



## Today's issue of BEN

**Business Events News** today has two pages of news and photos.

## Kerry Hotel HK

**SHANGRI-LA** Hotels and Resorts has announced it will open its fourth hotel in Hong Kong in Dec.

Situated on Kowloon's waterfront, the 545-room Kerry Hotel will offer a 1,756m<sup>2</sup> Grand Ballroom that seats 1,030 people banquet style, as well as 17 flexible meeting venues which can accommodate from 30-660 delegates, as well as indoor and outdoor areas.

## MEA chief calls it a day

**MEETINGS** and Events Australia chief executive, Linda Gaunt, has handed in her notice.

Having overseen the development of Meetings Events Australia for the last 11 years, Gaunt has established the association as a knowledge hub for the meetings and events sector, working also to build up the Australian Events Academy (MEA's registered training organisation).

"Linda has been instrumental in placing MEA on the national stage for meetings and events and is a well-known ambassador for the business events industry," praised

group chairperson Simon Baggs.

"On behalf of the Board, I congratulate Linda on her achievements and wish her all the best for the future," he said.

Gaunt commented that it is with "a great mixture of regret and great pride that I leave the association".

I am proud of what has been achieved for the meetings and events sectors over the many years I have been at the helm and I wish MEA every success into the future," she said.

Gaunt will depart in Sep, with recruitment for MEA's new chief executive to commence from today onwards.

## Wine Partners wanted

**ICC** Sydney is inviting producers and distributors of wine to submit their best drops to vie for a spot on their beverage list.

Sommelier and beverage operations and cellar manager, William Wilson, will work with a panel of industry experts to sample the submitted wines at a series of tasting sessions beginning from 18 Jul.

"More than 70,000 bottles of wine will be served annually to an ongoing calendar of exhibitions, conventions and entertainment acts across the integrated precinct," said Wilson.

"We are keen to hear from producers of all sizes who share our passion for craft and quality."

The ICC Sydney panel is expecting to taste over 200 premium varieties during the selection process.

## Glenelg motel revamp

**SOUTH** Australia's Comfort Inn Marina Motel in Glenelg is set to be transformed into a five-star hotel with conference facilities.

SA Minister John Rau said the long term job opportunities created by the development will provide a boost to the local area.

## MCEC director sleeps it rough



**THE** Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) played host to over 200 business and community leaders last week for the annual Vinnies CEO sleepout.

MCEC director of people and culture, Helen Fairclough (pictured), adorned her winter warmers and also got into the spirit; spending a blustery rainy night camping out on the steps with other participating business leaders.

"The Sleepout gives you a small glimpse into life on the streets, and it was rather overwhelming to experience what so many

Australians face every night, especially families, women and younger people," said Fairclough.

"It's so important to gather together to bring attention to this significant issue.

"MCEC executives have been taking part in the Sleepout for the last five years, and the entire organisation gets behind us each year to raise crucial funds," remarked Fairclough.

Approximately 100,000 people in Australia find themselves without a safe space to sleep.

To offer your support and sponsor Helen, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Vivid smashes record

**VISITORS** to Sydney's annual light festival, Vivid, cracked the two million mark this year - an increase of 35.4% on last year's attendance (1.7 million).

Minister for Trade, Tourism & Major Events, Stuart Ayres, said a standout area of growth this year had been the number of visitors travelling to NSW on specific Vivid Sydney packages, with 88,300 deals sold (up 104% on 2015).

## EVENTS BEYOND ARE HIRING!

### Senior Event Coordinator

Are you ready to take the next step in your career? Events Beyond is seeking an experienced Senior Event Coordinator looking to unleash their potential and grow into the roles of Event Manager and Director, with aspirations for more!

Events Beyond seek only the best of the best and are looking for professionalism, talent, creativity, motivation and DRIVE.

Our next team member will be a passionate individual who isn't afraid to roll up their sleeves and think outside the box to deliver exceptional outcomes for our business partners across a range of industries.

Essential qualifications include 2 - 4 years' experience in an events role, experience coordinating large-scale Conferences and Incentives, an in depth knowledge of domestic and international destinations and venues, experience working with EventsAir and a sound knowledge of GDS systems, preferably Galileo.

The successful candidate will have a direct and immediate impact in our growing business and will have an opportunity to 'fast-track' their skills, experience and expertise working alongside exceptional industry talent on a diverse and challenging portfolio of corporate events.

Interests and CV's to be directed to [guy@eventsbeyond.com.au](mailto:guy@eventsbeyond.com.au). Experienced applicants only.





# business events news

27th June 2016

## The Deck launches at Mercure



### crumbs!

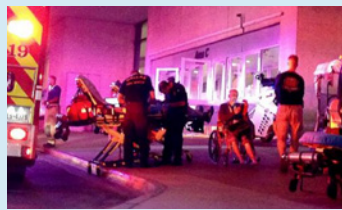
**WARNING** not all motivational speakers should be trusted.

A group of eager participants at Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Texas who were inspired by motivational speaker Tony Robbins, decided to walk across hot coals in a bid to "conquer their fears".

The strength gained from the "Unleash the Power Within" seminar sadly wasn't strong enough to prevent some pretty serious burns.

More than 30 people were treated on site for feet and lower extremity burns while five were taken to hospital.

One participant said some of the burns could be attributed to some people's lack of concentration while crossing the coals "because they were too busy taking selfies".



**MERCURE** Gold Coast Resort has debuted a new outdoor entertainment venue, The Deck.

The new venue (pictured above) can accommodate up to 80 guests banquet style or 150 guests in a cocktail setting.

"As one of Australia's original prestige golf resort addresses, the Mercure has always been ideal for medium to large residential conferences and with the addition of The Deck, we now have a fantastic range of indoor and outdoor venues to suit all occasions," commented Mercure Gold Coast gm Tom Bloomfield.

Mercure Gold Coast now boasts nine conference spaces and four outdoor venues.

In celebration of the launch of The Deck and its updated conference facilities, Mercure Gold Coast is offering a special \$200 Stay and Meet Deal.

The offer includes overnight accom and a full day delegate package, with bookings to be made by 31 Aug - **CLICK HERE** for more information.



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## Confessions of a compulsive conference-goer

Andrew Klein, professional MC and presentation skills speaker and director of SPIKE Presentations, presents his front line observations on conferences in a regular feature in **BEN**.

### Chair and chair alike

**RECENTLY** there has been a lot of buzz in the media about some top male speakers (Adam Fraser, Dan Gregory and others) boycotting conference panels unless there were women panellists. A great awareness building initiative. Hats off and all power to them.



But it got me thinking about conference panels and a totally different type of diversity. Something rarely discussed. Until now. I am referring to the diversity of CHAIRS on Panels. By which I don't mean the Chairman, Chairwoman or Chairperson. I mean the diversity of chairs that the panellists sit on, during the panel. Sure, not as hot, controversial or important topic as gender diversity, but I've never claimed that my monthly column would discuss the 'big' conferencing issues. Although getting bums on seats is a long time big issue amongst conference organisers.

So let's talk chair diversity as I know that many conference committees and conference organisers often spend a fair bit of time debating the upsides and downsides of where to put panellists' backsides.

**Hotel chairs behind the long table, white table-cloth and desk microphones look:**

Benefits: It allows the panellists to feel protected and to note-take. It also looks very formal. Downside: It looks very formal. The panellists end up looking like those faceless officials who sit behind the table during the weekly TV Lotto draw.

**Stools:**

Benefits: Looks kind of cool and hip. Looks informal. Stools are quick and easy to get on and off stage. Downside: Can look too informal. They sometimes swivel. They're not ideal for females in skirts.

**Big comfy lounge chairs:**

Benefits: High comfort factor. Visually appealing, makes the presentation look like a talk show. Downside: Can be expensive to hire. Cumbersome to get on and off stage.

**The same chairs the audience are sitting on:**

Benefits: They are the same ones the audience are sitting on, so no cost and easy to move.

Downside: Looks cheap.

There are of course other options for chair diversity – having the panellists simply stand or perhaps sit casually on the side of the stage up close and personal to the audience to make it as conversational and relaxed as possible. So there you go. Some random points on chair diversity. Hope that kept on you on the edge of your seat!

*If you are looking for an MC for your next conference or a speaker/trainer on presentation skills or pitching skills, email [andrew@lunch.com.au](mailto:andrew@lunch.com.au) or visit his website at [www.andrewklein.com.au](http://www.andrewklein.com.au).*



**Business Events News** is Australia's newest online publication dedicated to the vibrant meetings, incentives, conferences and events sector.

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