

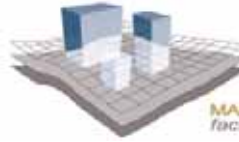
FM Action Agenda: greener pastures

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MANAGING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
facilities management action agenda

The Facilities Management (FM) Action Agenda was established by the Department of Industry, Tourism & Resources and produced its strategic plan entitled 'Managing the Built Environment' in 2005. The plan set out a 20 point Action plan to improve the recognition of FM as a contributor to a more productive and sustainable Built Environment through improved innovation, education and regulatory reform. This is being championed across four Recognition Working Groups covering Innovation, Education & Training, Regulatory Reform and Sustainability.

Now officially in the third and concluding year of its implementation phase the FM Action Agenda has made significant progress across a wide range of initiatives. The FM Action Agenda charts the course for a continuing journey towards best practice which FMA Australia with others is committed too. This article provides an insight into the activities of the Recognition Working Group for Sustainability under the leadership of Jon McCormick (2005-08) and Michael Silman (2005-07).

The Sustainability Challenge

The Sustainability Working Group is responsible for implementation of Actions 14 – 17 namely;

Action 14 – Promote the role of facilities management in responding to increased demand for corporate accountability associated with sustainability performance.

Action 15 – Promote the role of the facilities management industry in key industry and government forums addressing sustainability.

Action 16 – Use the data web portal proposed in Action 4 to disseminate sustainability information.

Action 17 – Develop a 'business case' model that highlights the costs and benefits of embracing 'sustainable' practices in the use and management of materials, energy, water waste, and indoor environmental quality with a particular focus on workplace productivity.

Sustainability is now a mainstream issue. This is being acknowledged by individuals realising that their actions have consequences, governments in their policy platforms and organisations recognising the environmental, social and financial benefits of creating and maintaining Green Buildings.

The FM Action Agenda team's Sustainability effort has focused on the improved utilisation of existing knowledge and the development of tools and opportunities to improve the environmental performance of facilities. This has involved us in consultation regarding FM's contribution to resolving a range of environmental challenges has been pursued with a range of industry groups such as the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC), the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), the Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (DEUS), Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA) and the Property Council of Australia (PCA).

Specifically input has been provided to the Warren Centre's Low Energy High Rise project, the CRC for Construction Innovation's 'Your Building' project and the Department of the Environment and Climate Change's 'ESD Operations Guide for Commercial and Public Buildings'.

These actions will promote industry wide understanding and collaboration enhancing the quality and quantity of FM resources in the

future. This recognition and rigor will add focus to issues impacting on the 'Managing the Built Environment' for the benefit of industry stakeholders, the national economy and ultimately the community.

Sustainable Operations Guidelines for Facilities Managers

A key deliverable of the FM Action Agenda in 2008 will be the "Sustainable Operations Guidelines for Facilities Managers". The Guide will not only demonstrate the inextricable link between the FM and a sustainable Built Environment, but will focus on mitigating the estimated environmental impacts. It is estimated that worldwide, buildings consume 32% of the world's resources, including 12% of water, contributing 40% of the world's landfill and 40% of global air emissions (OECD 2003). There is huge potential to make improvements to the environmental performance through the enhanced management of existing facilities. Facility Managers will play a crucial role in achieving the efficiencies required to make a positive difference.

A sustainable Built Environment will be necessary to meet '... the needs of future generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland Report 1987). In order to be sustainable we must consider the 'triple bottom line' interdependence of economic, environmental and social elements. The Guide will make practical recommendations to reduce this environmental burden presented by the Built Environment.

The practical framework of the Guide will start many Facility Managers on the path to sustainability, and 'Greener Pastures' for all. The Guide will be to bridge the perceived knowledge gap that exists in how to operate facilities in the most environmentally efficient way, to perform beyond compliance. The focus will be on simple management solutions rather than technological or construction based solutions requiring major capital expenditure commitment. The Guide is also intended to be a living document, updated periodically to respond to changing demands and opportunities to address sustainability.

Currently the major drivers for Facility Managers to implement changed practices and sustainability initiatives come from requirements in:

- ▶ Regulatory compliance;
- ▶ Corporate social responsibility standards;
- ▶ Environmental performance metrics, benchmarking and tools; and
- ▶ Whole of life planning and management principles.

The Guide will address issues of:

- ▶ Sustainable materials selection
- ▶ Energy efficiency
- ▶ Water efficiency
- ▶ Waste management

- ▶ Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)
However, Facility Managers face a number of barriers to implementing sustainable management practices, including:
 - ▶ Disconnect between design, construction and operational phases of the facilities life cycle;
 - ▶ Knowledge and skills gaps in the delivery of sustainability outcomes;
 - ▶ Lack of support from senior and executive management;
 - ▶ Lack of understanding, and agreed industry standards and metrics;
 - ▶ Lack of adequate metering and monitoring of performance over time;
 - ▶ Short term criteria rather than long term objectives;
 - ▶ Poor historic and habitual management practices;
 - ▶ Tenant behaviour, particularly in terms waste streams and energy consumption; and
 - ▶ Absence of effective incentives / penalties to facilitate behavioural change.

A "Sustainable Operations Guidelines for Facilities Managers" will empower those responsible for the management of the Built Environment to realise the true extent of FM's contribution. It will combat the perception that sustainability represents a cost rather than an opportunity.

Getting the Message Out

There have been important changes within the property – construction – facilities industry in terms of initiatives, regulations and technologies as we move towards the role the Built Environment must play in any sustainable future. Promotion and education regarding FM's contribution is a vital activity. On 11 February in Sydney Jon McCormick presented "Post Occupancy: the Green Building FM Challenge" at the Green Building Council of Australia and the Property Council of Australia's Green Cities 08: What's Possible Now?

Other opportunities to promote this important message have been identified for 2008 as the CRC for Construction Innovation's Clients Driving Innovation conference (March 12-13) on the Gold Coast, BIFM's Annual Conference (March 18-19 Keble College) in Oxford, FMA Australia's ideaction 2008 Conference (May 7-9) on the Gold Coast, EFMC'08 (European Facility Management Conference, June 10-11) in Manchester, the World Sustainable Building (SB08) tri-annual Conference (September 21-25) in Melbourne and IFMA's World Workplace Conference (October 15-17) in Dallas.

On 14 May in Sacramento Stephen Ballesty will be presenting the keynote address on the Australian FM Action Agenda at IFMA's Californian Sustainability Mayday Conference. This event will benefit the IFMA Foundation and will be another example of industry and government working together to achieve a more 'productive and sustainable Built Environment' for the community.

Moving Forward



Should you wish to become involved in the FM Action Agenda www.fmactionagenda.org or directly support its initiatives please do not hesitate to contact Stephen Ballesty on +612 9922 2277 or at stephen.ballesty@au.rlb.com



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