



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Senator the Hon Ian Campbell**

*Minister for the Environment and Heritage*

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## **COCKATOO ISLAND FESTIVAL A HUGE SUCCESS**

The Australian Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, today praised the success of the inaugural Cockatoo Island music and cultural festival, held over the Easter long weekend.

‘An estimated 20,000 people attended the festival over three days and have given the thumbs up to what is likely to become a regular event on Sydney’s cultural scene,’ Senator Campbell said.

‘The festival is a vindication of the Government’s decision to establish the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust and a demonstration of how former industrial sites can be converted into creative public uses.

‘The transformation of Cockatoo Island from a derelict shipbuilding yard into a festival venue is part of a long-term plan to revitalise this historic site.’

Senator Campbell said the festival’s program of music and cultural activities had struck a chord with the people of Sydney. Music, cinema, exhibitions, comedy, performance and camping combined to produce an eclectic program that reflected Sydney’s vibrant cultural life.

‘The festival was also a significant test of the island’s capacity to host a large event, not least transporting people to and from the site. The industrial fabric of the island, its buildings, aprons, roads and other spaces, proved themselves uniquely suited to performance, food outlets and places to relax and enjoy the views of Sydney Harbour.

‘The Trust will continue its program of rehabilitating Cockatoo Island and working towards the goal of ever greater public access. The festival has established the island as part of Sydney Harbour’s public domain. This is fitting given the island’s place in the story of Sydney.’

Senator Campbell said the Trust’s comprehensive plan for its seven sites around Sydney Harbour envisaged small-scale maritime activity on Cockatoo Island and a range of complementary activities centred on the island’s history and pivotal location in the harbour. The Government approved the comprehensive plan in 2003 and allocated \$115.5 million in the 2003 Budget to implement the plan.

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