



All's well

FOLLOW the horses, he said, they will point you back to reception.



Odd - I was sure that Broome's Cable Beach Club Resort and Spa (CBCR), which meanders over bridges, lily ponds and past boab trees, didn't mention grazing horses.

It turns out said equines are stone reproductions of Xian's Terracotta Warrior horses and are positioned throughout the gardens to point guests in the right direction.

Broome, if you haven't been, is something else again: powdery blue seas, rich red pindan soil and a sniff of a wild west past.

It's a destination often on people's bucket lists and favoured by the motor vehicle industry for car launches, and for incentives and conferences by pharmaceutical and insurance companies and banks.

For **BEN**, it all began on Saturday with an overnight at the Quality Hotel CKS Sydney Airport in one of the newly refurbished King Rooms and a 4am wake-up call, after which things went skew whiff.

Our 6am Qantas flight to Broome via Melbourne was delayed for an hour; no one's fault, especially when it's a computer loading problem and safety is the issue.

It meant that on arrival in Melbourne, the meeting planners on this Perth Convention Bureau famil had to dash to the waiting connecting flight.

Our bags were not so lucky, so we spent the day in either our winter weight or borrowed clothes in 32 degree heat, later dining alfresco in a private area alongside the CBCR's Sunset Bar, watching the setting sun shine across the Indian Ocean, and forgiving all - especially as our bags made their way to us afterwards.

Broome continues Friday, so stay tuned for more in **BEN** o8 May.

Jill

MCEC expansion confirmed

THE Victorian budget has included provision for the expansion of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) (**BEN**



Breaking News yesterday).

The first Andrews budget was released yesterday, which committed to building stage two of the MCEC, expected to cost from \$190m to \$210m.

A business case was being assessed by the project team, with further details to follow when negotiations were complete, a state government spokesperson said.

Stage two was expected to include a 7,500 sqm expansion of exhibition space, 1,500 sqm of additional multi-purpose space, new concourse space and links to the existing Centre.

The project could begin later this year, with the construction and commissioning phase expected to take about 28 months, the spokesperson said.

Minister for Tourism and Major Events John Eren said upgrading the MCEC meant more floor space, corporate conventions,

overseas visitors and jobs.

The announcement follows the previous government's pre-election promise to fund the expansion (**BEN** 27 Oct 14), and an \$80m boost to secure major events for Victoria (**BEN** 04 May).

The expansion of the South Wharf precinct footprint was expected to see an extra 74,000 international visitors a year, with MCEC ceo Peter King saying it was estimated to see an extra \$175m a year for Victoria, on top of the \$580m contributed annually from the MCEC's activities.

The Plenary Group and partners would work with the government to finalise the proposed master plan, with details to come.

Melbourne Convention Bureau ceo Karen Bolinger said the commitment showed the government's recognition of the "substantial" role business events played in Victoria's visitor economy.

Today's issue of **BEN**

Business Events News today has two pages of news plus a full page from (**click**)

- The Travel Industry Exhibition

Jupiters Townsville's \$30m redevelopment



JUPITERS Townsville Hotel and Casino will become The Ville later this year, as it undergoes a \$30m redevelopment.

Proposed plans include a resort-style pool with a resizable pavilion for poolside functions and events, as well as an elevated timber terrace, Jupiters Townsville said.

Levels 14 to 16 would be refurbished starting later this year, Colonial Leisure Group (CLG) executive chairman Chris Morris said.

The redevelopment would help evolve the hotel's reputation as an entertainment and leisure destination for North Queensland, Morris said.

CLG bought the property last year from Echo Entertainment Group for \$70m, the *Australian* reported.

Minerals style guide

GEOSCIENCE Australia has provided an Australia Minerals style guide in response to a query about its request for tender for the design and construction of a promotional booth at the China Mining conference, with a \$600,000 budget (**BEN** 29 Apr).

The organisation confirmed that designs of the booth should be included with submissions.

CLICK HERE to read more.

DIRECTOR OF SALES - MICE

FOUR POINTS
BY SHERATON

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Four Points by Sheraton Sydney, Darling Harbour is only 12 months away from launching Sydney's most exciting hotel and convention venue. The hotel will boast 4,800sqm of convention, meeting and event space and will add 222 new guest rooms to its current portfolio, bringing the total number of rooms to 905.

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business events news

6th May 2015



FOR an event with a difference, look no further than the annual Stormtroopers Weekend.



Coming up to its sixth year, the two day event will be held from 23 to 24 May at Dreamworld, with 120 Star Wars characters expected to attend.

Activities include a daily Stormtrooper parade at noon, lightsabre lessons (Jedis only) and dueling, and Star Wars-themed LEGO displays.

Donations from guests will go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, with a percentage of funds raised from official photographs sold going to the charity, Dreamworld has said.

It's not quite the parade but you can **CLICK HERE** for the Star Wars characters dancing Gangnam Style.

Saddle up

ROYAL Randwick has a new venue in The Stables, that pays homage to the heritage of the Australian Turf Club.

Located on Level 4 of the Queen Elizabeth Grandstand II, the venue, which spans more than 1,200 sqm, is available to hire for luxury events, cocktail functions and business conferences, and offers commanding views of the lush green of the racecourse as well as the Sydney CBD skyline.

World Science Festival heads to BNE

BRISBANE will host the World Science Festival next year, as part of a six year agreement that will see it the second city in the world to secure the event.

To be held from 09 to 13 Mar 16, the Festival will be held in the streets, parks, museums, galleries and performing arts venues of Brisbane and regional Queensland and is expected to see 60,000 attendees.

Queensland Museum worked in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) to secure the event, a TEQ spokesperson said.

The Festival was expected to see more than 27,000 direct visitor nights, contributing "significantly" to the state's economy, Minister for Tourism and Major Events Kate Jones said.

CLICK HERE to read more.

It's raining GMs!

HALLELUJAH! There are more gm appointments happening in the world of Accor right now than you could poke a stick at.

To begin with, Craig Dodd has been appointed gm of Novotel Darwin; Matt Juniper is at ibis Townsville; the new gm of ibis Styles Mt Isa is Laura Ousby; Patina Farnham has the role at the Mercure Canberra; at the Como Melbourne it's Karen Taylor; Glen Erickson has joined Ibis Glen Waverley, then there's Guy Marinucci at the Mercure Treasury Gardens.

Wayne Harris has started at The Reef House Palm Cove; Brett Skinner took up his new gm role at Mercure Kakadu on 04 May and Alexis Hvalgaard joins the Mercure Broome on 18 May.

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Gray's Say

Peter Gray, an independent Motivation Consultant, presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the Conference and Incentive industries.



RACE TO THE BOTTOM

WHY is it that conference and incentive professionals appear to think so little of themselves that too often they allow their clients to dictate terms? How many members of other professions compete for business and do so without payment? Looking for a lawyer? Why don't we ask four or six or 10 or 20 to pitch for the business? Need surgery? Perhaps we'd better ask a number of eminent surgeons to demonstrate how they would perform the procedure we need!

Seems a ridiculous concept? Yes, of course it is, but C&I professionals go through this rigmarole time after time without any hope of getting paid for the amount of time and effort they expend on putting together a pitch, a proposal, call it what you will.

And how many times do we hear that the agency that secures the business has used the ideas and concepts others had outlined in their proposals...care of the client, of course? It's almost impossible to copyright ideas so how do we protect our intellectual property, or do we not bother?

Many larger companies have procurement departments that are responsible for evaluating project proposals and we have to hope they have been well briefed by the person originating the purchase request. Too many are instructed to accept the lowest price rather than the best value for money for the ideas and concepts presented. Imagine what would happen if the same principles were applied to the

examples already stated: the lawyer or the surgeon?

The C&I industries have to become more professional and stop selling themselves cheap. Many of us have done the hard yards (or whatever the decimal equivalent is these days); we've applied for and obtained accreditation in our chosen fields and now we can add the appropriate post-nominals to our name on our business cards. So what? How many potential clients know that they should request an accredited meeting manager, incentive practitioner or whatever? Not a lot, if recent research is any indication.

Too many clients are complaining that appointing a so-called C&I professional is a matter of caveat emptor. But the solution is in their own hands.

Meeting managers and incentive practitioners should refuse to do speculative work unless an agreement is in place for the protection of their intellectual property before they enter into any sort of competitive pitch. And if the agreement includes a fee to cover the work they will have to do in order to prepare the pitch (win or lose), so much the better.

Peter Gray is an independent Incentive Consultant and Motivational Strategist

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