

EVENT NAME: 2009 Thoracic Society of Australia & New Zealand (TSANZ) and Australian & New Zealand Society of Respiratory Science (ANZSRS) Annual Scientific Meeting

DATE: 3 - 8 April 2009

TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 890 participants including 50 exhibitors

OBJECTIVE OF CONFERENCE:

As is appropriate to Northern Territory, there was a particular focus on Indigenous Health and issues relations to tropical and remote regions. Darwin represented a new venture for both Societies and the decision was stoutly supported by the membership.

CHALLENGES & TRIUMPHS:

Any perceived challenges were flagged very early in the planning process. These were flight access and accommodation availability for close to 900 delegates as well as the potential negativity towards the travel distance involved.

TSANZ/ANZSRS Conference Manager and Director, Festival City Conferences, Ms Elisabeth Eaton said their concerns never materialised.

“Flight availability did not cause any more heartache than at any other Australian city, all delegates were easily accommodated, with a shortage of only a few rooms on a couple of nights, but that is a normal occurrence with any destination, plus we had the same level of exhibitor support as the previous 3 years.

“We believe the proactive approach undertaken by the NTCB by direct liaison with the Darwin hoteliers and airlines, well in advance, was instrumental in resolving any potential flight or accommodation shortages. It is these areas that Convention Bureaus play an important role in ensuring the success of an event. We thank Lynn Fairbrass and her team for their assistance,” added Ms Eaton.

“From an exhibition perspective, preparation is the key. It is so important that suppliers understand the complexities involved with coordination of such large events and the Darwin Convention Centre took the lead in this area. The Centre allowed the transport companies to deliver exhibitors’ freight and equipment several days before the start of the conference, in comparison with centres in some capital cities that will only accept deliveries on the day of the conference build.

“Little things like that make or break an event and we believe Darwin worked together as a team,” stated Eaton.



LOCAL SUPPORT

In her role as Director, Festival City Conferences, Elisabeth Eaton has organised several conferences in Darwin prior to the opening of the Darwin Convention Centre, even as far back as 2001.

“Some of the local suppliers are on a steep learning curve with regards to the specific needs and demands of a medical conference the size of TSANZ/ANZSRS.

One shining example was the dedication and commitment displayed by Total Event Services. The event required equipment to display 240 posters with a high level of presentation. It was believed that this equipment would need to be transported from either Adelaide or Brisbane, however the team at Total Event Services showed their ‘total’ dedication to success.

Ms Eaton said they listened to our needs and manufactured the poster boards to meet our specific requirements, we could not have been happier with that outcome.

“By taking a proactive stance and commitment to the Darwin convention industry, Total Events Services can now provide the services that are expected when organising such high profile medical events,” remarked Ms Eaton.

The Darwin Airport Shuttle showed extreme flexibility, a high level of professionalism and the ability to meet our last minute requests. Organising regular hotel shuttle services to transfer members to the venue at the start and end of each conference day with only a short lead time and were particularly organised with some last minute requests on the evening of the conference dinner held at the DCC.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY EXPERIENCE:

One of the true beauty’s of holding an event in Darwin was the relaxed tropical atmosphere. The warm balmy air and the idyllic positioning of the city surrounded by one of Australia’s largest harbours, it is no wonder that conference delegates develop an instant rapport with this northern capital. Escape from the ‘day to day’ pressures on hectic daily routines made it quite easy to slip into what is fondly known as “Darwin time”!

“Overall the suppliers have a keen desire and willingness to assist in every way they can. We certainly do not want to lose the charm and appeal of the Darwin experience, and we do look forward to returning when all facets of the Darwin Waterfront Precinct are in operation. In fact, we are currently working on bringing another larger medical conference to Darwin in the near future,” stated Ms Eaton.

SOCIAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

TSANZ/ANZSRS has a limited focus on social events. However ANZSRS held a conference dinner at Peewees on the Point Restaurant that was well attended. The waterfront location and the spectacular sunset added a magical atmosphere to this networking event.

PRE & POST CONFERENCE TOURS:

Many delegates who had not been to Darwin before took the opportunity to head to Kakadu, Katherine and Alice Springs, the Tiwi Islands and the region of Darwin itself.

CLIENT QUOTES:

"We had a wonderful experience at the Centre. All staff were very helpful, friendly and interacted well with the delegates. The food was fresh and delicious. The audio visual team were excellent and the wireless connectivity a bonus."

"We were initially cautious that distance might affect attendance, however that never eventuated. We experienced the same level of sponsorship and exhibitor support as the previous 3 years. We believe that members saw Darwin as an exciting, fresh destination and this attributed to the success of the meetings."

Elisabeth Eaton, TSANZ/ANZSRS Conference Manager, Director, Festival City Conferences

"The Darwin Convention Centre Production team excelled in the areas of pre-conference planning, had sound working knowledge of the venue and its overall running and displayed, strong communication & management skills amongst their team and to us the client."

"The personal approach made us feel quite special in every way, from the General Manager popping her head into the Conference dinner, to the IT trouble shooting and support, to the superb catering keeping that kept us well fed. It truly was a great team effort!"

Mark Stevens, TSANZ Audio Visual Manager, MARK ITMEDIA



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