

Local Government Association of NSW



HOSTING THE 2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A guide for councils

7 March 2006

HOSTING AN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

These notes have been prepared to give host councils some guidance regarding preparations for hosting a successful annual conference.

The annual conference of the Local Government Association is usually held in a NSW country centre in October or November each year. This document gives details of mandatory criteria for nominating centres and information about costs and host responsibilities. Voting for the venue takes place at the conference two years in advance so applications are invited now for the 2008 conference. In 1997 the conference resolved that inland NSW venues be preferred at least every second year wherever practicable.

Time lines and information about the Association's and host council's financial responsibilities are also included.

Nominations are now called to host the 2008 annual conference.

Host requirements

Bidding councils must address each requirement in writing within their submitted bid documentation, and supply a statement advising that they have read this hosting guide and agree to the requirements within. The Executive has determined minimum requirements for councils wishing to host the Conference as follows:

Essential Criteria

1. Accommodation: at least 800 rooms with private facilities.

Note: A bidding council **MUST** be able to guarantee a minimum of 70 hotel rooms per night for the duration of the conference (Saturday through to Wednesday) for Association use only.

The accommodation for the Association must be of a minimum of 3-4 star standard and must be connected to or within close proximity (maximum five minutes walk) to the conference venue.

Note that notwithstanding this requirement the Associations will pay only for rooms actually occupied during the conference period.

2. Auditorium: must hold up to 1000 people seated theatre style

The facilities must have:

- Disabled access and amenities (access, egress and toilets)
- A raised stage large enough to hold a top table for 12 people
- Air conditioning
- Adequate lighting
- Public address and audiovisual facilities.

3. Mobile telephone reception

All facilities must have mobile telephone reception (CDMA reception alone is NOT adequate).

4. Conference support facilities

The facilities must have:

- A large space suitable for use as a polling place
- A large secure (lockable) space for use as offices for LGA staff
- A large space suitable for use as a media room (this space must be enabled for internet and telephone access)
- A large space adjoining the conference venue to be used as a trade display area.

5. LGA office

The LGA office must contain:

- 3 desks or benches
- 1 high speed laser printer, capable of printing a minimum of 10 pages per minute
- 2 PCs minimum 3.0 megahertz with minimum 1 GB RAM, loaded with Windows XP, Microsoft Office version (clarify with Association), with front loading USB ports
- A high speed photocopier capable of copying a minimum 25 copies per minute
- A fax machine capable of faxing a minimum of 6 pages per minute
- 6 fully adjustable ergonomic office chairs
- 2 telephone handsets
- Telephone and data facilities

The supply of office equipment and fit out will be at the host council's cost.

6. Dinner venue

A bidding council must be able to provide a suitable venue to host the main conference dinner with a maximum 15 minutes drive from the main conference venue.

7. Childcare facilities

Childcare facilities must be made available during conference sessions and functions (including nightly dinner functions).

8. Motor vehicles and drivers

A bidding council must be in a position to supply two motor vehicles (of minimum Holden Berlina standard) and two drivers for Association use for the duration of the conference. The vehicles and drivers must be available or on call from 8.00am until 11.00pm each day.

9. Ecological Sustainable Development Principles and the conference

The 1999 Local Government Association Conference resolved that “... councils hosting future LGA Conferences to show a commitment to ESD principles by ensuring the planning and running of conferences consider:

- (i) energy efficiency
- (ii) water conservation
- (iii) waste minimisation
- (iv) pollution control

That delegates, as part of the Conference background papers, be provided with a statement of where those principles impacted upon that Conference.”

Recent and future conferences have been/are being held at:

1990 Coffs Harbour	1996 Queanbeyan	2002 Broken Hill
1991 Orange	1997 Port Macquarie	2003 Albury
1992 Albury	1998 Coffs Harbour	2004 Armidale
1993 Newcastle	1999 Dubbo	2005 Mudgee
1994 Leura	2000 Gosford	2006 Blue Mountains
1995 Wagga Wagga	2001 Wollongong	2007 Coffs Harbour

WHO ARRANGES WHAT?

The host council is responsible for ensuring that arrangements for all facets of the conference are completed to the highest possible standard. All elements of the conference organisation need to be discussed with and agreed to by the Association before firm plans are put in place. Association staff will work with the host council at each stage to help the organisation process run smoothly.

Council’s responsibility	Association’s responsibility
Determining the social and partners’ program in conjunction with the Association	Quality control of all facets of the conference
Securing business session and social program venues	Deciding the theme (in conjunction with the host council)
Securing accommodation and arranging bookings	Arranging business sessions and inviting speakers
Designing and distributing registration forms, collating responses, collecting fees, remitting share of fees (as agreed) to the Association	Inviting guests and booking them with the host council
Arranging audiovisual equipment for business sessions as per the Association’s requirements	Preparing and distributing business papers
Arranging trade displays, and sponsorships with support from, and in coordination with, the Association	
Staffing enquiry desk during conference	

WHO PAYS FOR WHAT?

Council's responsibility	Association's responsibility
All other aspects of conference arrangements not covered by the Association	Elections of office-bearers and Executive members – Electoral Commissioner costs
Balance of social program, morning and afternoon teas, lunch (if provided)	Any printing we ask to be done
All auditorium hire including audio visual equipment	Guest speakers and staff registration fees and their accommodation
Security arrangements at the request of the Association (eg security guards)	Required banners and signage in the auditorium where this is not sponsored
Provision of vehicles and drivers	Any other secretarial services we ask you to provide
President's reception, budget \$20,000, sponsorship should be sought	Accommodation for the President, Association guests and staff
	Expenses for the President, staff and guests
	The cost of phone calls and data charges (but not installation of telephone lines or data cabling)
	Other business session items agreed between the host council and Association
	Printing of business session papers (such as late motions) but not how-to-vote cards

Sponsorship

The successful council should seek sponsorship opportunities for all events. However, as the Association has in place a number of existing sponsorship and partnership arrangements, sponsorship opportunities must be discussed with the Association in the first instance as the host council must recognise all existing corporate partnerships of the Association. These partners will be acknowledged in conference documentation, signage etc.

As a result of these pre-existing arrangements some levels of sponsorship will be capped or already "sold out". This will be discussed further with the host council.

Registration fees and Association costs

The host council's costs are paid for from registration fees, sponsorships and trade exhibitions. In turn the host council makes a payment to host the conference to the Association. This payment may be in the form of cash or in kind sponsorship opportunities.

One single registration fee is levied by the host council. The amount of the fee is agreed between the council and the Association.

Sponsorship and trade displays

Trade displays will be arranged by the host council in conjunction with the Association. Traditionally morning and afternoon teas have been held in the display area to attract delegates to the trade display area.

The host council is to provide to the Association at no cost, four trade stands. The Association also retains the right to choose the placement of its four stands and the stands associated with corporate partners.

Social functions

As the host council's responsibility, these may vary from year to year according to how the host wishes to showcase their region to conference participants. Proposals should be discussed with the Association.

Enquiries

Phone Peter Coulton at the Association on (02) 9242 4030.

SUGGESTED TIME LINES

ON BIDDING FOR THE CONFERENCE

Discuss all proposed arrangements and dates with the Association before making your bid. Secure as much accommodation as possible over the range of agreed preferred dates to ensure orderly allocation of room bookings.

Have a business session venue agreed between the Association and Council and have other sites such as workshop venues considered.

IMMEDIATELY ON BEING AWARDED THE CONFERENCE

Determine the dates. The conference runs from Saturday afternoon to Wednesday lunch time. The exact dates are agreed between the Association and Council but are usually late in October or early November.

Set up a conference planning committee comprising elected and staff representatives. The Association also asks to have a representative on this committee. Council is invited to have up to three nominees attend and participate in the Association's conference planning committee meetings. The times and dates of the committee meetings will be discussed with the successful council.

At the first meeting after winning the bid the council conference committee should discuss broad strategy for conference arrangements and have a preliminary look at a proposed social program. Subsequent meetings should refine the strategy and monitor arrangements.

THE YEAR BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

- Decide on the social program for all participants and the partners' program
- Determine a draft budget. Note: Councils will need to be able to support a cashflow of approximately \$100,000.00 and will need to appoint a dedicated staff member or professional conference organiser.
- Set up a system for managing accommodation bookings and maintain contact with accommodation venues to ensure they are holding the necessary number of reservations for conference bookings
- Determine staff numbers needed in the conference year who will work on conference business
- Decide meeting cycle for the conference planning committee.

WITHIN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF CONFERENCE YEAR

- Agree on a registration form and be ready to send it out early in the conference year
- Produce a kit for sponsorships and trade displays
- Arrange local publicity supporting the benefits the conference will bring to the community
- Finalise budget
- Decide staffing levels needed as the conference dates approach
- Attend the Association conference planning committee meeting
- Provide reports to conference planning committee.

ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER

The opening ceremony

The opening ceremony provides an opportunity for the local community to be involved, to showcase the town or area. A local celebrity or identity usually fulfils the role of MC. Ensure an elder of the local Aboriginal community is invited to participate in the opening ceremony to perform the Welcome to Country address.

Facilities

There will be a number of audiovisual requirements during the conference, are these able to be met locally, with a degree of flexibility in reserve if needed? Internet and telephones for the stage, media and the Association's office will need to be available as well as several fax machines. Photocopying facilities for late motions and handouts, and in election years for ballot papers, will be needed.

Church service

It is traditional for an inter-denominational church service to be arranged in conjunction with the local ministers fraternal. Issues to consider include the capacity of the church and its location from the main venue. Is it a walk or is transport required?

President's reception

A reception on the Sunday afternoon/evening follows the opening ceremony. All delegates are invited to attend. Is a suitable venue available? Will a theme be incorporated? Who will cater for it? Is there a sponsor? A venue with both indoor and outdoor facilities is recommended.

Transport

Transport between accommodation and the venues used will need to be arranged and costs incorporated into the registration fee. During the conference, Council is responsible for transporting speakers to and from the airport.

Partners' activities

A range of activities are arranged to provide partners with opportunities to experience the district of the host council. Ideally they should be activities particular to the district with variety over the conference dates to appeal to a range of tastes. Costs should not be excessive. Childminding facilities must also be made available.

Conference dinner(s)

On the Monday evening a social dinner is organised by the host. On the Tuesday evening the formal conference dinner takes place. All observers and delegates usually attend - around 750 to 900 persons in number in a single room. Thought needs to be given to available venues without undue delay. Appropriate entertainment needs to be considered and options discussed with the Association prior to commitments being made. The President may also host a cocktail party or similar prior to the formal dinner. This will be by invitation only for up to 100 persons and is paid for by the Association.