

# Case Study: Seventh Regional 3R Forum in Asia & the Pacific



Government of South Australia  
Green Industries SA





**When Australia was selected for a high-level United Nations’ forum on the 3Rs – waste reduction, recycling and reuse – Adelaide and its world-class convention centre were quickly recognised as the preferred option to host the event.**



# ACC shines for United Nations Asia-Pacific 3R forum

South Australia has made impressive advances in waste management and resource recovery and is recognised globally for its leadership.

It's a reputation mirrored by Adelaide Convention Centre (ACC) which has made sustainability a priority and can run major conferences with the tiniest environmental impact.

The centre was given the opportunity to showcase its green credentials to nearly 400 political leaders and decision-makers from 42 countries when they visited Adelaide in November for the Seventh Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific.

The forum comes together every year to share best practices, experience and knowledge with developing countries and to discuss waste management and related issues.

Green Industries SA - the state's key agency for driving resource efficiency improvements to increase productivity and profitability - worked closely with the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) and ACC to deliver the four-day forum which focused on the

challenges of urbanisation and sustainable development. Other forum partners included the Australian Government, CSIRO and the Japanese Ministry of the Environment.

"In recent years we've been helping ACC achieve its sustainability targets, so it was a privilege working with them on such a prestigious event," said Vaughan Levitzke, Chief Executive of Green Industries SA.

"Traditionally the 3R forum is held in the host nation's capital city but the United Nation's organising body recognised South Australia's strong track record in environmental leadership and nominated Adelaide.

"This was a significant coup for South Australia and allowed us to strengthen existing relationships in the region and develop new connections with high-level government representatives from Asia-Pacific countries, City Mayor and international experts. It also delivered the Adelaide Declaration - towards the Promotion of Circular Economy under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."





It was essential that a 'zero waste' ethos underpinned the forum's event management.

With Adelaide Convention Centre already having integrated many of these practices into its standard operating procedures through our collaborative work in previous years – particularly in relation to minimising food waste and encouraging recycling – it meant that our aspirations were seamlessly delivered.

VAUGHAN LEVITZKE  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE GREEN INDUSTRIES SA



# Demonstrating long-term sustainability

Since 2007 the Adelaide Convention Centre has been operating under the mantra Gold Service, Green Attitude – a way of working which has become a deep-seated part of its culture.

The centre is one of just a handful of convention complexes in the world that has been awarded gold certification under the EarthCheck environmental benchmarking system.

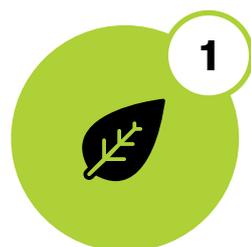
Philip Wells, ACC Event Planning Manager and chair of the internal sustainability committee, said this was an important factor in being chosen for the 3R forum and provided a high level of synergy.

“EarthCheck accreditation involves long-term commitment to sustainability across all areas of our business, including

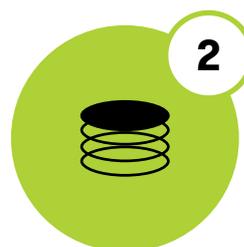
policy, energy, water, waste, community contributions, paper, cleaning and use of pesticides,” he said.

“To maintain our accreditation we are audited annually and have to demonstrate continual improvement of at least 1% across each one of those areas.”

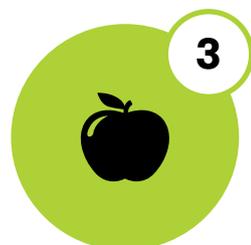
This is no easy feat for an organisation that has already virtually eliminated organic waste going to landfill and is on target to reuse and recycle at least 90% of total event waste. The sustainability program includes:



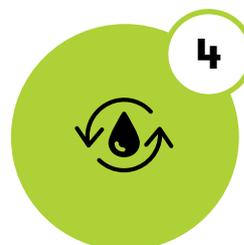
An on-site composting system which has recycled more than 14 tonnes of organic waste since 2006



A worm farm that has munched through nearly 25 tonnes of organic waste in eight years to produce rich fertiliser



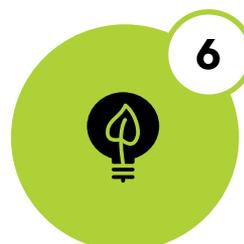
Welfare initiatives delivering tonnes of leftover food to disadvantaged people through Foodbank SA and OzHarvest



Recycling and reuse of various waste streams, including electronic items, glass, plastics, corks and candles



Numerous water conservation initiatives, such as sensor and low-volume taps, urinal water savers, portable tanks to capture and reuse water from fire system testing and drought-tolerant native plants in the gardens



Energy saving through the use of efficient LED lighting, turn-off policy in rooms not in use, a benchmarking system to monitor power usage, and a policy of using at least 25% certified green energy.

# Expansion reveals flexibility

Adelaide Convention Centre is undergoing a \$400 million two-stage redevelopment and delegates to the 3R forum were able to experience first-hand the in-built flexibility of the expanded venue.

The 3R forum requirements quickly evolved from standard tiered seating to a large-scale conference format involving multiple meeting rooms with a central hall capable of hosting all the delegates in a large U-shaped seating arrangement.

Organisers also required airport-style security with full scanning capability and a single entrance so that the forum was isolated from all other events.

“These were major changes from the original concept but the new centre design is extremely flexible,” said Philip.

“Although from the outside it now looks like three separate buildings, inside it’s all interconnected and can be configured in multiple ways to meet different requirements. As it turned out the new west building was ideally suited for all aspects of the forum.”

ACC’s redevelopment is due for completion by August 2017 when the new east building, which contains a 3,500-seat multi-purpose plenary hall, will open.





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PHILIP WELLS, ACC EVENT PLANNING MANAGER



# Futures of Waste

During breaks in the 3R forum, delegates were invited to view a photographic exhibition highlighting that waste is an enduring part of the human story.

Organisers took advantage of wall mounts installed by ACC for its Centre ArtBeat initiative, which provides free hanging space for artists to exhibit their work.

The images from leading photographers were part of the Futures of Waste Photographic Perspectives exhibition originally organised by the School of Art, Architecture and Design at the University of South Australia.

“In these photographs we are reminded that waste is an enduring part of the human story and that it’s through waste as well as through pollution that we are now transforming the world through climate change,” said the exhibition organisers Robert Crocker and Chris Thornton.

“However, these photographers also remind us that there are solutions in repair, remaking and recycling in the circular economy – an economy that brings the 3Rs from the margins to the centre of our economic life.”





# Contact Details

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## **GREEN INDUSTRIES SA**

A South Australian Government agency that is working with industry and government to advance waste management, resource efficiency and recycling. A key focus is encouraging innovation and economic growth through development of the green economy.

[www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au](http://www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au)

Marcia Hewitt  
Director Business  
(61 8) 8204 2672  
[marcia.hewitt@sa.gov.au](mailto:marcia.hewitt@sa.gov.au)

## **ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE**

Since opening in 1987 ACC has created more than \$1 billion in economic benefit for South Australia and set a new benchmark for convention facilities and services in Australia. Each year it hosts about 700 individual events involving more than 200,000 people.

[www.adelaidecc.com.au](http://www.adelaidecc.com.au)

Simon Burgess  
Director Convention & Exhibition Sales  
(61 8) 8210 6713  
[simon.burgess@avmc.com.au](mailto:simon.burgess@avmc.com.au)