

ISO 20121 Event Sustainability Management System Public Comment Period Now Open

The public comment period for ISO 20121 is now open and the level of international interest in the development of the standard continues to grow.

The event industry, sustainability practitioners and standard experts are invited to provide their comments on the Draft International Standard ISO 20121 Event Sustainability Management System until **11 September 2011**.

The Chair of the ISO Technical Committee (ISO/PC 250) that develops ISO 20121, Fiona Pelham MD of Sustainable Events Ltd commented: *“Everyone is encouraged to engage with their national standards body or one of the liaison bodies and share their feedback. The international working group has delivered an outstanding draft international standard and now is an opportunity for everyone to get involved with the development of sustainability within the event industry.”*

There are 29 participating countries, nine observing countries and six liaison bodies part of the working group for ISO 20121. Recent meetings held in Tokyo and San Francisco included representation from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, France, Japan, Norway, Spain, Sweden, UK, and USA.

Meegan Jones, President of the **Sustainable Event Alliance** and who represents the Australian mirror committee at international meetings noted: *“It has been a great experience working with the various countries on the ISO 20121 working group and bringing our committee’s comments to the table. The Australian mirror committee is keen to now show the draft international standard to the event industry in our country and gather as much feedback and contribution as possible to take to the next international meeting.”*

The mirror committees will review the comments received from the public feedback, decide on their national positions and submit relevant comments to be reviewed by the entire working group during the next meeting in Brazil in November.

The standard (ISO 20121) will be applicable to any organisation working within the event industry and it will take a management systems approach requiring identification of key sustainability issues relevant to the standard user.

Leonardo Martins from ABNT the Brazilian standard body and joint secretariat for ISO 20121 stated: *“It is clear from the working group’s input and from international interest that ISO 20121 will have international relevance and will be suitable for use in developed and developing countries.”*

ISO 20121 is expected to be finalized in 2012 to coincide with the London Olympics.

Make Your Comment

To read the standard and submit your comments for formal consideration, access the Sustainable Event Alliance website at www.sustainable-event-alliance.org. Non-members of the SEA are welcome to give feedback through the SEA. Members of the organisations which are on the ISO 20121 Australian mirror committee can also access the standard and offer their feedback directly through these organisations.

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The mirror committee for Australia is convened by Standards Australia. It consists of:

*Association of Australian Convention Bureaux
Australian Centre for Event Management (UTS)
Australian Banking Association
Business Events Sydney
Exhibition & Event Association of Australia
Environment Institute of Australia and NZ
International Congress and Convention Association*

*International Special Events Society
Live Performance Australia
Local Government & Shires Association (NSW)
Meetings & Events Australia
DECCWA (previous)
Sustainable Event Alliance
Sydney Olympic Park Authority*

The committee chair is **Giselle Radulovic** of Business Events Sydney.

About the Standard

ISO 20121 is a 'management system' standard. With extensive global stakeholder engagement and involvement, the resulting document will be a standard event organisers can follow to systematically address sustainable development issues in the event planning cycle. Rather than a checklist or how-to guide, the standard encourages the implementation of processes and systems to ensure sustainable development issues and potential impacts are identified, stakeholders engaged, objectives set and met, and a continuous improvement cycle embedded. Integral to success is the overarching commitment by the organisation's top management to sustainable development principles and their directive to its implementation in event management. Important also is that the team producing and running the event has skills and knowledge in sustainability and how it can be applied in action in event production. This will require professional development within the industry.

About the Sustainable Event Alliance

The Sustainable Event Alliance is an event industry association dedicated to the promotion and advancement of knowledge of sustainable development within the event industry. Its vision is to unite event professionals to work towards increased consideration for sustainable development. Formed in February 2010, it has chapters developing all across the world. It is an Australian-founded international initiative, lead by Meegan Jones (Author of **Sustainable Event Management: A Practical Guide**) and Jane Fullerton Smith (**Sustainable Event Management Systems**). The Sustainable Event Alliance:

- Provides a knowledge bank on sustainable development for the event industry.
- Offers a portal for networking and discussion around sustainable event management.
- Communicates and creates a commonality of best practice in sustainable event management across all industry sectors and the supply chain.
- Spreads the desire to reduce impacts of event production.
- Opens up opportunities for development of sustainable production solutions within the industry's supply chain.
- Hosts an 'endorsed supplier database' for members to access companies servicing the industry with sustainable solutions.

Events professionals, events, event organising companies, and suppliers to the industry, are invited to join the Sustainable Event Alliance. Annual membership is \$50 for individuals and \$100 for events or companies. www.sustainable-event-alliance.org [ENDS]

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