

NATIONAL CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AUDIT Business Events Sector



December 2008

About the Research

In response to the global need to deliver events that have a stronger social or environmental focus, Tourism Australia has conducted an audit to identify businesses with solid Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) credentials.

Increasingly, corporate meeting and incentive planners are seeking out information on venues and services in Australia that can assist businesses in staging events that are more sustainable.

Through this research potential and existing customers in the business events sector can be better informed about Australia's green and socially responsible operators - from convention centres, conference and incentive hotels to staging companies.

The national audit provides a comprehensive inventory of product and operators that already have some form of green accreditation, whilst also identifying operators that are planning to become accredited in the future.

Key Objectives

To collect information about levels of accreditation, the breadth of green products, community initiatives, examples of programs and projects, and steps being taken to develop CSR objectives in the business events sector.

- Gather evidence to market Australia's CSR credentials to position Australia as a destination where the natural environment is valued and protected.
- Use information and evidence to support marketing of Australia as a sustainable business events destination.
- Develop an inventory of product and case studies for best practice in the business events sector.

Key Findings

Accreditation

Overall, one in three audit participants (35 per cent) reported holding at least one accreditation, with an average of 1.4 accreditations per organisation.

- A total of 31 per cent of organisations are currently seeking some form of accreditation, and 27 per cent intend seeking accreditation in the next 12 months.
- A significant proportion of the business events sector reports it is presently actively engaged in seeking travel and tourism accreditation as well as building related accreditation.
- Key among these is the Accommodation and Convention & Exhibition Centre sectors' focussed pursuit of International Green Globe Bronze/Silver accreditation and interest in the National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- The Business Events Sector is engaged in a wide range of CSR and sustainability related activities.
- Larger organisations (100 plus employees) and international brands appear ahead of the game in terms of their breadth and depth of involvement in CSR activities, driven by client demand and industry alignment.

Key Respondents in the Business Events Sector

- Accommodation, venues, convention and exhibition centres and convention bureaux are classified as key respondents in the business events sector.
- These key respondents are more actively involved in the CSR - close to half (46 per cent) hold at least one accreditation and a significant proportion are currently in the process of seeking accreditations such as Green Globe Bronze and NABERS (one in four for each).
- This suggests these key respondents are better equipped to lead the business sector in promoting Australia as sustainable business events destination.

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Demand for Sustainable Product and Availability

- The business events sector recognises increased demand for sustainable product from the market, both domestic as well as international.
- This increased demand is more likely to be seen as originating domestically (69 per cent), significantly ahead of international demand (37 per cent). This outlook may be potentially related to greater participation in the domestic market by the business events sector.
- A reasonable proportion (30 per cent) claim to offer low impact business event choices, although all of these may not perhaps be fully supported by formal accreditation.

Audit Methodology

- In conducting the research, responses from a total of 278 organisations in the Australian business events sector were collected via an audit conducted online.
- The audit was open for participation between 1 August and 31 October 2008.
- Business events organisations were invited via email to participate in the audit, which was conducted online.

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