

## New International Standard in development for the Event Industry

The Australian event industry is participating in writing a new **international standard** to improve sustainability performance. **ISO 20121: Event Sustainability Management Systems** is in development and anticipated to be launched in 2012. Fifteen event industry and stakeholder organisations have been appointed to the Australian committee by **Standards Australia**.

Initially just an 'observer' in the development of ISO 20121, **Standards Australia** was encouraged to upgrade their status to 'participating', by the Australian chapter of the **Sustainable Event Alliance**. Australia is now taking an active role in the development of the international standard which will have an impact and consequence on the event industry in our country when launched. Approximately thirty countries are involved in the standard's development.

In June 2010 when encouraged to increase its involvement in ISO 20121's development, an information session was held by **Standards Australia** for the events industry to gauge its interest in the standard. The result was positive and from this the Australian 'Mirror Committee', was formed. This is a group of industry bodies representing stakeholders in the events industry in Australia. The members of the committee will feed information to and from their constituents into the standard's development process. The mirror committee for Australia consists of:

- **Association of Australian Convention Bureaux**
- **Australian Centre for Event Management (UTS)**
- **Australian Banking Association**
- **Business Events Council of Australia**
- **Business Events Sydney**
- **Exhibition & Event Association of Australia**
- **Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand**
- **International Congress and Convention Association**
- **International Special Events Society**
- **Live Performance Australia**
- **Local Government & Shires Association (NSW)**
- **Meetings & Events Australia**
- **NSW Department of Environmental Climate Change and Water**
- **Sustainable Event Alliance**
- **Sydney Olympic Park Authority**

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

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### The next steps

The mirror committee has met and worked through the '**Committee Draft**' of the standard. The committee's comments were added to the discussion at a global meeting in San Francisco in September 2010. The outcome of that meeting was a '**Draft International Standard**'. This will be **available for public comment in April 2010**. The Australian mirror committee members will distribute the standard to their networks for comment and this will then form the official comments by 'Australia' on the standard, to be discussed at the next global meeting in November this year. Any stakeholders in the event industry who wish to comment but are not members of the various event industry associations will be able to access the Draft International Standard and make comment through the **Sustainable Event Alliance**.

### 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.com](http://www.sustainable-event-alliance.com) [ENDS]

### For More Information:

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