



CRC - PROPOSING A SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

By Dr Keith Hampson, CEO for the CRC for Construction Innovation

Almost at the conclusion of its 'first life', the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Construction Innovation is planning its next existence as the Sustainable Built Environment CRC.

“SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT CRC WOULD BE A TREMENDOUS MOVE TOWARDS CREATING AN AUSTRALIAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING INDUSTRY THAT IS BETTER, FASTER, CHEAPER, SAFER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE.”



To learn more about the CRC for Construction Innovation's outcomes from 2001 to 2008 and find out about the availability in 2009 of resources from current projects in Dispute Avoidance and Resolution, National Information Modelling (BIM) Guidelines/Case Studies and Safety Effectiveness Indicators go to www.construction-innovation.info



The award-winning Construction Site Safety Culture project.



Dr Keith Hampson

Since 2001, CRC for Construction Innovation participants in industry, government and research have been developing key technologies, tools and management systems to improve the effectiveness of Australia's property, design, construction and facilities management industry. For the past seven years, it has delivered practical outcomes in a range of areas including sustainability, construction safety, digital modelling, eBusiness, facility management, procurement and national policy development.

The infrastructure and building industry in Australia faces enormous challenges in the coming decades as it deals with the economic downturn, skill shortages and the pressures of rising energy costs and population growth. In addition, there is an unprecedented demand for infrastructure and increasing expectations by the community for facilities to be developed and managed sustainably. This is likely to be compounded by greatly increased costs and complexities arising from demand and financing issues as well as the implications of policies to stem climate change.

This critical situation presents Construction Innovation with a clear focus for planning the continuation of the CRC model, but through a new research and education portfolio geared to emerging industry priorities in sustainability. It would capture the momentum and strengths of unique and already established collaborations, as well as adapting and expanding the participant network to ensure coverage with the industry's most critical issues.

To this end, the Sustainable Built Environment CRC (2009–2016) is being proposed. Property, design, construction and facility management leaders working with Construction Innovation have identified the areas in which research

will have the most significant impact for a new CRC. A proposed program of future research has been informed by national industry workshops, key industry bodies and prospective partners. Greening the built environment, safer construction, increasing productivity, driving performance through procurement and delivering knowledge and skills into practice are key issues within the program.

The successful Exemplar Project model used by Construction Innovation, most notably the award-winning Sydney Opera House Exemplar that formed the focus for work in digital modelling, is again being implemented. The exemplar model involves linking in with high-profile, real-life projects that demonstrate how CRC research is transforming the industry.

Construction Innovation is working with State governments to secure several suitable exemplars across the country. As exemplars, these projects would both be informed by and inform, the world-class research of the Sustainable Built Environment CRC in the areas of sustainability, safety, skill development, procurement and productivity.

In Queensland, the Gold Coast Light Rail Project has been confirmed as one such project. This initiative of Queensland Government in partnership with TransLink and Gold Coast City Council will improve public transport choices and reduce traffic congestion on the Gold Coast.

A second exemplar is linked with the Victorian Schools Plan, a Victorian Government project set to rebuild, renovate or extend all schools in the State by 2016–17. Knowledge exchange opportunities will be generated through this extensive program of sustainable construction, and in particular, the state-wide co-ordination of the future maintenance requirements of the school buildings for optimum efficiency using the latest asset management technology.



Sydney Opera House FM Exemplar Project - an award winner in facility management.

The outputs from the Sustainable Built Environment CRC will feed into national frameworks and distribute the knowledge gained for the long-term benefit of the entire Australian industry. The strategic mix of private and public partners across the centre's project development, research and delivery ensures a path to market across the supply chain for uptake of these outcomes and transformation of business practice. Small-to-medium enterprises in particular will be targeted with tool kits, training programs and industry publications to be delivered through industry networks and associations. A variety of dissemination pathways will be pursued by the centre to maximise the uptake of Sustainable Built Environment CRC research outputs to generate positive opportunities for the industry.

If the ongoing support from industry, government and research sectors, is supported at the federal level in the 2009 CRC selection round, a stamp of approval for proposed Sustainable Built Environment CRC would be a tremendous move towards creating an Australian infrastructure and building industry that is better, faster, cheaper, safer and more sustainable. 🏗️



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