



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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Protecting Australia's interest in Holden cultural history

The Australian Government has sought the commitment of General Motors (GM) to comply with its obligations to protect and preserve culturally and historically significant objects following the company's decision to close operations in Australia.

The Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said Holden has been an iconic part of Australian life for many decades and its heritage is of immense importance.

"Many Australians have rightly expressed concern that the Holden business, now being shut down by its US parent company General Motors, holds extensive collections of historically and culturally significant motor vehicles and materials associated with the history of automotive manufacturing in Australia," Minister Fletcher said.

The Office for the Arts in the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications has commenced discussions on this matter with Holden over recent days.

"I am encouraged by Holden's statement that it would preserve key heritage vehicles and that it is working through plans with General Motors and local partners and institutions," Minister Fletcher said.

"The provisions of the *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986* will cover much of the material in these collections, which includes heritage vehicles, photos, documents and plans. It is likely that many items would be protected under the Act and may not be exported from Australia without a permit.

"The Government expects to see a clear plan from GM about how this significant material is to be preserved and maintained in Australia – which could potentially include it being made available to institutions such as the National Museum of Australia, the National Library of Australia, State government museums or privately-owned museums. As part of this plan, GM should also make sustainable arrangements for funding the preservation and storage of this material.

"The initial response from Holden has been a constructive one and I look forward to further engagement," Minister Fletcher said.

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Media contact:

Brad Hatch | 0448 162 679 | Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au

Rebecca Papillo | 0439 892 771 | Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au