



We've got you collared!

WHEN we took part in a recent Ghan famil from Alice Springs to Darwin, (**BEN** 03 Feb) the first morning was spent on an Alice Springs update.

During our time at the Alice Springs Convention Centre the famil participants were given a rather clever 'neck cooler'.



Not only did it look good, it works: the non-toxic cooling material inside the neck tie swells when placed in cold water.

Available in an assortment of colourful indigenous designs, its cooling properties brought remarkable relief on a hot Red Centre day.

Our famil group were so impressed by the cooler and the fact that it makes a clever gift for conference delegates, we asked for the contact details of where they can be purchased.

We now pass it on to our readers.

Contact Sue, Centralian Sports Shop 1, 40 – 46 Todd Mall, Alice Springs, NT 0870.

Phone 08 8952 6344.

Jill

Miss Australia's AIME

THEY'LL be beating a path to The Grace stand #2008 at AIME as they host Miss Universe Australia winner, Olivia Wells.

Appearing on 18 Feb between 1pm to 2pm, she will help promote the hotel and Australia as a destination for domestic and international travellers.

Drop in and say hi to The Grace team and have your photo taken with Olivia.

Strictly fancy dancers



AN impressive display that is sure to draw large crowds to the Sydney Opera House forecourt is all set for 23 Feb at 9am.

A spectacular dance-off is being staged with 4,000 dancers, under the creative direction of the master of the dance and guru of the spectacular, Baz Luhrmann himself.

'Strictly Sydney' is described as the largest outdoor ballroom dancing event ever seen in Australia.

Held in celebration of the imminent opening of 'Strictly Ballroom The Musical' in March, it is a collaboration between Luhrmann, Global Creatures and Destination NSW.

The Minister for Tourism Major Events and the Arts George Souris said the event was sure to attract great interest from not only Sydneysiders but also visitors from intrastate, interstate and overseas.

With the Opera House back drop, he said it would be "one of the most spectacular outdoor

settings on earth."

This impressive display of thousands of dancers, selected by ballot, in vibrant costumes outside one of the world's most iconic buildings will be captured in an exclusive aerial shot.

Sue Hocking to retire

WE'VE seen her here and we've seen her over there in Doha and now, after many years in the industry, The Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland venue sales & marketing general manager Sue Hocking has announced her decision to retire at the end of April.

"I am looking forward to this next phase of my life, enjoying smelling the roses and being back in my home environment in South Australia after almost six years away."

You can bid Sue a fond farewell at AIME next week; in the meantime, the recruitment process has begun for the role.

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Hoardings, Darling

TWO kilometres of hoardings have gone up at Darling Harbour.

This is in preparation for the construction of the new convention, exhibition and entertainment facilities in the area.

The current facilities will be dismantled, recycled and removed from the site, in its \$2.5 billion transformation, with 70,000 tonnes of concrete to be removed, NSW Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner said.

BEN at AIME

BEN will be at this year's Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME), bright-eyed and bushy tailed at stand #1118.

Come and meet some friends with **BEN**efits!

OMAN CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE

Exciting Career Opportunities

The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre is now seeking suitably qualified candidates for the following key positions:

Sales & Marketing

- Director of Sales & Marketing
- Sales Manager – Exhibitions

The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre is being constructed in two stages. Stage One, incorporating 22,000sqm of exhibition space will be completed in 2015, followed by Stage Two, featuring 3,200 and 450 seat tiered theatres, 14 meeting rooms and two ballrooms due for completion in late 2016.

All interested candidates must address the requirements within the position descriptions available on: www.omanconvention.com/careers.aspx

Applications must be received by email at:

hr@omanconvention.com
 no later than 19 February 2014.



OMAN CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE
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business events news

12th February 2014

Robust Mid East growth



REED Travel Exhibitions and GIBTM 2014 exhibition manager Lois Hall said confidence in the already robust Middle East meetings industry's future growth was improving, which came as no surprise.

This indicated another successful year ahead, she said, commenting on IBTM Global Events Portfolio and other MICE sector professional's prediction that exponential growth would occur in business events across the Middle East this year.

"One of the key factors currently contributing towards the global spotlight on the Middle East MICE industry in 2014 will be Dubai's successful World Expo 2020 bid. "This will undoubtedly accelerate the economic growth throughout the region and will provide a renewed stimulus to the meetings and incentives sector there."

With an anticipated 25 million visitors to Dubai for World Expo, 71% are expected to hail from overseas.

"It will raise the profile of the Middle East even further, highlighting its status as a global meetings hub before, during and after the event and will be supported by an estimated US\$7 billion worth of transport and tourism-related infrastructure development."

GIBTM 2014 is being held 24-26 March at the Abu Dhabi Convention Centre.

Swissotel's new GM

SWISSOTEL Sydney has appointed Christian Hirt as its new general manager.

Hirt has more than 17 years hospitality experience in luxury international properties, and was previously the director of operations at Swissotel the Bosphorus.

Hirt has also worked within the Le Meridien and Kempinski hotel groups.

Hirt said he was delighted to join the "effervescent" hotel.

Visit *inPlace* Recruitment at AIME & WIN a trip for 2 to Mauritius!



AIME breakfast invite

CROWN Hotels will sponsor a breakfast being held by the Incentive Association (IA) at Crown Towers Hotel, preceding AIME on 17 Feb at 8am.

The event is focused on individuals and companies interested in incentives as a marketing and communications tool.

Crown Hotels business development manager conference, incentives and group sales Naomi Dawes said Crown was pleased to associate with the event and the IA.

"Crown Melbourne and Crown Perth are uniquely positioned to host large scale incentive reward programmes with world class locations, facilities and the latest in audio visual technology."

Practitioners and others operating in the field of incentives are welcome to the breakfast, however an invitation is a must.

For further information email admin@incentiveassociation.com or phone 03 9005 7707.

CSR programs launch

TEN Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs have launched in Townsville, North Queensland.

The programs gave corporations and conference delegates the opportunity to make a difference to society and the environment, Townsville Enterprise Ltd said.

One of the CSR programs is a Coral Reef Health Check.



EVERY year in the USA, Career Cast conducts a survey that identifies the most and least stressful jobs.

Last month they released their latest report which noted that jobs requiring you to face unpredictable conditions, immediate dangers and high-stakes situations ranked among the most stressful of 2014.

Now here's the rub - on the 'Most Stressful' jobs list, event coordinator came in at number five, surpassed only by enlisted military personnel at number one, military general at second most stressful, fire fighter at third and airline pilot at fourth.

Themed Events posted on Career Cast's website to say event planner was stressful because every detail fell on you and there was a lot of behind the scenes work and extremely high expectations to unfold in front of a large audience where anything could go wrong.

"You are constantly moving a mile a minute and juggling multiple tasks.

"Then there are the clients, who absolutely hate planning and organising; which brings its own emotional instability because they can underestimate the magnitude of what it takes and can disregard boundaries and timelines."

Phew, we salute you!

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Going to the 2014 MEA conference?



Sabah's premier resort and MICE venue, Suter Harbour, is offering fantastic pre and post conference packages. 3 free tours for first 30 guests!



Visit us at the Sabah stand at AIME or see our packages on the MEA Conference site.

For more information call (03) 9818 1858 or visit suteraharbour.com



The inPlace crowd

INPLACE Recruitment, exhibiting at AIME on stand #2238, note that over the past few years companies have been tightening their purse strings and consolidating their businesses.

This year they say there's a new confidence in the air, with business manager Ben Carnegie saying the company had noticed an increase in the need for temp and contract staff, as businesses recognised growth in the near future and were looking to secure industry professionals to assist in initial growth stage.

"This has also led to an increase in demand for permanent front line staff including event travel coordinators, administration and support staff.

"This demand for skilled candidates across the MICE industry is also being reflected in salaries as we are seeing small to medium companies willing to offer higher salaries to attract and



retain quality talent.

"Larger companies are still limited by rigid salary structures, which at times can reduce their competitiveness."

Visit the inPlace Recruitment stand and go in the draw to win a trip for two to Mauritius staying at the beautiful Lux Belle Mare Resort.

Luxperience recruits

AS Luxperience 2014 gains momentum, new staff and a new board member have been appointed.

These include Meeko Tien as buyer programme manager, responsible for overseeing the recruitment and management of the Luxperience VIP Buyer, and Bronwyn Towers as customer relations executive, to ensure the buyers' experience during Luxperience in Sydney is managed with premium service.

Well-known industry personality, Teree George, director of global sales at the Jumeirah Group, is the most recent addition to the Luxperience Advisory Board.

Luxperience 2014 will take place 31 Aug to 03 Sep in Sydney.

Register IT&CM Asia

A **FINAL** call has gone out to those buyers who wish to attend IT&CM China to register by 10 Feb.

Being held at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center, 15 to 17 Apr, it is located on the east bank of the Huangpu River.

The event will bring Chinese and international MICE exhibitors and buyers in one marketplace.

To register, visit the website at www.itcmchina.com.

Mantellato joins ICC

YOU can't keep a good woman out of the industry.

So the news that events industry executive Helen Mantellato has been appointed as exhibition sales manager at the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney, is welcome.



Mantellato was with the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre since it opened in 1988 and its director of sales (exhibitions) for the past 10 years.

AEG Ogden director of convention centres Geoff Donaghy said Mantellato brought exceptional knowledge and understanding of the exhibition industry.

He said the ICC Sydney pre-opening office would soon be in place and recruitment of a number of other senior appointments to the management team would commence over the next few weeks.

Hilton Hawaii's look

THE Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort is sporting a new look after a series of rejuvenation projects.

Upgrades include the redesign of the Village's iconic Bali Steak & Seafood and Paradise Lounge, Tapa Bar, and a new lobby.



The main lobby area features a new chandelier, which is styled to be a metaphorical reference of a soft cluster of banana leaves suspended in a tall pyramid-shaped space.

Peters gets Verve

MEGAN Peters will join Verve Creative Events as production director.

With more than 10 years of event and catering management experience, Peters is renowned for her keen eye to detail.

Previously general manager of Avocado catering group, Peters will head the production team and drive the new strategic event management plans.

Meet 24 Macau

MEET 24, an initiative that provides flexible check-in/check-out times, has launched.

Instead of the usual fixed hotel times, Meet 24 allows smaller meeting groups to check-in any time and check-out at the same time on the day of departure at no additional cost.

Also, meeting space booked will be held for the same duration.

Available only to members of the Starwood Preferred Planner program, Meet 24 has a minimum booking per day requirement of 20 guestrooms and a maximum of 100, plus at least one full-day meeting for all participants.

Mercure's new look

THE four-star Mercure Sydney Central has completed the final stages of a multimillion dollar renovation to its 517 rooms.

Mercure's conference space has also undergone renovation, with a "Modern French" image, as has the balcony area.

General manager Greg Brady said the hotel's change came as the Central Station area underwent a renaissance.

The upgrading of the conference facilities is particularly significant given the closure of the Sydney Convention Centre.

To celebrate, the hotel launched its new conference offering 'Meet and Sleep', from \$239 per day, including full day conference package, which included accommodation, he said.

For more, visit www.mercuresydney.com.au.

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