

DARWIN CONVENTION CENTRE CELEBRATES FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Thursday 21 May 2009

Australia's newest convention centre is celebrating its first year of operations, and what an exciting year it has been.

Since it opened in mid-2008, the Centre has hosted over 150 national and international conventions, exhibitions, concerts, gala dinners and special events. It welcomed 30,000 of guests from over 34 countries to Darwin and the Northern Territory.

Highlights of its first year include:

- Hosting internationally respected academics as well as dignitaries including Nobel Peace Prize winner Jose Ramos-Horta; Professor Tim Beatley of Sustainable Communities, University of Virginia, USA, and Professor Olga Saugstad, Department of Pediatric Research, University of Oslo.
- Winning prestigious design and construction awards from the Masters Builders Association and the Territory Construction Awards amongst others.
- Delivering the ultimate multicultural Darwin is known for with more than 20 different nationalities comprising the service staff.
- Record delegate attendance and exhibitor sponsorship achieved by many conventions hosted.

The Head of Conference and Events for the 28th Travelscene American Express Conference, Mr John Zaharakis said "with increased infrastructure developments such as new accommodation properties and the attraction of the Australia's Northern Territory as a whole, Darwin is blossoming into a vibrant alternative for those looking to stage a meeting or an event in a new and exciting destination."

To support the demands of global conference organisers, the city of Darwin has also grown, adding essential incremental infrastructure and capacities such as:

- Increased airline seating capacity, with Qantas and Virgin Blue adding more than 350,000 seats per annum; Jetstar has chosen Darwin as the airline's Asian hub.
- An additional 713 rooms added to the accommodation inventory with the opening of the new Vibe Hotel and Medina Apartments at the Darwin Waterfront precinct and the Darwin Airport Inn.
- New 'Skywalk' connecting the waterfront precinct's hotels and the Darwin Convention Centre with the city centre.
- The opening of Darwin's newest attraction, Crocosaurus Cove, the largest display of Australian reptiles in the world, in the heart of the city.

The organisers from international conventions held at the Darwin Convention Centre speak for themselves.

"The Darwin Convention Centre is second to none; in fact it was one of the best venues ever to hold our event. The food was excellent, the auditorium had great visibility, the audio visual and IT communications were outstanding.

The Centre's staff were informative, very friendly and polite and the location was magnificent, overlooking the crystal blue waters of Darwin harbour."

Dr Amy Ramsay, International President, International Association of Women Police (IAWP)

"Many delegates remarked that Darwin had all the services and facilities of a major city but in a relaxed tropical environment. The city has its own special character with the added bonus, to international attendees, of being so close to Asia, which gave the conference a totally different dimension.

The staff at the Darwin Convention Centre have the right attitude and make everyone feel so welcome. The catering was top class, as good as any conference I can remember attending and participants commented on the quality of the food."

Mr Steve Healy , International Alumina Quality Workshop (AQW) Chair and General Manager of Rio Tinto Research and Development, Bauxite and Alumina

"The Darwin Convention Centre (DCC) as a venue was great for our event and we will definitely bring another conference to the Centre. The DCC team were flexible in delivering on our "out-of-the square" needs. In addition, the food was of a very high standard and the delegates were impressed with these aspects."

Dr Renee Bartolo, Conference Co-convenor, 14th Australasian Remote Sensing & Photogrammetry Conference and past National President of the Spatial Science Institute [SSI]

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Darwin Convention Centre is a project of the Darwin Cove Consortium and the Northern Territory Government and is proudly operated by international venue management specialist, AEG Ogden. www.aegogden.com



28TH TRAVELSCENE AMERICAN EXPRESS CONFERENCE AT THE DARWIN CONVENTION CENTRE