Architectural Heritage of the 20th century:
RAIA DATA ENTRY FORM

This data entry form follows the UIA format with some additional fields and full details that will be referred to from UIA.

	Author:	Eric Martin (Blocks of descriptive text have been taken from: Citation for ICI House on the Victorian Heritage Register, VHR No H786. Taylor, Jennifer *Tall Buildings - Australian Business Going Up: 1945-1970,* Fine Art Media in assoc with Architecture Media, Melbourne, 2001 in the preparation of this nomination.)
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	City	KINGSTON
	State	ACT
	Postcode	2604
	Date:	24 January 2004
	Latest Update:	24 January 2004
	Status:	
	Project ID:	Orica House (originally ICI House)
	Image:	

Building / site description index

NOTE:
This document presents the elements of description of buildings on which the tool developed for Internet searches. An indexing form on the internet allows the on-line submission of this information. This document is intended to let anyone who is willing to participate forward us information about buildings to be added to the system without using the Web.

Our description grid consists of three tables:
- ✓ A brief list of "objective" elements of description,

- ✓ A report on the state of the building in order to point at protection needs,
- ✓ Six categories of criteria open to modification so as to bring contextual or national specificity to the fore. In this table both the criteria and their values are to be filled.

Name of the Criteria column indicates the name of the element of description required (example: "Date of design").
Importance of the criteria column lets you to point at the particularly importance of one or several elements of description of the building. You can here indicate (decreasing order A,B,C,D,E) whether an element of description appears to you as decisive in its selection for the index.
Not known elements of description may of course be left empty.

RAIA DB field	Name of the Criteria	Importance of the criteria	Your Building

RAIA DB field	Name of the Criteria	Importance of the criteria	Your Building

TABLE n° 1 : DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING / SITE

	MODULE 1 : IDENTITY OF THE BUILDING / SITE		
	Current name		Orica House
	Previous or other name(s)		ICI (Name changed to Orica in 1998)
	Present owner		Macquarie Bank
	Status of the owner		An independent Australasian company
	Materials and techniques		The structure for ICI House is a rigid steel frame with insitu concrete floor slabs up to the fourth floor, with the remaining upper levels being precast concrete floor units of inverted channel sections (tubs) spanning 12ft (3.6m) between steel beams. This was then topped with a concrete slab. The steel frame for the building was site-welded, allowing the end walls to have precast concrete panels hung off them and then covered by the glass-aluminium curtain wall. The glass used for the curtain wall spandrels and the end walls is a dusky blue ceramic enamelled glass imported from Belgium. The cladding material of the lift tower is reconstructed polished granite wall slabs, the first major use of this material in Australia. The panels are fixed by brass bolts which pass through the structural steel and are then bolted into brass sockets cast into the slabs. The granite used is grey crushed granite from Kingston, South Australia.
	Description		The building is an open plan concrete encased steel framed structure elevated on pilotis over what was originally an open undercroft. The main body of the building is clad with framed glazed curtain walling. The floors of the building are of precast concrete inverted channel sections panels. The building is comprised of 21 stories, including the ground floor and two floors below ground. The service core is expressed as a separate element from the main glass clad body of the building.
	Year of project design		1955
	Year of beginning of construction		1956
	Year of end of construction		1958
	Initial Design (if differs from description) and changes		The initial design differed significantly from what was to become the final scheme. The height and postiion on site of the lift tower (20 storeys) and the tower (19 storeys and roof structure) were all to change. In August 1955, the building had open ground space all around the

			base of the buildng including a 40ft (12.19m) setback from its southern facade on Albert Street. Within this setback was a carpark and a flat-roofed canopy. At this stage the building appeared to be completely glazed on three sides, with the fourth being expressed as a detached lift tower on the east side. The building was to sit on pilotes and there was a roof terrace with an open roof structure. By May 1957 the prismatic slab block had been shifted to front directly onto Albert Street. It was now 21 storeys, which included a roof structure. The carpark remained in its original position but was now covered by the tower slab above. A major formal change was that the tall, thin east and west elevations were delineated as solid elements. From the north attached sunshades, a landscaped garden with a biomorphic sculpture located close to Nicholson Street, and the lift and service tower were delineated as a discrete tower block presented a completely different and highly modulated facade. In July 1957 the east and west end walls were delineated once again as glass, as the precast panels were covered by the blue glazed skin. The ground floor was a carefully designed garden including sculpture and space for visitors cars. The building included a new corporate foyer.
	Documentation and References		Citation for ICI House on the Victorian Heritage Register, VHR No H786. "ICI House Melbourne" in *Architecture in Australia,* September 1959 Goad, Philip Ed, J*udging Architecure,* RAIA, 2003 Taylor, Jennifer *Tall Buildings Australian Business Going Up: 1945-1970,* Fine Art Media in assoc with Architecture Media, Melbourne, 2001

	MODULE 2 : BUILDING / SITE LOCALISATION		
	Postal Address: street, n°		1-4 Nicholson Street and 510-532 Albert Street
	Postal Address: town/suburb		EAST MELBOURNE
	Postal Address: Postal code		3000
	Urban centre/city		MELBOURNE
	Canton (Local Government area)		Melbourne City
	Region (State)		Victoria
	Country		Australia
	Regional Context (ex: Mediterranean basin, etc…)		Port Philip Bay, Victoria, Australia
	Continent		Australia
	Urban context (ex: Port, new town, etc…)		Capital city of Victoria, port.

	MODULE 3 : AUTHORS		
	Project Design: Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin		Sir Walter Osborn McCutcheon (1899-1983) was the team and design leader of the team in Bates Smart and McCutcheon. Born Melbourne, Australia 1899. McCutcheon had designed AMP House, Collins Street in 1929-31, Buckley and Nunn Store, Bourke Street in 1933, ICI's research laboratories in Deer Park in 1956, Wilson Hall, University of Melbourne 1952 and MLC buildings in many cities in the 1950s.
	Information on the author / the team		The team was a group of architects and structural engineers from within BSM. Two other of BSM's five partners were directly involved. H Selwyn Bates dealt with client and administrative matters. Douglas Gardiner, architect and technician was the detail and documentation partner. See also http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/biogs/P003760b.htm http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/tia/scripts/tia-dynindex.php3?EID=P003760
	Engineering:		
	Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin		Engineering associate in BSM was Harvey H Brown a structural engineer who was the engineering contributor to the cumulative technical success of the office's high rise construction techniques after his appointment as associate partner in 1951
	Mechanical consultants		W E Bassett and Associates
	Electrical consultants		Julius Poole and Gibson
	Construction: Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin		E A Watts Pty Ltd
	Garden Design Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin		The garden, its water feature and fountain, all of which remain intact, were the result of a collaboration between the architects, landscape architect John Stevens and sculptor Gerald Lewers, whose fountain sculpture is an intrinsic feature of the garden.
	Information on the author / the team		

	Contracting Authority:		
	Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin		ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries) an independent company. Chairman in the 1950s who initiated the building was Kenneth Begg.
	Information on the author / the team		See also www.orica.com/business
	MODULE 4 : TYPOLOGY		
	Type (single building/complex)		Single building
	Initial use		Commercial offices
	Present use		Commercial offices
	Planned use)		Commercial offices
	Architectural Style		Mid-Twentieth Century (1940-60) International Style

	MODULE 5 : EVALUATION (Analysis of significance)		
	Background		The design ICI House illustrates a tendency in Melbourne between 1890 and 1960 to inventively blend, assimilate and reformulate international ideas with local concerns. The war-induced overlay of industrial imperatives in construction, delivery and an aesthetic of repetitive efficiency was enthusiastically embraced. Internally, industrially produced surfaces and veneers and individually commissioned artworks replaced embellishment by craft.
	Technical		
	Comments/Evaluation		ICI House demonstrates considerable advancements in local construction techniques. These include the framed glazed curtain walls and innovative use of concrete, including precast reinforced units as floor and spandrel members. The division of the glazed offices from the solidly clad service tower was among the first in the world. From its completion in November 1958 until 1961 it was the tallest building in Australia. While curtain walling had previously been used to a small degree on facades in Melbourne, its use on ICI House was especially important in that the whole main body of the building is clad with it. At the time of construction it was believed that the east elevation of ICI House was the largest area of enamelled glass in the world. The reconstructed polished granite on the lift tower was the first major use of this material in Australia The ICI building's curtain wall was proposed 2.5 years after the Skidmore Owings and Merrill Lever House in New York and was

			internationally amongst the first of these new corporate towers. Other curtain wall buildings prior to this or at the same time are the United Nations Secretariat 1947-50, Lake Shaw Drive Apartments 1948-51, Seagram Building 1954-58, Inland Steel Building 1955-58 which has a separate service core as does ICI, Chase Manhattan Bank 1955-61, and although not high-rise General Motors technical Centre 1948-56. Another interesting building that was flush glazed and appeared as if a curtain wall is the Equitable Life Insurance Building, Portland, 1944-47.
	Social		
	Comments/Evaluation		The social aspects related to the technical and aesthetic values and the ground floor public space.
	Aesthetic		
	Comments/Evaluation		At its time it was a modernist aesthetic not of cubist abstraction but one of system building, repetition and modular planning and one in which the glass curtain wall modulated by aluminium framing was found to be the thinnest, lightest and most efficiently erected skin. No other building of its time could match the comprehensive resolution of glass curtain wall, landscaped garden and plaza, interior fitout and distinctive urban setting. From its opening ICI House was hailed as the most accomplished glass tower in Australia in the 1950's.
	Contextual		
	Comments/Evaluation		ICI House was a major architectural statement which contributed to Melbourne's position as a participant in innovative world architecture in the 1950's. Its design follows continued developments in international style modernism and such as the Ministry of Education and Health, Rio De Janeiro by Niemeyer and Costa, 1937-43, Lever House, New York by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, 1952 and The United Nations Secretariat, new York by Wallace Harrison, 1953. ICI represents the development of a typology of high rise glass curtain wall office buildings.
	Historical		
	Comments/Evaluation		ICI House was a landmark in the planning of the City of Melbourne. The building was more than double the previous height restriction enforced in Victoria and the design was permitted under the Uniform Building Regulations changes in 1955 because the site coverage was examined as a percentage of the total site area. This led to plot ratio determinations for city sites and the eventual

			redefinition of the central Melbourne skyline. The garden (along with its component parts i.e.: the Lewers fountain and the water feature) is of significance due to its role in determining the plot ratio that allowed the breaking of the height limit as well as defining the original formal entry to the building. ICI House represents architects Bates Smart and McCutcheon's most refined work in their typological development of the post-war glazed skyscraper, and as such is a rare and surviving monument to the ideals of corporate modernism of the 1950's – the corporation as embodied by an all-glass curtain-walled tall building – the post war realisation of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's crystal skyscraper projects of the 1920's. Yet its architects employed an aesthetic of efficiency associated with the mobilisation of the construction industry, the science of building systems and design through teamwork – a direct product of wartime experience – which followed the German Expressionists' transcendental idealisation of glass as the utopian material of the future.
	Originality		
	Comments/ Evaluation		The building's main entry is now off Albert Street through a foyer that was sympathetically remodelled in 1989 by the original architects. This originally was the secondary entrance whereas the main entrance was through the landscaped garden entered off Nicholson Street. The building is substantially intact externally but has been refitted internally.

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE			
			Nil

TABLE n° 2: STATE OF BUILDING / SITE

	MODULE 1 : ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE		
	State of building and defacement		Good
	Evaluation of danger (decreasing order A,B,C,D,E)		E
	Nature of danger		Nil
	Comments		-

	MODULE 2 : PROTECTION	
	Type	Listed on State Heritage Register
	Administrative level of protection	Listed as a Heritage Place but interiors are not covered by Heritage Victoria.
	Institution accountable	Victorian Government, Heritage Victoria
	Planned restoration	None proposed or required.

To fill in this last table, two types of answers are possible:

- A description of the building according to each module's theme, or, for a sharper analysis,
- The addition of new criteria that you consider as relevant in the description of the building (examples given below). In this case the answer includes the criterion name and the value it takes for the building.

TABLE n° 3 : CHARACTERISATION OF THE BUILDING / SITE
(Significance of the building under the Stated Criteria)

	Categories of Criteria		
	MODULE 1 : PERIOD OF DESIGN / CONSTRUCTION		
	In relation with trend it represents (social, political, and aesthetic ...).		On its completion in 1958 the ICI Building was the tallest building in Australia, the east elevation had the largest area of enamelled glass in the world, the use of reconstructed polished granite was the first major use of this material in Australia. Its curtain wall was among the first corporate towers in the world.
	MODULE 2 : FORMAL ARCHITECTURAL VALUE		
	Specific formal qualities or representativeness of a building in relation with the trend it represents (social, political, and aesthetic ...).		ICI's modernist aesthetic is one of outstanding design using system building, repetition and modular planning of which the glass curtain wall is a major element. The other elements of the landscape garden, sculpture and ground floor setting contributed greatly to the high aesthetic qualities of the building. No other building of its time could match the comprehensive resolution of glass curtain wall, landscaped garden and plaza, interior fitout and distinctive urban setting.
	MODULE 3 : RELATION TO THE LOCATION		
	Spatial context of the building (global or local environment)		ICI House was a major architectural statement at the high eastern end of Melbourne CBD. It made a dominant mark on the skyline as it was the first to take advantage of greater height possibilities due to revisions to the Uniform Building Regulations.
	MODULE 4 : MONUMENTAL OR SYMBOLICAL SIGNIFICANCE		
	Value connected with history of building		The building is monumental in that it is a landmark building which is a refined design of a glazed curtain wall skyscraper.
	MODULE 5 : ATYPICITY		
	Significant originality of works / building		The building was designed by Sir Walter Osborn McCutcheon, director of one of Australia's leading architectural practices. Other key contributors were: partner Douglas Gardiner (BSM) engineer Harvey H Brown (BSM), Landscape Architect John Stevens and Sculpture Gerald Lewers.

	MODULE 6 : CONSTRUCTION / STRUCTURE		
	In which areas is the building a forerunner or exemplary		ICI House demonstrates considerable advancements for its time particularly in premanufactured components including framed glazed curtain walls and precast reinforced concrete units including flooring.

	STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE		
	In which areas is the building a forerunner or exemplary		ICI House is a landmark building with outstanding modernist aesthetics of a glass curtain wall building of the 1950s. At its time it was the tallest building in Australia, had the largest area of enamelled glass in the world and was the first major use of reconstructed polished granite in Australia. It was innovative for its time particularly with its premanufactured components including framed glazed curtain wall and precast reinforced concrete units including flooring. The building has high aesthetic appeal with its ground floor and distinctive urban setting with its pilotis design and plaza incorporating a landscape garden and sculpture. The building is the major work by one of Australia's leading architects, Sir Walter Osborn McCutcheon with contributions by architect partner Douglas Gardiner, structural engineer Harvey M Brown, Landscape Architect John Stevens and Sculptor Gerald Lewers.

	IMAGE and PLAN		
	Image:		
	Plans