experimental people (‘experientials’). Classical ballet audiences tended to be older and more likely to be ‘conservative’ in attitude. The difference in the male/female ratio was particularly pronounced in classical dance (66 percent of attenders were women compared to 56 percent of all dance forms), as was the city/country ratio (80 percent of attenders were city-dwellers compared to 72 percent and 73 percent for modern and popular dance forms). Attenders at multicultural dance and popular dance forms were more evenly spread across all age groups than other dance forms.

### Motivators and barriers to attendance

Figure D.7 sets out selected motivators and barriers to attendance at dance performances. Dance audiences are motivated by similar factors – the sensory or aesthetic pleasure of dance and the appreciation of the skill involved. Expense was mentioned as a barrier for both classical and modern dance forms.

**Figure D.7: Selected motivators and barriers to attendance by dance type, 1999**

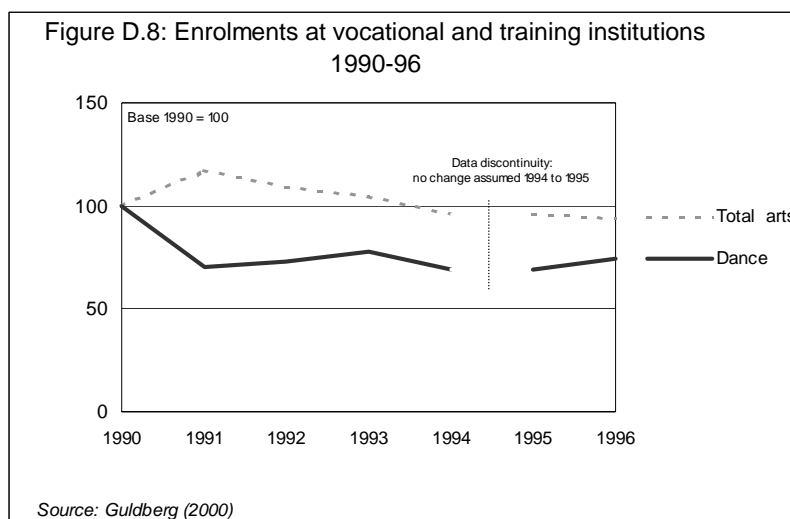
| Genre                                   | Motivators                                                         | Barriers                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Classical ballet                        | Pretty, highly skilled, uplifting, sensory pleasure, big night out | Feminine, old-fashioned, expensive, not enough advertising |
| Modern ballet/contemporary/modern dance | Visually appealing, uplifting, controversial, highly skilled       | Too way out, abortion of ballet, expensive, low awareness  |

Source: Australia Council (1999)

## Part two: Sector

*From 1990 to 1996, numbers enrolled in dance courses at vocational institutions decreased more than all arts enrolments*

Figure D.8 sets out indexes for enrolments in vocational education institutions. Enrolments in dance courses appear to have declined more than all arts enrolments, although the reliability of the data is questionable, particularly prior to 1995 and should be interpreted with caution. Data on enrolments in *university* dance courses is not presented here because reliable data from published sources is not available (some data on university dance enrolments is contained in the performing arts chapter).



### Part three: Funding

The ABS' ongoing survey of government cultural funding does not allow dance funding to be separately identified. Some indication of funding levels is available from the Australia Council. Figure D.9 sets out data for Australia Council funding to dance over the ten years to 1999. The data shows that the proportion of Australia Council funding going to dance declined from 20 to 12 percent, although the data does not account for dance projects funded under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fund, nor under the Community Cultural Development fund. Changes to the classification of international projects are also not accounted for in the data.

**Figure D.9: Australia Council funding to dance 1988-89 to 1998-99**

|                                  | 1988-89    | \$m current prices |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
|                                  |            | 1994-95            | 1998-99    |
| Total Dance                      | 6,178,000  | 8,060,375          | 7,546,556  |
| Total arts funding               | 30,636,000 | 53,107,000         | 60,859,020 |
| <i>Dance as percent of total</i> | <i>20</i>  | <i>15</i>          | <i>12</i>  |

NB: Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance and community cultural development dance projects. Classification of funding for international projects also changed between periods.

Source: Australia Council Annual Reports

## Appendix A

### Estimates of total employment in dance occupations

To estimate total employment in dance and choreography occupations, census data is augmented by data from Throsby and Thompson (1994). Census underestimates employment in dance. Throsby provides a more accurate picture by having greater 'capture'. But Throsby and Thompson (1994) is for 1993 only. Data is summarised in figure AD1.

An estimate for 1996 may be obtained if the greater capture of Throsby and Thompson is applied to 1996 census actuals. To obtain a measure of the greater capture, a comparison is made between Throsby and Thompson (1994) and census data for 1993. A simple linear extrapolation is applied to arrive at an estimated census dance employment of 864 in 1993, which is two-thirds of Throsby and Thompson. This ratio is applied to 1996 data to arrive at an estimate of dance employment for 1996 of 1,443.

**Figure AD1: Estimating total employment in dance occupations from the two sources**

|                                | 1991       | 1993         | 1996         | <i>Ann av<br/>change 1991-96</i> |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Throsby &amp; Thompson</b>  |            | <b>1,300</b> |              |                                  |
| <b>(a) Census 1996*</b>        | <b>823</b> | 907          | <b>1,027</b> | 5                                |
| (b) Ratio Throsby/census       |            | 1.43         |              |                                  |
| <b>Estimated total (a x b)</b> |            |              | <b>1,473</b> |                                  |

Figures in bold are actuals

\*Estimate for 1993 obtained by applying annual average change to actual data

Estimates of the number of dancers and choreographers in 1996 are made by applying the same ratio of dancers to choreographers recorded in the 1991 census. Figure AD2 summarises the calculations.

**Figure AD2: Estimating the dancer/choreographer split for 1996**

|                                | <b>Actuals</b> | <i>Percentages</i> | <b>Estimates</b> |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|
|                                | 1991           | 1991               | 1996             |
| Choreographers                 | <b>71</b>      | 9                  | 129              |
| Dancers                        | <b>741</b>     | 91                 | 1,344            |
| Dancers and choreographers nfd | <b>10</b>      |                    |                  |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>823</b>     | 100                | 1,473            |