

# Facilities management yearns for centre stage

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The Sydney Opera House will play guinea pig to developing better facilities-management skills with today's launch of a program that aims to put the industry on the economic map.

According to a new report from Access Economics, the FM sector is worth about \$12.2 billion a year. It employed 172,000 people in 2002-03, but because it is still relatively young, the industry struggles for recognition in the wider economy.

The chairman of the Facility Management Association of Australia, Stephen Ballesty, said: "Facility management impacts on every sector in the Australian economy, yet owing to the breadth and infancy of the industry, it can be difficult to demonstrate its contribution.

"This project provides the basis under which we can practically articulate the recommendations of the FM Action Agenda and produce tools and road maps for the effective implementations of many of the specific actions."

The FM Exemplar Project for the Opera House, part of the federal

## EVOLVING INDUSTRY

### Profile of the facilities management industry

Contribution	Value added (\$m)	Employment ('000)
• Direct management component	1958	16
• Direct service supplier component	6583	119
• <b>Total direct</b>	<b>8541</b>	<b>135</b>
• Total indirect	3689	37
• <b>Combined direct and indirect</b>	<b>12,230</b>	<b>172</b>
• Combined share of Australian economy	1.8%	2.1%

Source: Access Economics

government-backed Facility Management Action Agenda, aims to use the opera house facility-management program to improve skills and know-how.

According to the FMA, the project would help "research and create a world-class FM model that will have a direct beneficial role for the Australian FM industry as well as the economy as a whole".

The action agenda was announced by the Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources, Ian Macfarlane, in January 2004, with responsibility assumed by his parliamentary secretary, Warren Entsch, who will launch the project today, and John McCarthy, chairman of the strategic industry leaders group SILG.

According to Mr Ballesty, SILG identified five main areas of focus for the industry: FM in the Australian economy, innovation, education and training, regulation and sustainability.

Figures produced by Access Economics show the industry contributes 1.8 per cent of total value-add to the Australian

economy and 2.1 per cent of employment.

In overall contribution, FM provides \$8.5 billion directly and \$3.7 billion indirectly.

Direct value added is the value contributed by an FM firm, professionals and their associated staff as well as the service suppliers such as trades people, cleaners, gardeners and security guards and skilled technicians. Indirect value is defined as goods and services used by the FM industry such as electricity, gas, water office rental and office supplies.

The Exemplar project will combine the expertise of a group of government and industry experts organised by the Co-operative Research Centre for Construction Innovation and led by Rider Hunt.

The acting director facilities, Sydney Opera House, Paul Akhurst, said the project would "enhance the SOH facilities team's understanding of how we contribute to the experience of all our customers and enable us to demonstrate and improve our effectiveness".