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## MEDIA RELEASE

### EXPANDED LUNAR COIN PROGRAM INCLUDES INNOVATIVE 'FIRSTS' FOR COLLECTORS

The introduction of two innovative 'firsts' for collectors makes The Perth Mint's 2007 Australian Lunar program of 99.99% pure gold and 99.9% pure silver legal tender coins the most expansive and original in its 12-year history.

First issued in 1996, the program was inspired by the significance of the traditional lunar calendar in Asian societies and widespread observance of Chinese New Year around the world.

Creating a ready market for Australian precious metal coins in Asia, the Australian Lunar program has become popular in the United States and Europe. More than 6.8 million ounces of gold and silver Lunar coins have been sold since 1996, ranking it as one of Australia's most successful coin programs.

The latest coins, which celebrate the Year of the Pig, comprise bullion gold and silver investor releases, stunning proof quality gold and silver numismatic versions, and a growing number of other limited mintage collector issues benefiting from a range of special coin treatments with outstanding appeal.

General Manager Veronica Maguire said the success of the Australian Lunar gold and silver coin program reflected the Mint's trusted reputation for precious metal Australian legal tender. "Bullion coin sales have grown in line with surging interest in precious metal as an investment," she said. "In the collector market, supreme quality and innovation are the key drivers, measures that The Perth Mint has consistently delivered on."

Renowned internationally, proof quality Australian Lunar coins depict a delicately frosted animal on a mirror-like polished table. The 2007-dated gold Proof Lunars portray a pig standing in a bed of mushrooms, while silver versions bear a complementary design of a pig on bed of flowers. Both reverses include the Chinese character for 'pig'.

The 1oz Gilded Edition, a specimen quality 99.9% pure silver coin, features a similar pig that is exquisitely gilded in 24-carat gold. Like the latest Coloured Edition silver coins, which feature a selectively coloured image of a pig, it is especially popular in the Mint's burgeoning Asian markets.

An amazing addition to this year's line-up of official Australian Lunar releases is the new 1oz 'lenticular' silver proof coin, the Mint's first Australian legal tender release to celebrate the lunar New Year with moving imagery. Comprising 24 coloured frames that produce a movie-like sequence, the reverse depicts a young pig walking on grass with mountainous scenery in the background.

The Perth Mint has also released the first Lunar-themed 1oz silver proof Holey Dollar & Dump Set. Based on the famous coin format introduced by Governor Macquarie in 1813, the reverse of the Holey Dollar portrays all 12 animals associated with the lunar calendar - the mouse, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig.

The reverse of the gold-plated Dump is inscribed with the words LUNAR NEW YEAR 2007 and GOOD FORTUNE & PROSPERITY, which surround Chinese characters meaning Happy New Year.

Ms Maguire said that the new coins offered tremendous opportunities for collectors. "A 'first' of any kind in the world of numismatics sparks extra interest among collectors who will naturally be attracted by the originality and limited availability of these exciting releases," she said.

The continuing success of the Australian Lunar coin program was assured with plans for a second series of pure gold and silver coins well advanced, she added.

The precious metal coins from The Perth Mint's 2007 Australian Lunar coin program are available by calling toll free on 1800 098 817, through The Perth Mint Shop located at 310 Hay Street, East Perth and leading coin dealers.

To find out more about The Perth Mint and its extensive range of products visit our website at [www.perthmint.com.au](http://www.perthmint.com.au)

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#### **PICTURE EDITORS**

Images of the 2007 Australian Lunar coin program can be downloaded from:  
[www.perthmint.com.au/gc/distributors/images.asp](http://www.perthmint.com.au/gc/distributors/images.asp)

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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