



Australian Philatelic Federation Bulletin

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New APF National Class - Special Studies

Introduction

The Australian Philatelic Federation has approved a new National Exhibition class. The Special Studies class will enable exhibitors to enter exhibits which do not fit the rules of the other classes. As an Australian National Class, it will be recognized at Australian exhibition but not internationally. The new class may be now included in the prospectus for future National exhibitions and will be listed in the 2027 Full National exhibition in Canberra.

Full details of the Special Studies class are listed below.

Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Special Studies Class Exhibits at APF Exhibitions

Overview

The Special Studies Class covers exhibits that cannot be categorised in any other APF or FIP class as well as exhibits which are experimental in nature. This includes exhibits which combine elements of different classes as well as exhibits of material which are not covered by the other classes.

Special Studies Exhibits require a well-defined purpose and scope as well as a logical plan of organisation. The Exhibitor must carefully explain what they are attempting to accomplish and the challenges of putting the exhibit together. Exhibits would be expected to have some postal, philatelic or fiscal relevance (as broadly interpreted).

Examples of a special Studies Exhibit include (but are not limited to) exhibits such as:

- Comprise unstamped stationery such as post office forms and unstamped aerogrammes (for example, a display of private permit aerogrammes), postcards (but not a display that should be shown in the picture postcard class), lettercards and the like.
- Comprise or include commemorative covers, advertising covers, and the like where the material or the treatment does not permit its inclusion in another class.
- Thematic or topical class type exhibits which include significant amounts of material not allowed under the thematic or topical rules (for example, the use of advertising covers, picture postcards)
- Comprise philatelic numismatic covers (PNCs)
- Unstamped revenue-related documents including cheques and the like
- Use items from two or more classes, for example, traditional and postcards; postal stationery and unstamped stationery; traditional and first day covers; postage stamps and revenue stamps;
- An Open Class type exhibit but which has limited variety of non-philatelic items shown, such as postal history enhanced by period photos.
- Documents with some relevance to the postal or fiscal systems.
- Comprise paper ephemera with some postal or fiscal relevance

Criteria and scoring

For Special Studies exhibits, the following scoring shall be used:

Treatment: 25

Philatelic and subject Knowledge, Personal Study and Research: 40

Condition: 10

Difficulty of Acquisition: 20

Presentation: 5

Total: 100

One Frame Exhibits

A One Frame Special Studies exhibit is intended to be an exhibit with a very narrow theme that fits into one frame. If a theme can be shown in more than one frame, it is not suitable as a theme for a one frame exhibit. A selection of items from a multi-frame exhibit may be suitable only if the selection can completely treat a natural sub-theme of the exhibit within one frame. An extract of a multi-frame exhibit showing only the best items (“cherry picking”) from a multi-frame exhibit is not appropriate as a one frame exhibit.

The Title Page

All exhibits must include a title page which should consist of:

- The title of the exhibit
- Short, precise and relevant general information on the subject
- A description of the purpose of the exhibit
- A description of the scope of the exhibit (What is included in the exhibit and what is omitted)
- A plan of the structure of the exhibit – chapters or sections etc.– rather than a “frame by frame” or “page by page” description
- A list of personal research by the exhibitor within the subject (with references to articles or literature)
- A list of the most important literature references

Treatment

Treatment of the exhibit reflects the degree to which the exhibitor is able to create a balanced exhibit characteristic of the chosen subject. A logical progression that is easy to follow and a clear concise write up will help the jurors to appreciate the exhibit. In assessing treatment jurors will check that the statements made in the introduction and plan are adequately represented in the display.

The Exhibit may be treated in a manner chosen by the Exhibitor and can, for example, be traditional, chronological or organised by subject or by topic.

The exhibit is evaluated on the following:

- The completeness of the material shown in relation to the scope of the exhibit
- The subject has been chosen to enable a properly balanced exhibit to be shown in the space available
- The content reflects the title, purpose, scope and plan
- There is a logical flow in the exhibit
- The headlines of each page support the understanding of the treatment
- There is a good balance between the different parts of the exhibit
- There is a natural start and ending point of the exhibit

The Introduction Page is evaluated on whether it:

- Introduces the purpose of the exhibit
- Defines the scope of the exhibit
- Explains the structure of the exhibit
- Has a plan of the exhibit
- Mentions the most important literature/references

The material for a Special Studies exhibit will be chosen to support the treatment of the Exhibit. The judges will appreciate that this treatment shows the exhibitor’s knowledge of the material.

Philatelic and Subject Knowledge, Personal Study and Research 40

Philatelic and subject knowledge is demonstrated by the items chosen for display and their related comments. Personal study is demonstrated by the proper analysis of the items chosen for display. Personal research is presentation of new facts related to the chosen subject.

The judges will judge this criterion taking into account the nature of the exhibit. ‘Philatelic knowledge’ will be taken to include ‘Knowledge of the material shown’ where the material is not ‘philatelic material’ in nature. The points will be split into philatelic and subject knowledge as appropriate for the treatment of the exhibit.

The judges will take into account:

- The choice of items reflects knowledge of the chosen area
- The exhibit should demonstrate a full and accurate appreciation of the subject chosen
- The existing literature within the area has been used
- The items are well described
- Personal study
- Research and new discoveries should be given full coverage in accordance with their importance.
- Condition
- All material should be in the best possible condition. This criterion will be judged in the same manner as other classes.

Exhibitors are encouraged to show unique or very rare material that does not occur in fine condition, but are cautioned from including other items in a condition that may reduce the perceived overall condition of the exhibit. The condition of common material should be impeccable. It is important to remember that the actual condition obtainable will vary according to the country, period and type of material. If an item has been restored or manipulated it must be described as such.

Difficulty of Acquisition

Difficulty of Acquisition is directly related to the items shown and to the relative scarcity of this material (however, not the value).

If using rarity statements (“One of X recorded”) it is important to mention the source of this recording. Do not use expressions like “Unique” or “Very rare”.

Presentation

The method of presentation should show the material to the best effect and in a balanced way. The exhibit is evaluated on:

- Good balance in the frames and the individual pages
 - Good use of the page - with not too much white space on the pages
 - The write-up is clear, concise and relevant to the material shown and to the subject chosen for the exhibit
 - Sufficient write up - but not too much text
 - Illustrations are not too dominating. Any photocopies must be a minimum of 25% different in size from the original
 - Careful mounting
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