

# MEA matters

Spring Edition

## Message from the CEO

It has been 12 months since I joined MEA as CEO and in that time we have initiated a number of new programs or renewed others that were outdated.

Over the coming months MEA will continue to announce new initiatives and programs that will support the events industry. These programs have been developed by the industry for the industry to grow and develop Australia's reputation for delivering exceptional events.

The new look MEA Awards program will be launched in October and there will new categories and submission criteria. New Awards categories will include "Regional Event of the Year" to acknowledge the many events that are being held in regional Australia. MEA will also include an Award for Innovation in Events to recognise those that take the risk and develop new and successful concepts to keep our industry flourishing and vibrant.

MEA has recently created two new national committees, the National Education Committee and the National Young MEA Committee. These Committees will, over the next few months, develop a national events calendar of professional development and networking programs that will be available in each State and Territory.

The 2018 National Conference is also shaping up to be another conference not to be missed. We are thrilled to have Annabel Crabb as the MEA inaugural Conference Local Champion. Annabel will be bringing you insights into her home town and State in the lead up to the Conference and she has kindly agreed to welcome the delegates in person at the Conference Opening.

Later in September MEA will be meeting with government officials to outline a number of programs including the findings of the Skills Shortage Survey. It is a great opportunity for MEA to engage with government to keep them well-informed on the business events sector.

The next twelve months will be very busy and I look forward to welcoming our new MEA regional members, your feedback on the new programs and how MEA can fine tune them to better support your business.



**Message from Robyn Johnson, MEA CEO**

## Message from the Chair

Wow – what a great 12 months MEA has had! When I look back on what we have collectively achieved, it reminds me of how important the work we do is for our industry and motivates me to continue working hard for our members.



By the numbers, over the last year we increased our membership by 14%, launched our regional membership and, at the annual MEA Conference, achieved a 47% growth in attendance. Re-introducing the expo component of the conference in such a limited timeframe was definitely a highlight, and I'm sure attendees found this very beneficial.

We've engaged with all levels of Government and stakeholders to promote the importance of business events, including participating in the inaugural Business Events Meeting in Canberra, launching a national mentoring program and creating a National Education Committee to develop a nation-wide program that will be introduced in 2018.

But what I'm really proud of is the Skills Shortage Survey research MEA undertook, in association with AACB and EEAA. The valuable insights collected from our members will help to identify skill gaps and will guide future learning and development opportunities. We want the people in our industry to be the best they can be, and to learn from each other.

The remainder of 2017 and early 2018 is shaping up to be action-packed, so keep an eye out for more MEA events and workshops! We love hearing your feedback too, so please reach out if you have any ideas or areas where we can improve our service to you. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Robyn for her passion, commitment and professionalism as MEA heads into a new era.

**Message from Anne Jamieson, MEA Chair**



**Meetings & Events Australia**

## Skills Shortage Survey

The full report on the findings of the Australian Workplace Skills Shortage Survey for the Events Industry Sector has now been finalised and a copy of this report and the summary highlights are available on the MEA website.

Meetings & Events Australia partnered with the Australian Association of Convention Bureaux and the Exhibition & Events Association of Australasia and thanks them for their support in this research project.

The data obtained has been a valuable tool in assisting MEA to develop relevant programs for the MEA membership.

It has allowed MEA to better plan and implement industry based education to assist in closing the gaps in the skills and determining where and at what level this learning should be targeted. It has been invaluable in developing the 2018 national education and professional development program that MEA will be launching later this year.

It has also allowed MEA to open discussions with government to ensure that the gaps in the skills can be factored into any decisions in the restrictions to 457 visas.

MEA plans to continue this research on a biennial basis to stay informed on the skills needs in the events industry.

## Predatory Meetings – Presenters and Delegates Beware

Predatory meetings are a relatively new and unwelcome phenomenon taking place across the world that may have long term implications for the events industry.

What is a predatory meeting? Predatory meetings are set up to appear like legitimate scientific or business conferences but are, in fact, exploitative, as they often do not provide proper editorial control over presentations and advertising can include claims of involvement of prominent academics who are, in fact, not involved at all. Some predatory meetings don't even exist, they are simply a scam.

The advent and reporting of predatory meetings is becoming more common.

In the academia world, it is a goal to have your work published and presented as part of a conference program. For many scientists and researchers this is the holy grail. However sadly, these meetings are being endorsed or run by academics according to James McCrostie, Associate Professor, Diato Bunka University in Japan who has written a number of articles on predatory meetings and how they work and who is supporting them.

An article in The Age newspaper in July this year reported on a meeting promoted as the 11th Obesity and Endocrinology Congress that was being held in Melbourne. The report advised that those attending this meeting claimed nearly half of the advertised conference speakers were absent, creating hours-long gaps in the conference. The research was not properly scrutinised, and some papers bore little relevance to the conference theme. When put to the test it was found that the vetting process for submitted papers being accepted was lackadaisical. Participants claim they were met with empty rooms, low-rate research and a company that refused to reimburse the cost of their registration. This meeting had been deemed illegitimate by peak bodies the Endocrine Society of Australia and the Australian and New Zealand Obesity Society.

Organisations that deliver conferences, particularly in the medical and scientific world, carry out a rigorous process of

vetting research and confirming presenters for their programs. With so many conferences in competition for delegates, any reputational risk to their conference brand would cause long term damage and low attendance rates. There is also the concern that these meetings spread unreliable science.

The events industry in Australia needs to be aware of the existence of these meetings, particularly professional and trade associations to ensure that reputations are not put at risk.

Australia has strong consumer protection legislation that prohibits misleading and deceptive conduct by businesses. In addition to the possibility of civil liability, penalties and fines under that legislation, delegates who fall victim to such shabby conduct may equally be entitled to remedies for breach of contract including refunds of conference registration costs and also possibly other associated expenses of attending, such as travel and accommodation costs.

### Jobs MEA

Post your new role on Jobs MEA to attract new talent.

MEA members receive unlimited listings.

Non-members can post jobs for \$275 per listing.

All postings include:

- Posted on MEA's LinkedIn site (new)
- Company branding – inclusion of logo
- Short & long description of position
- Category classification
- 30 day expiry with option to renew

Jobs are classified in various categories and there is a search criteria that allows you to filter by keyword, category or state.

**To list your next position contact [admin@mea.org.au](mailto:admin@mea.org.au)**

# MEA 2018 National Conference

**6-8 May 2018, Adelaide Convention Centre**

The Ultimate Conference in the Events Industry welcomes Annabel Crabb, proud South Australian, as the inaugural MEA Conference Local Champion.

Over the coming months Annabel will give you her insights into Adelaide and South Australia and why you should definitely attend the National Conference which is the largest gathering of event organisers, PCOs, in-house event managers



and special event managers from all sectors; corporate, association and government in Australia. The Conference will also be attended by Australia's experts in production, delivery and design. It is the only conference that brings together the whole of the industry to network and exchange ideas and experiences. WELCOME ANNABEL!!

Sponsored by



The Conference will be hosted in the new East Building at the Adelaide Convention Centre, we are looking forward to making the most of this fantastic new space. Like the Centre, Adelaide itself is undergoing a rapid transformation with a growing small-bar scene, world-class art and music on show, and a festival calendar to rival that of any other Australian city. Discover its laneway secrets, take in the stunning flora at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens, and find delicious treats around every bend.

MEA 2018 delegates will have lots of activities to choose from during the conference as the Committee prepares a showcase of Adelaide OR even arrive a few days early to explore and get a feel for this amazing city and South Australia.

Conference planning is well underway and we are so excited to be working with our partners and Committees to put together a fantastic conference for our industry.



**The website will be available on [www.mea2018.com.au](http://www.mea2018.com.au) soon.**

## Are interpreters and translators doomed to extinction?

Artificial intelligence is changing the world. It is expected that optometrists will be obsolete in less than 7 years as will 70% of the legal profession, and truck, bus and taxi drivers will disappear in the foreseeable future.

The business events industry will also be impacted by change. One area that may disappear is human interpreters/translators.

The traditional conference interpreting setting includes the need to erect sound proof booths and providing infra-red receivers and headsets for delegates. This is a very costly exercise.

The rapid development of smart technology will enable organisers to look for more innovative and affordable channels to bridge the gap in communicating the message. Remote interpreting is one of them.

Remote interpreting uses a cloud-based platform allowing interpreters to work from any location, not just in the venue. Delegates use smartphones, tablets or laptops to access the content. The platform can be accessed via mobile app or Firefox/Chrome browser. It can be connected with a mobile app downloaded for free for both iOS and Android devices. The platform also enables the audience and the speakers to participate remotely in conferences, which opens up a whole new approach to delivering content.

However, remote interpreting is still experimental technology and is not without its challenges. First it requires a very fast

speed and stable internet connection. As interpretation is a cognitive task, the interpreters require consistent and clear sound quality.

For now, most of the meetings, especially incentive events, still required interpreters to be present on site to facilitate communication and, in particular, negotiations.

It is not only the skill to interpret the words communicated, but there is also a complex interpersonal and inter-cultural requirement. The choice of interpreter is not only based on their language proficiency but also a well-balanced personality is required to ensure both a professional and seamless communication delivery.

At the recent Institute of Internal Auditors, simultaneous interpreting service was provided for over 120 Korean delegates. Delegates from other countries enquired about Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Spanish, Japanese and Mandarin languages. This demonstrates that while English is the accepted language for business, there is still a way to go before interpreting is no longer a requirement.

As for artificial intelligence, who knows when it will replace interpreters? For now the human approach is still the preferred option.

**Dr Yvonne Hu, Managing Director, Conference Interpreter Services**

## Getting More Out of Your Event

**M**EA has relaunched *Getting More out of your Event* to bring it up to date with current trends. This guide is designed to inform clients on the benefits and importance of engaging a well trained professional event manager.

The role of the event manager has changed considerably over the past five years. Events, particularly those attended in large numbers, are expected to have high levels of security in place, risk management plans and strategies to identify and respond to any perceived risk.

These are skills that will need to be updated in line with increased risk and security protocols. Over the next 12 months MEA will be offering Professional Development to cover what is now essential in assessing risk at events.

*Getting More out of your Event* will be circulated around Australia through Convention Centres and other venues and Convention Bureaux.

**If you are interested in a copy please email [admin@mea.org.au](mailto:admin@mea.org.au) or go to the website and download a pdf copy**



## MEA goes Regional

**M**eetings & Events Australia launched a Regional Membership package for companies and individuals who deliver events in regional Australia.

This new membership package will provide regional operators with access to educational programs and resources to support and grow their expertise and to introduce them to a national network of event professionals. It will also provide a platform to profile regional events and to promote the challenges and successes of how these events contribute to the important economic and social legacies that they deliver to local communities.

The first organisation to join MEA as a Regional Member is The Events Centre in Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast. The Events Centre General Manager, Gary Mears, said, "The Events Centre Caloundra is both excited and honoured to be the official first Regional Member of MEA. We see MEA as a leader in providing important access to information, contacts and online tools to

progress our organisation, in particular we will be making the most of the online support that is provided by MEA for sales training and building client relationships".

There is new investment in the regional events sector across Australia. The Caloundra Events Centre will undergo a \$6 million redevelopment as part of a dollar-for-dollar funding partnership between Sunshine Coast Council and the Federal Government.

The first individual Regional Member is Simon Relph who recently moved back to the Northern Rivers of NSW, after being away for around 20 years. Simon has relocated his events management business after he saw how much the region had developed and the potential that existed for the delivery of events. Simon said, "I was previously a member of MEA through my roles in other leading events management companies, and I appreciated the large network that the association offers its members, as well as being a good source of industry information. Knowing that MEA was taking a special focus on regional areas, I was keen to join as a Regional Individual Member to help drive the potential I see in my regional area".

MEA attended the recent launch of the NSW government's Regional Conferencing Strategy in Tamworth. This new strategy to be delivered by a new regional conferencing unit at Destination NSW, will support and promote regional business events. The government has set up a generous fund that will assist in developing programs to drive events into the regions.

MEA also attended the recent Regional Victoria Roadshow in Sydney that showcased the best of regional Victorian business event venues and destinations. Visitors sampled fabulous Victorian



The Event Centre Caloundra



*Kevin Anderson MP, Robyn Johnson MEA, Minister Adam Marshall MP, Stephen Mahoney DNSW*

produce and wines and learned how regional Victoria is equipped to deliver outstanding events.

The MEA Conference program this year featured a session on regional events with a focus on festivals. MEA will continue to include regional content in its annual conference program to highlight the contribution that they make to the Australian and local economies.

MEA is also creating a Regional Committee that will allow the regions to have a voice in the events industry. It is planning the first Regional Special Interest Group at the annual conference in Adelaide.

A Regional Business Event Award category is being added to the revamped National Awards Program. Details of the entry criteria for this award will be released in October this year.

MEA will continue to support regional business event initiatives and provide a voice for this sector of the industry.

Details of regional memberships are available on the MEA website. [www.meetingsevents.com.au](http://www.meetingsevents.com.au).

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## Meeting Essentials Online is now available

Meetings Essentials Online has been updated and is now available.

This online learning tool has been designed for those who want to learn the basics of event management. The content of this Essentials program is available online to enable new entrants and those located remotely to undertake the course online in their own time.

There are 11 topics such as managing budgets, sponsorship and on-site management. Each of these topics can be purchased individually or as a package. There is an assessment required to be completed for each topic.

Once the 11 topics and all assessments have been successfully completed, the students will receive a Certificate of Completion.

For more information on Meeting Essentials Online, please go to the website or email [admin@mea.org.au](mailto:admin@mea.org.au).

Please note that this is a non-accredited course and is not recognised as prior learning for the Diploma of Event Management.



**Cost: \$450 for all 11 topics or \$50 per topic**

## Tell Us About Your Event Legacy

Recent research found that business events contribute \$30.2 billion to the Australian economy each year. What about the social legacies? How do business events impact communities?

The majority of meetings and events held include a corporate social responsibility activity in their programs designed to give back to a local or international charity or the community in some way. This contribution can be made in so many ways such as donation of books or materials to under privileged schools, fund raising, planting trees, building infrastructure, upgrading facilities and many many more.

MEA recognises the importance of these contributions and has created a portal on the MEA website to record

the scope and range of this support, whether financial or in kind. Event organisers and organisations are invited to complete the template (<http://www.meetingsevents.com.au/research/>) with the details of the contribution their event has made, provide testimonials and upload photos. This information will form part of an annual report that MEA can use to promote the value of business events.

In addition, MEA has included an Event Legacy Award in its new look National Awards Program. All entries submitted for this Award, together with others posted on the portal, will be included in the MEA Annual Legacy Report. Details of how to enter for this Award will be available in October this year.

# MEA around Australia

Over the past three months MEA has presented some fantastic events across Australia and we are even more excited about what is coming up over the next few months. (go to page 8 for more detail).

MEA has formed a National Education Committee and has begun to develop a professional development program for all states and territories for 2018. If you have any ideas for PD, ClubMEA or YMEA events please send to [events@mea.org.au](mailto:events@mea.org.au).

## NSW PD – Are you Trending in 2017?



This session involved a panel of industry experts across various sectors who discussed what is trending in the events industry including catering, exhibitions, technology, media/PR and business/buyer trends.

## VIC PD – Resilience through Change

How to manage change was the topic of this presentation, presented by Sophie Graves. This session provided an insight into the challenges faced by today's workforce and how to enact and adapt to change.



## NSW ClubMEA – Trivia Night

The inaugural NSW Trivia Night facilitated by Be Challenged was a great hit and one that will now be an annual fixture on the NSW MEA event calendar. Congratulations to the trivia winners, Sydney Showground and International Productions.

## VIC ClubMEA – Trivia Night



Now in its 8th year, MEA Victoria once again teamed up with its long term partner Be Challenged to host yet another great night of trivia. Winners were none other than host venue Fenix!

## NSW Leaders' Breakfast

The second MEA Leaders Breakfast had an international flavour with Rod Cameron from the Joint Industry Meeting Council and Jan Tonkin, President IAPCO. Both speakers discussed some of the big issues in the events business of how to adapt, survive and grow in an age of social and economic upheaval.





## NSW PD – Major Events

Focusing on some of the major events in the nation, this panel explored the marketing, logistics and operations of New Year's Eve, Australia Day, the Sydney Royal Easter Show and Vivid Sydney.

## SA PD – Connect and Collaborate

We all know that events are about connections. This session introduced new ways of connecting with clients and focussed on how to sharpen your skills to work collaboratively with your industry colleagues.

## VIC PD – The Art of Sales through Storytelling



What an absolute hit this PD was with the industry!! The very talented VIC Branch Committee Member, Mary-Jane Devine from Fusion Marketing, shared her insights on how we all have something to sell – a vision, an idea, a product or service – and it's a crucial part of success for all of us.

## QLD Cairns PD – Smart Sales Strategies

MEA recently announced its Regional Membership which timed perfectly with the regional PD session held at Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort. Cairns local Sam Harrop covered the biggest business challenge – driving sales – and shared his five smart sales strategies that he uses to drive business.



## NSW YMEA – Wine down with YMEA

The young professionals of our industry continue to outdo themselves with planning fantastic nights like this intimate evening at The Cellar by bouche. Great wine, great entertainment and great networking.



## VIC Career Insights

Each year the MEA VIC team and their event colleagues take time out to participate in the Careers Insight event to educate the industry's up and coming event professionals currently studying event management. This event is very well attended and receives such positive feedback from clients and educators. The Career Insight Program is held around Australia each year to introduce students to event professionals to learn first hand about the events industry.



## Thank you

MEA congratulates and thanks the state MEA Branch Committees for their time creating and delivering these industry events and the event sponsors for their valuable contribution towards the success of these outstanding events.

### Event Sponsors:

- Be Challenged
- Fenix
- Fotobox Co
- Hyatt Regency Sydney
- Luna Park Sydney
- MAV Audio Visual
- Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
- Microhire
- Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort
- Oneill Photographics
- Pitstop Marketing
- Rick Robertson Entertainment
- Scene Change
- Staging Connections
- Stamford Adelaide
- The Cellar by bouche
- UNSW City Campus

# What's Coming Up

**W**e know that the events industry is one that's constantly on the move. If you are travelling interstate make the most of your trip and attend a local MEA event as a platform to connect and network with local industry colleagues. For the most up to date information and to register for any of these events visit the MEA website at [www.measevents.com.au](http://www.measevents.com.au)

## MEA ACT

### Thursday 21 September 2017

ACT Professional Development – What does mindfulness have to do with events?

Speaker: Peter Bliss, Business is Bliss

2:30pm – 6:00pm - East Hotel

Event Sponsor: East Hotel

## MEA NSW

### Thursday 14 September 2017

NSW Professional Development – Prospecting: Where can you find new business?

Speaker: Nicole Bates, Conversion Management

4:00pm – 6:00pm - UNSW City Campus

Event Sponsors: UNSW Venues and Events and Oneill Photographics

### Wednesday 20 September 2017

NSW ClubMEA & YMEA – Sounds on Oxford

6:00pm – 8:30pm - Oxford Circus

Event Sponsors: White Label Hospitality Group and Oneill Photographics

### Wednesday 25 October 2017

NSW Career Insights

9:30am – 2:30pm - UNSW City Campus

Event Sponsors: UNSW Venues and Events and Oneill Photographics

## MEA QLD

### Wednesday 20 September 2017

QLD Career Insights

8:30am - 12:00pm - Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Event Sponsor: Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

### Date to be confirmed

QLD Professional Development

InterContinental Sanctuary Cove

Event Sponsors: InterContinental Sanctuary Cove and Staging Connections

### Tuesday 5 December 2017

QLD ClubMEA – Christmas Party

6:00pm – 8:30pm - Sixteen Antlers, Pullman Brisbane

Event Sponsor: Pullman Brisbane King George Square

## MEA SA

### Wednesday 25 October 2017

SA ClubMEA

Roof Climb at Adelaide Oval

Event Sponsor: Adelaide Oval

### 6-8 May 2018

MEA National Conference

Adelaide Convention Centre

## MEA TAS

### Monday 25 September 2017

TAS Professional Development – Smarter. Faster. Better. Cheaper.

Speaker: Debbie Mayo-Smith, Success Is!

Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart

Event Sponsors: Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart and Scene Change

## MEA VIC

### Wednesday 6 September 2017

VIC ClubMEA – Auction Night

6:00pm – 8:30pm - The Wharf Hotel

Event Sponsors: The Wharf Hotel, Givergy, Harry the Hirer and Oneill Photographics

### Thursday 14 September 2017

VIC YMEA presents When Harry Met...?

6:30pm – 8:30pm - Harry the Hirer Showroom

Event Sponsors: Harry the Hirer and Oneill Photographics

### Wednesday 20 September 2017

VIC PD - Planning for Crisis Management

8:00am - 10:00am - Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

Event Sponsors: Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre and Oneill Photographics

### November 2017

MEA Leaders' Breakfast

7.30 -9.00 Pan Pacific Hotel

Sponsors: Pan Pacific Hotel and Oneill Photographics

### Monday 4 December 2017

VIC ClubMEA – Christmas Party

6:00pm – 9:00pm - Four Points by Sheraton

Event Sponsors: Four Points by Sheraton and Oneill Photographics

## MEA WA

### Tuesday 12 September 2017

WA Career Insights

8:30am – 1:00pm - Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre

Event Sponsors: Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre, AVPartners and The Scene Team

### Monday 28 October 2017

WA Professional Development

City of Perth Library

Event Sponsors: City of Perth and The Scene Team

*The above information is subject to change without notice. Sponsors listed are those anticipated at the time of publication and may change. Please check the MEA website for the latest information.*



## New Members

MEA welcomes the following new individuals and organisations to the MEA network since 1 June 2017.

We encourage all of our members to consider these new members when delivering your events.

### NSW

Caitre'd – ([www.yordar.com.au/caitred](http://www.yordar.com.au/caitred))

Corporate Theatre Pty Ltd – ([www.corporatetheatre.com.au](http://www.corporatetheatre.com.au))

Felicity Fragar (individual member)

Foodbywayne – ([www.foodbywayne.com.au](http://www.foodbywayne.com.au))

Golden Age Cinema & Bar – ([www.ourgoldenage.com.au](http://www.ourgoldenage.com.au))

Legalwise Seminars - ([www.legalwiseseminars.com.au](http://www.legalwiseseminars.com.au))

Sebel Kiama Harbourside - ([www.accorhotels.com/gb/hotel-8805-the-sebel-kiama-harbourside/index.shtml](http://www.accorhotels.com/gb/hotel-8805-the-sebel-kiama-harbourside/index.shtml))

Soulful Experiences - ([www.soulful experiences.com](http://www.soulful experiences.com))

### VIC

Aitken Hill – ([www.aitkenhill.com](http://www.aitkenhill.com))

Colin Biggers & Paisley – ([www.cbp.com.au](http://www.cbp.com.au))

Lisa Johns - (individual member)

Mediatec Asia Pacific – ([www.mediatecgroup.com.au](http://www.mediatecgroup.com.au))

The Willows – ([www.thewillows.com.au](http://www.thewillows.com.au))

### QLD

The Events Centre Caloundra – ([www.theeventscentre.com.au](http://www.theeventscentre.com.au))

Simon Relph - (individual member)

Victoria Park - ([www.victoriapark.com.au/functions](http://www.victoriapark.com.au/functions))

### WA

Travel & Sports Australia – ([www.travelandsports.com.au](http://www.travelandsports.com.au))

MEA has offered one year complimentary membership to all students that attend the Careers Insight programs around Australia. This membership includes reduced fees to attend YMEA events to provide them with an opportunity to network with industry.

## MEA Partners

MEA appreciates the support that its national partners provide and is pleased to welcome Eventbrite as a new national supporter.

This support allows MEA to continue to plan and deliver initiatives and programs that support the industry.

### Principal Partners



### Major Partners



### Partner



### Supporters



If your organisation is interested in becoming a MEA National Partner, please contact Robyn Johnson on (02) 99295400 or by email [rjohnson@mea.org.au](mailto:rjohnson@mea.org.au)

### Official Photography



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**Meetings & Events Australia**