

# Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

## Striving for Sustainability

### Minimising Environmental Impacts

Environmental leadership is a compelling factor in the global competitive meetings and events industry structure.

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre strives to be a world leading sustainable event facility. The Centre is committed to achieving ecologically sustainable development through a balance of environmental, social, economic and cultural factors.

### Energy Efficient Initiatives:

- ❖ Introduction of a customised Carbon Calculator, a first in Australian Convention Centres, designed to allow clients to make informed choices to reduce the carbon footprint of their events and provide the opportunity for staging carbon neutral events. Over 30 significant events have used the Centre's Carbon Calculator in the past 12 months
- ❖ Creation of an electronic 'Dashboard' to measure the Centre's energy conservation and waste reduction to continually monitor sustainability performance against benchmark targets. The Dashboard information is communicated to visitors via the Centre's digital signage network, and to staff via a 'Green Screen' in the staff bistro
- ❖ Retro fit of the Centre's escalators to sensor mode resulting in savings of 30% in escalator energy usage during the past 12 months
- ❖ Installation of a Digital Signage system across the Centre's operations
- ❖ The purchase of Green Power for the Centre's Administration Offices resulted in saving of 103 tonnes of Co2 emissions during the last 12 months
- ❖ Installation of advanced air conditioning control in the Centre's Plaza Ballroom, in conjunction with Honeywell, during the past 12 months indicates a saving of 28% HVAC energy consumption
- ❖ Partnering with major conferences to reduce their carbon footprint and sharing the cost of purchasing 'Green Power' for their events

## **Resource Recovery:**

- ❖ Installation of a Bio Bin – only the second to be installed in Brisbane – producing on average 54m<sup>3</sup> of compost each year from the organic waste generated by the venue. Using this process eliminated organic waste being sent to landfill (along with reduced methane generation). Compost produced by the Bio Bin is used as a soil conditioner or as a fuel source for Green Power generation
- ❖ Segregation and recycling of traditional waste products including 1023m<sup>3</sup> of bottles and cans, 1713m<sup>3</sup> of paper and cardboard, 663m<sup>3</sup> of plastic sheeting and cling wrap, polystyrene, metals, timber, construction waste, e-waste, fluorescent lights and vinyl and plastic banners. (2400 fluoro tubes, 971 compact fluoro tubes and 224 metal halide lamps recycled in the last 12 months)
- ❖ Recent introduction of capability to recycle non rechargeable (primary) batteries
- ❖ Reusing discarded event materials (banners, signage, purpose built stands etc) by sending them on to Reverse Garbage (approx 23m<sup>3</sup> in the last 12 months)
- ❖ 1660kg of e-waste (including secondary recyclable batteries) recycled in the last 12 months
- ❖ The Centre's purchasing policy ensures a review process takes place to qualify products as meeting the Centre's environmental standards. A recent example in the past 12 months is the purchase of 50,000 new biodegradable cornstarch pens for use throughout the Centre. The Centre partners with its suppliers in sourcing environmentally friendly product and services
- ❖ The Centre has an ongoing commitment to source local produce and partner with suppliers to reduce environmental impacts empowering clients with choices which reduce embedded emissions and food miles for their events

## **Water Conservation:**

- ❖ Installation of a 36,000 litre rainwater tank for storage of water used for cleaning and general purpose use
- ❖ High pressure cleaning of the Centre using recycled water to reduce water usage for all external cleaning work
- ❖ Creation of an ice well to house left over ice and water from events at the Centre for reuse for cleaning purposes

- ❖ Through designing and manufacturing a 'paint wash' system to separate paint solids from water, a saving of 1000 litres of water was achieved via this system
- ❖ Having previously removed all water features and modified gardens, remaining landscaping is hand watered with recycled water
- ❖ Water used in events such as the Boat Show is captured and reused by Centre for cleaning purposes
- ❖ Major cleaning projects – cleaning of the 54,000m<sup>2</sup> venue roof is done using recaptured recycled water. Recycled water is used for washing the venue and this water is then captured, filtered to remove soil and pumped back up to roof level and reused

## **Commitment to change**

The Centre has established management structures and systems within the organisation to drive sustainability initiatives and practices across the entire operations. These include the formation in 2003 of an actively and operationally focused Green Team and in 2008 the Environmental Task Force - the strategic driver of the Centre's sustainability program.

The Environmental Task Force is a cross functional decision-making body chaired by the Centre's General Manager. The Task Force has an annual management plan with targets and KPIs and is responsible for identifying and delivering initiatives that will reduce the Centre's environmental impact.

The Centre has international Green Globe accreditation and has accreditation under ISO 9001 and ISO 22000.

## **Commitment to Community**

The Centre has a commitment to work practices which engenders sustainable values and community focused outcomes, executed through the two components of its Corporate Social Responsibility Program - ecowatch and communitywatch. The effect and impact of this is financially and culturally rewarding.

Clients are provided with the opportunity of choosing a venue with responsible environmental values and partnering in those values - the community benefits by the adoption of those values.

E.g. The Centre is a partner of Foodbank - the largest hunger relief program in Australia - and delivers all unused packaged food to Foodbank for distribution to the hungry and homeless. To date the Centre has contributed some 40,000 packaged meals to Foodbank.

- ❖ The Centre has a policy to source all its food and beverage product from local suppliers

- ❖ The Centre strives to reduce the number of deliveries related to supplies and waste disposal through coordination between suppliers
- ❖ Collaborative and cooperative partnerships with conference organisers and event planners to find ways to minimise energy consumption and reduce the carbon footprint of events
- ❖ Providing event planners with tailored advice for staging a 'green event'
- ❖ Collaborating with clients to showcase the success of their efforts to create environmentally friendly events to encourage others
- ❖ Introduction of a free, customised carbon calculator for events

## **Engaging with the community**

The Centre operates a comprehensive and strategic corporate community engagement program managed by a Community Cabinet - a cross functional voluntary group sponsored by the Centre's General Manager and chaired by the Human Resources Manager. The program engages employees and ensures we contribute to the social well being and strengthening of our local community.

It includes:

- ❖ Community Service Days - when employees are encouraged to work as teams undertaking a day of community service
- ❖ Sharing our resources - a surplus equipment and food donation program
- ❖ Community discount program - where selected community and charity organisations are supported by providing services and facilities at a significant discount
- ❖ Pathways to work - a program which fosters employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians at the Centre
- ❖ Give as you earn - a payroll giving program supporting up to 8 charities nominated by staff
- ❖ In the past 12 months 106 staff members were involved in more than 620 hours of community service