Operating Heritage Australia

Glossary of Terms for Operating and Engineered Heritage



OHA Glossary of Terms for Operating and Engineered Heritage

This document has been produced to provide a guide to custodians, owners and operators caring for objects of **operating, engineered heritage**.

Operating: performing its designed function

- Heritage objects do not usually operate for extended periods or at full capacity
- The terms used are also applicable to non-functioning or static engineered objects

Engineered: designed and built using scientific principles.

Introduction

This glossary provides definitions of key terms that are used in everyday heritage practice. It serves as a fundamental guide for those conserving, maintaining and operating heritage objects.

Its purpose is to ensure consistency in terminology when applied to operating engineered heritage.

Prior to developing this glossary Operating Heritage Australia identified:

- that there was a need for consistent terminology applicable to operating engineered heritage for owners, operators, regulators, museums, academia, auctioneers, vendors, and other heritage sectors

and

- that no comparable glossary existed relating to operating engineered heritage.

This glossary undertakes to resolve those shortcomings.

While the terms and principles listed here often align closely with Australian and international practice developed by traditional buildings and museum heritage communities, there are some differences in respect to terms more correctly applicable to and used by the Australian operating heritage community, and there are additional terms that specifically apply to engineered heritage.

We have chosen to give priority to terms used in Australia by the operating heritage community and have tried to use “everyday English”,

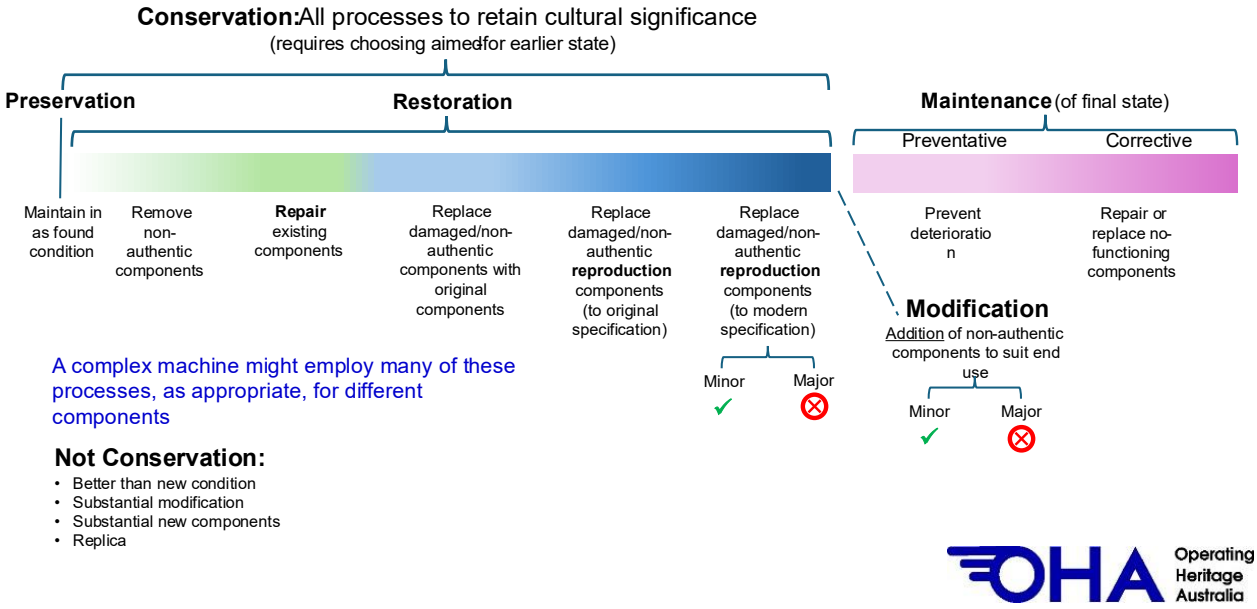
We believe the Glossary for Operating and Engineered Heritage will not only be useful to owners and custodians of operating heritage, but also valuable for other heritage professionals and sectors in appreciating and understanding the terminology and concepts applicable to the operating heritage.

Operating Heritage Australia

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Conservation of engineered heritage



OHA Operating Heritage Australia

Aesthetic:	A term used to describe a heritage object that is visually beautiful but can also include distinctive sensory qualities such as movement, sound, smell, feel or taste. For operating heritage, it may also be considered significant because of its technical design excellence.

Authenticity:	How closely the object represents its condition at a chosen earlier point in time.
	
	• The object is true to its period of original manufacture or the "known earlier state" in terms of:
	  ○ appearance and design
	  ○ materials and components
	  ○ functional capabilities
	  ○ sensory characteristics - sight, sound, smell, feel; the object manifests the correct aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period in time.
	• These attributes must be supported by thorough legitimate, credible and verifiable research.
	• This principle applies to the object and its components

Comparable:	Heritage objects that are of a similar type, make, model, era, design features including unique or specialised modifications. Comparative analysis will be required to determine this. If there are no comparable examples to be found, this could signify that it is a significant object.
Component:	A part or element of a larger whole, especially a part of machine or vehicle.
Condition:	The state of something regarding its appearance, quality, or working order • The extent of completeness, wear, corrosion and damage must be considered

Condition:

Condition Rating guide

Condition	Description
Very poor	Very extensive loss/damage which greatly impacts the integrity of the object
Poor	Wear, damage, deterioration and loss to a large proportion of the objects
Fair	Minor damage, some losses/deterioration more aesthetic than physical
Good	Some signs of wear but physically sound
Very good	Typical of condition found in well cared-for everyday use
Excellent	As new condition with little or no sign of use

- Examples that are in operating condition are likely to be more significant than those that are incomplete or not operating

Conservation:

All the processes involved in looking after an object or collection to retain its cultural significance.

Conservation Management Plan:

A document which assesses and records the cultural significance of a historic object and describes how any activities such as conservation, operation and maintenance processes can be managed appropriately retain the object's significance.

Cultural Significance:

A description of the importance we attribute today to an object or collection based on the impact it has had on the lives of individuals or communities throughout its "life".

Typical values for traditional heritage are:

- Historic significance – how was it associated with a person, place or event or activity in history?
- Aesthetic or technical significance – is it artistic and/or well designed? or does it display creative or technical excellence?
- Scientific or research significance – how does it provide information useful to researchers today or in the future?
- Social significance – how is it important to a community or group today?
- Provenance – what is the ownership, usage, maintenance and major restoration history of the object?
- Rarity or representativeness – is it rare or a particularly good example of its type?
- Condition or completeness – is it in good condition? Authentic? original?

Operating heritage can have additional values:

- Tangible sensory values such as distinctive movements, sight, smell, sound, feel, taste of the object
- Intangible heritage values such as traditional skillsets, technical and operating knowledge, oral traditions possessed by a person or community which must be safeguarded and transmitted to future generations to survive (memories or how to design, build or operate something).

Something can be significant to a nation, a state, a community or a family or only you.

Cultural Significance:

Levels of Significance:
Levels indicate the extent over which an object's heritage significance is recognised by any social or community group from a small local group to a large national or international association.

- Local
- State
- National
- International

Benchmarks for significance assessment

Benchmark	Description
Exceptional	Rare or outstanding example of the type.
High	High degree of original fabric. Modifications do not detract from its significance.
Moderate	Has some modified components. Components with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the object.
Little	Very few original components Modifications detract from its original form or function.
Intrusive	Damaging to the object's significance

Self-assessments of operating heritage objects can be carried out using OHA's Heritage Significance Assessment Tool

Engineered Heritage:

An object designed and built using scientific principles.

Existing State:

The state of the object as it is today.

Intangible Cultural Heritage:

"The practices, traditions, knowledge, skills – as well as the tools, objects, memorabilia, places and events that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage."
[UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage]

- For operating engineered heritage this includes:
- Knowledge & skills to construct/restore, operate and maintain operating heritage objects
- Associated objects such as tools, manuals, technical documents and spare parts
- Cultural spaces and events such as races, rallies, meetings
- Community organisations associated with the continuing conservation and operation of physical objects

The term "safeguarding" is used to describe measures aimed at ensuring the continuation of intangible practices, knowledge and skills, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement and transmission through formal and non-formal education.

Known Earlier State:

An identified and verifiable state that reflects a previous, more historically authentic, condition determined after thorough research.

Maintenance:
Maintenance:
	The continuing care of an object.
	• Preventive Maintenance
	  ○ Inspection, condition monitoring, cleaning, tightening, lubricating
	• Corrective maintenance
	  ○ Repairing or replacing worn, damaged or corroded components (often designed to be replaceable)

Modification:	Changing an object to suit an existing or other use. • Note that the object may have been modified during its working life. Some of these modifications may be historically or technologically significant and must be retained to retain significance (e.g. Southern Cross aircraft was modified before its historically significant use by Smithy, battle damage to military objects). • Modification related to conservation refers to modifications carried out during/after restoration. Modification is acceptable only where the adaptation has minimal impact on the cultural significance of the object (e.g. fitting turn indicators to a vintage motor vehicle is acceptable, converting it to battery-electric is not).
Object:	A material (tangible) thing that can be seen and touched (common terminology for physical heritage). For engineered heritage it can mean a simple object (nut or bolt) or a complex machine made from many smaller objects.
Operating Heritage:	An object that is able to perform its designed function. • Heritage objects do not usually operate for extended periods or at full capacity • The terms used in this glossary are also applicable to non-functioning or static engineered objects
Original:	The object as created or manufactured. • This term can apply to a complex object such as a machine or vehicle, or parts and components. • A vehicle or machine can contain original components but not be original in total: e.g. a vehicle fitted at some time during its life with original after-market accessories. In this case the complete vehicle could be authentic but not original. • For the whole object to be considered original, at least 75% of the components must be original material.
Patina:	Evidence of the natural deterioration of materials as result of use during the working life of the objects.
Preservation:	Maintaining an object in its existing state and retarding deterioration. • Ensure environment does not cause further deterioration (physical damage, harmful chemicals, dirt, heat, humidity, pests, etc.) • Minor, unobtrusive intervention is acceptable to prevent deterioration of materials (lubrication, stabilise existing materials).

Provenance:	The life history of the objects; a record of ownership and significant events including major maintenance and restoration. Can include documents, photographs, serial plates and registration details.
Publicly accessible:	On permanent exhibition (not on loan) in a public or private museum or collection and open to the public.
Rare:	Singular or unique or one of the last three remaining comparable examples on public display in Australia.
Repair:	Returning the existing materials of an object to a known earlier state to retain functionality with minimal introduction of new material. • Allows modification of an existing component (e.g. weld reclamation, sleeving, straightening, panel beating) • If a sub-assembly, it may involve replacing some components.
Representative:	Good example of type, model and make. Typical or characteristic example of type, model and make.
Reproduction:	A copy made to the original design using original or authentic materials. • Generally applied to parts and components • If applied to a complete machine the term “Replica” is generally used.

Restoration:	Returning an object to a known earlier state.
	
	• The earlier state is decided after considering the cultural significance and which significant attributes will be conserved
	• Different levels of restoration can be appropriate for the whole object or component parts (from least to most intervention)
	  ○ Preservation (maintain in as-found condition)
	  ○ Remove dirt and non-authentic components
	  ○ Repair existing components
	  ○ Replace damaged and non-authentic components with original components (e.g. new old stock or salvaged parts)
	  ○ Replace damaged and non-authentic components with new (reproduction) components to original specification
	  ○ Replace damaged and non-authentic components with new (reproduction) components to modern specifications (e.g. brake linings, tyres, electrical cables).