



MEDIA RELEASE

CONVENTIONS AUSTRALIA MAKES CSR A PRIORITY

May 2009

News that IMEX 2009 is to have a strong environmental and CSR educational focus is music to the ears of the Conventions Australia partners exhibiting at the event in Frankfurt.

Recent convention centre developments in Melbourne and Brisbane are incorporating the very best in cutting edge environmental design, whilst established venues and their convention bureaux have embraced environmentally responsible strategies and CSR initiatives as an utmost priority.

The new Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre has already set world benchmarks by becoming the first convention centre in the world to be awarded a '6 Star Green Star' environmental rating, relating to energy, water, indoor environment quality and the construction materials used.

The Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre's commitment to creating a greener exhibition Industry has earned it the Exhibition and Events Association of Australia's inaugural Best Green Initiative Award. This recent accolade recognises the continued success of the Centre's *Ecowise* programme, launched four years ago, which has assisted the venue to raise its resource recovery rates from 11% to 41%, as well as achieving a 21% reduction in water consumption.

The Adelaide Convention Centre has also won a Corporate Social Responsibility award at the prestigious Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) Industry Awards in Australia for their *Gold Service. Green Attitude* programme which includes environmental and CSR initiatives as well as sustainable meeting packages.

The Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) is undertaking a significant expansion, to be known as BCEC on Grey Street. The \$130 million development will build on BCEC's current environmental standards and practices to meet global environmental benchmarks.

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Conventions Australia is a partnership between the 14 leading Australian convention centres and bureaux which are active in the international market, specifically in relation to international association meetings.



Brisbane has also been chosen to host a major conference focusing on sustainability issues when the World Green Infrastructure Congress is held at the BCEC in 2012. This event follows on to the recently staged Green Cities '09, which was Asia Pacific's biggest event focussing on leading edge thinking on sustainability for the built environment. The 2012 event is expected to attract 2,000 delegates from the global green roofs industry and the food and energy industries.

Australia's Northern Territory is walking the talk with one of the region's leading conference hotels, Crowne Plaza in Alice Springs, installing the largest rooftop-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) system in the Southern Hemisphere, setting an enviable green benchmark for the hotel industry. The Territory is home to Australia's largest indigenous population and the Northern Territory Convention Bureau (NTCB) is working closely with indigenous communities and organisations to enable visiting business groups to make an interactive CSR contribution. A recent corporate incentive took on a range of tasks at a kidney dialysis clinic established for indigenous patients from the Western Desert region. The corporate visitors set about repairing storm damaged fences, produced meals, purchased cooking equipment, repaired children's bicycles, created a vegetable garden and also donated a lump sum of money towards the purchase of a mobile dialysis unit.

"We're delighted that our partners have so enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to develop environmentally sustainable infrastructure," said Amanda Anker, speaking on behalf of Conventions Australia. "It's not just about bricks and mortar either – world benchmarks have been set in operational initiatives, as well as socially responsible programmes which we believe strongly enhance Australia's position as a cutting edge international business events destination."

Conventions Australia was formed to raise the profile of Australia, increase the level of awareness and reinforce it as an ideal business events destination in the international association market.

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