

DARWIN CONVENTION CENTRE RECEIVES HEALTHY VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FROM THE THORACIC SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

12 April 2013

Darwin Convention Centre is fast becoming a venue of choice for major events and conferences - particularly those of medical and scientific associations.

In the final week of March, Darwin welcomed the return visit of a major conference since opening, when the highly influential Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) returned for their Annual Scientific Meeting, just four years after their first visit in 2009.

TSANZ is the peak professional body of thoracic physicians, scientists and other health care professionals involved in respiratory health. The Society's goals include the promotion of the development and application of knowledge about respiration and respiratory disease and the highest quality and standards of patient care.

This year TSANZ's focus for the Meeting was on the advances in research and treatment of lung disorders that affect one in four Australian families.

The extent of the commitment with which the Society regards its Annual Scientific Meeting was evident both from the size and intensity of the program and the response of attendees.

The meeting included the involvement of associated symposia such as an Advanced Trainees Short Course on the Friday prior to the opening day and the annual meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Respiratory Science.

TSANZ's objective for its Scientific Meetings is always to embrace the broad spectrum of the clinical and scientific interests of its members. As such, there can be no doubt that the feature of currently relevant topics and issues dealing with new research and advances in matters including the latest research in cystic fibrosis, lung cancer and sleep disorders and issues regarding Indigenous respiratory health played an important part in the Meeting's delegate appeal.

With the TSANZ Meeting occupying the Centre's Auditoria, all the meeting rooms and other more informal spaces, many other issues were addressed, including exercise and oxygen intake in children born pre-term, smoking among young Indigenous people and breastfeeding and protection against snoring in childhood.

That initiative was further enhanced by the unique specialisation and world leading status of the visiting keynote speakers, who included: * Professor Eric Bateman MBChB, FRCP: Director of the University of Cape Town Lung Institute * Professor Peter Davies: Aintree and Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospitals in the UK. * Professor J Kirk Harris: PhD:Children's Hospital at Denver Colorado USA * Dr Alistair Story RGN, MPH, PhD: University College Hospitals and the Hospital of Tropical Diseases in London * who were supported by the participation of 27 well-credentialed Australasian speakers in several sessions.

TSANZ Chief Executive Officer, Rita Perkons, said the Society was pleased to return to the Darwin Convention Centre after holding its annual scientific meeting in the city in 2009." The Darwin Convention Centre is an outstanding facility and the professionalism and efficiency of the staff contributed to the success of our meeting this year," she said.

"The meeting attracted 773 TSANZ delegates, which was a very pleasing response given the distance of Darwin from other major capital cities in Australia.

"The delegate numbers reflected the quality of the scientific program and the calibre of speakers. Delegates also took the opportunity to network during the meeting with many enjoying the visitor attractions of Darwin after the event."

Malu Barrios, General Manager of the Darwin Convention Centre, said that when the Centre opened its doors in June 2008 it made a commitment to support its host city's evolving position as an international business powerhouse.

"It is always a pleasure to host major conferences and a special privilege to welcome back a high profile group of medical specialists of such professional standing as TSANZ and to play a part in their satisfying experience of the city.

So I am particularly pleased to hear that so many delegates also took the opportunity during their visit to enjoy our unique regional attractions."

"I was also reminded that a number of the Doctors who attended the first Conference of the Australasian Sleep Association (ASA), which was held at the Centre last October, were motivated by their experience to return to attend the TSANZ Meeting."

"That type of response is the best sort of endorsement of the Centre's performance," said Mrs Barrios

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