

Statement from, **The Carillon Society of Australia (CSA)**

Secretary Ms June Catchpoole
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To the Inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority

The National Carillon. Canberra

- 1. The Staff:** The Director, carillonists, engineers/maintenance and volunteers have all worked with pride and beyond remuneration to bring the carillon up to its current world standard and to keep it there. This takes adequate funding.
- 2. Visiting Carillonists:** Elite carillonists, outstanding musicians from Europe and America, invited to present recitals, have been willing to travel the long haul from the northern hemisphere to play on this carillon. This includes Australia on the world carillon map, inspires the local carillonists and gives opportunity for Australians to experience the overseas state of the art. These carillonists would not make the commitment to travel so far were it not for the excellent standard of the carillon and for the warm hospitality of the carillon staff. Funding used for this purpose is not wasted and must continue at an appropriate level.
- 3. The world standard of the National Carillon:** This did not happen by chance. The current Director, Mr Timothy Hurd, QSM (Queen's Service Medal NZ) is highly qualified in all areas of the instrument: performance, composition, teaching and engineering/maintenance, and he is in touch with the world scene. Timothy knows his work and has used these skills, his insight and his foresight, all developed over many years of dedication and determination, to achieve the current excellent condition of the National Carillon. He has been worthy of his appointment and the staff have all strived to achieve the best. It is fortunate for the National Carillon that the current Carillon Director was attracted to apply for the position.
- 4. The gift of the Carillon by Great Britain to the PEOPLE of Australia:** It was a brilliant choice of gift: a unique instrument transcending all cultures, religious and political persuasions; used for occasions of national dignity and celebration, and for personal joy, bringing harmony and peace to the people; but if it is not played at least daily and on special occasions, then the people cannot hear it, and it fails to be part of the cultural life of the National Capital. The gift therefore, would be nothing but a waste of money and it must be remembered that the gift was a not trivial but a huge commitment of funds by Great Britain for a worthy cause and a worthy people. Considering this, the Australian Government must be honour bound to provide the necessary level of funding to keep the National Carillon at world standard.
- 5. The Carillonists:** Many years of study and the practice of music have been spent by each of the carillonists before they even start to learn and develop their skills at the carillon. Practice and learning must then be on-going as with any instrument. 'The workman is worthy of his hire' - funding/remuneration for the carillonists should be on an appropriate level to reflect the amount of work and commitment that performance demands. Many musicians move overseas because of the lack of opportunities for them at home in Australia. Similarly reducing the number of carillon recitals will be very restricting for the carillonists.
- 6. Overseas experience:** Having been privileged to attend the World Carillon Congress in Europe in 2006, and the Carillon Congress of the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America in 2007, The CSA states with confidence that the National Carillon *is* world standard; that it is one of the best; that it is held in very high regard; and that its carillonists are amongst the most dedicated, determined and talented. This is due to the wisdom of the National Capital in finding sufficient funds over past years.
- 7. Funding:** Having set aside funds in recent years to achieve this state of the art world standard, it is pure folly now to let it slip back to mediocrity and anonymity, thus wasting the funds already spent on it and destroying the years of dedicated work by the staff of the National Carillon. It has never been easy for any organization or government to find sufficient funds; but in the case of this musical instrument, severe

cutting of funds will inevitably result in disheartened staff and gradual deterioration of the instrument, thus leading to excessive, maybe unattainable, costs in years to come to restore the instrument to an acceptable standard. It happens so easily, and any musician will tell you that constant adequate funding along the way prevents an instrument from becoming unplayable, and needing massive costs in the future.

Yours faithfully
June Catchpoole
Secretary of the Carillon Society of Australia
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