

**BUSINESS AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Agenda Item 5.5

11 December 2007

**2007 MELBOURNE BUSINESS FESTIVAL- 1-11 OCTOBER
AND BUSINESS PARTNER CITIES (BPC) NETWORK 2- 5
OCTOBER 2007**

Division Economic Development

Presenter Jane Sharwood, Manager Business and International

Purpose

1. To report on the outcomes of the 2007 Melbourne Business Festival (MBF), 1-11 October 2007, and the Business Partner Cities (BPC) Roundtable, held during the MBF, 2-5 October 2007.

Recommendation from Management

1.1. That the Business and International Relations Committee endorse:

- 1.1. the outcomes of 2007 Melbourne Business Festival and Business Partner Cities;
- 1.2. the development of the Melbourne Business Events Series in 2008 as an alternative to a business festival; and
- 1.3. Council pursuit of partnerships with Business Partner Cities member cities/organisations in Mumbai, Osaka, Tianjin and Hong Kong, to leverage specific business and trade outcomes identified as a result of hosting the Business Partner Cities Roundtable in 2007.

Key Issues

2. As a result of a post-event evaluation and debrief, the opportunity exists to improve the effectiveness of delivering business-related events in an alternative format to the Melbourne Business Festival. It is anticipated this will more effectively reach targeted business sectors and build Melbourne's business community. In addition, initiatives aimed at leveraging off the hosting of the BPC Roundtable in 2007 are suggested:
 - 3.1. Melbourne Business Event Series delivering a program of events throughout the 2008 calendar year. It is anticipated events will be developed in conjunction with a range of partner organisations. Key events such as the Women in Business Lunch and the Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendations will be continued; and
 - 3.2. a strategy will be developed for the Business Partner Cities Network to strengthen bilateral connections with key target cities and organisations aligned with Council's priority markets (China, Japan and India) with Tianjin, Osaka, Mumbai and Hong Kong.

Structure of Melbourne Business Festival

3. The MBF was made of three types of events as follows:
 - 3.1. Council owned and managed events:
 - 3.1.1. Business Challenging the Future- Melbourne Business Festival Launch;
 - 3.1.2. Women in Business Lunch- Women Going Global;
 - 3.1.3. Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietors Commendations;
 - 3.1.4. Small Business Success Stories; and
 - 3.1.5. Events Industry Forum (Events Melbourne);
 - 3.2. events surrounding the Business Partner Cities Network (BPC) Roundtable that was this year hosted by the City of Melbourne in conjunction with the Australian Industry Group (AIG):
 - 3.2.1. welcome Cocktail Reception;
 - 3.2.2. Business Partner Cities Seminar: "Inside Edge- Doing Business in Asia";
 - 3.2.3. welcome Dinner;
 - 3.2.4. roundtable- City Strategies for Doing Business in the Global Economy; and
 - 3.2.5. farewell Dinner- Hosted by BPC Osaka Council; and
 - 3.3. events held by outside partner organisations under the "2007 Melbourne Business Festival" umbrella.
4. This year marked the first year that the Council was able to source a level of external sponsorship of their events.
5. The following events secured sponsorship:
 - 5.1. Business Challenging the Future –Incorporating the 2007 Melbourne Business Festival Launch was sponsored by KPMG; and
 - 5.2. Women in Business Lunch sponsored by RACV Business Insurance.
6. The 2007 BPC Roundtable was held from Tuesday 2 October - Friday 5 October 2007. It was hosted by Council in conjunction with AIG.
7. The BPC Roundtable was attended by representatives of 9 key Asian cities/business organisations; Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Seoul, Mumbai, Osaka and Tianjin. The Roundtable provided the opportunity to exchange ideas, information and new business opportunities around the theme of "City Strategies for Doing Business in a Global economy". An observer from the Auckland Chamber of Commerce also attended, at the invitation of the Osaka BPC Council.
8. The 2007 MBF and BPC were successful with the number of participants attending, the MBF was up on any other year's attendances.
9. This was the first major project of the newly formed branch and the working relationships formed amongst the branch assisted in the MBF's and BPC's success, they were both delivered with less resources than any other year- both financial and staffing.
10. Attachment 1 of the report is a detailed evaluation of the MBF and BPC.

Time Frame

11. The 2007 MBF commenced on Monday, 1 October and concluded on Thursday, 11 October 2007. The BPC Roundtable and associated events were held from Tuesday, 2 October through to Friday, 5 October.

Relation to Council Policy

City Plan 2010 Strategic Objective 2: Innovative and Vital Business City.

12. Strategic Objective 2.2 - Foster a Civic and Business culture that encourages entrepreneurship and Innovation.
13. Strategic Objective 2.2.03 - Recognise and reward excellence in Melbourne's business community.
14. Strategic Objective 2.3.01 - Create an alliance with government and external stakeholders for international business and trade development.
15. Strategic Objective 2.3.03 - Develop local, regional, national and international connections, conferences and forums that will promote Melbourne's business and trade potential.
16. Strategic Objective 2.5 - Improve the City's role as a 'Start-up city' by supporting the establishment and growth of small-to-medium business.
17. Strategic Direction 1.3 in City Plan 2010 - strengthen and develop long-term strategic relationships with sister cities, Business Partner Cities and other key partners.

Consultation

18. External stakeholders consulted in the development of the 2007 Melbourne Business Festival included the West End Business Association, VRC, VECCI, BioMelbourne Network, KPMG, Melbourne Business School and RMIT.
19. Consultation of the BPC was extensive both within and outside the Council. The Chair Business and International Relations Committee played an active role in the development of the program. Stakeholders consulted included Marketing and Communications, Media Relations, Events Melbourne, the Australia Industry Group and Osaka BPC Council.

Government Relations

20. Victorian and Federal Government representatives were invited to, and attended, events held throughout the eleven day program. The greatest number of government representatives, other than at BPC events, attended the Launch function and the Women in Business Lunch.
21. Regular updates on the 2007 BPC Roundtable were provided to relevant Federal and Victorian Government agencies, such as Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Austrade, and Victorian Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development. In addition, representatives from Federal and Victorian Government agencies were involved with most events surrounding the 2007 BPC Roundtable.

Finance

22. The 2007/08 budget approved by Council provided funds to deliver these events within the Melbourne Business Initiatives and Business Partner Cities line items within the budget. At a project level an estimate of \$75,000 was identified and whilst final figures are not yet available the expectation is that both these events will be within this allocation.
23. Costs associated with the implementation of a Melbourne Business Events Series in 2008, as an alternative to a business festival, will be subject to the normal budgetary process as part of the 2008/09 budget process.
24. The current budget allocation within the Business and International branch provides sufficient funds to leverage specific business and trade outcomes identified as a result of hosting the Business Partner Cities Roundtable in 2007.
25. No additional funds are required to deliver the reports recommendations in 2007/08.

Legal

26. No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation to the report.

Sustainability

27. A site visit to CH2 was arranged for BPC delegates to demonstrate the City of Melbourne's commitment to issues of urban sustainability.

Comments

28. The MBF opened by an evening cocktail/networking function on Monday, 1 October in place of the traditional Melbourne Business Luncheon. In recent years the latter had not been successful in attracting an audience with the desired blend of stakeholders and business leaders. The Launch was successful in targeting a number of external stakeholders and Councillors with the opportunity to interact with the Melbourne business community.
29. The BPC Roundtable and associated events were held from Tuesday, 2 October through to Friday, 5 October.
30. The 2007 MBF program was made up high quality events that promoted and showcased Melbourne's business strengths and networking community. And presented an opportunity for the City of Melbourne to connect with its businesses community, showcase its support for business and trade development, and identify potential clients for the Council's services to business.
31. After a post MBF review by the Business and International Branch it has become evident that the most effective way to engage with and improve Council's relationship with the business community is to host a 'business series' throughout the year rather, rather than a Festival.

Background

32. The objectives of this year's MBF were:
 - 32.1. to raise awareness of Council's business and trade support programs within the business community;
 - 32.2. provide value-add events/opportunities for the City of Melbourne, stakeholders and partners, allowing for the development of a cohesive business community;

- 32.3. build and showcase Melbourne's business capabilities;
 - 32.4. offer the opportunity for businesses operating within the City of Melbourne to create networking relationships as well as facilitating interaction and collaboration amongst them and promoting Melbourne domestically and internationally as a business and investment destination;
 - 32.5. inform, educate and raise awareness of key issues and opportunities available to organisations residing within the City of Melbourne; and
 - 32.6. foster knowledge and enhance learning through relevant workshops and seminars.
33. The target audience of the MBF was diverse and included, but was not limited to:
- 33.1. the 14,000 business operating within the City of Melbourne;
 - 33.2. tertiary education and research institutions;
 - 33.3. business and trade professional associations;
 - 33.4. those wishing to start-up or expand into the City of Melbourne; and
 - 33.5. business operating in the key sectors that the City of Melbourne is seeking to grow.
34. In 1999, the City of Melbourne together with the Australian Industry Group joined the BPC Network. Melbourne remains the only Australian member city of the Network.
35. The purpose of the BPC Network is to facilitate the promotion of business interaction in the Asia Pacific region, contributing to mutual economic development of each member city and create opportunities for small to medium size enterprises to establish links with their counterparts throughout the network.
36. Melbourne last hosted the 2000 BPC Roundtable meeting on 14 September 2000. The Roundtable was held as a satellite event to the World Economic Forum (WEF) East Asia Economic Summit, also in Melbourne in September 2000.
37. Since Melbourne last hosted the Roundtable meeting 2000, many changes have taken place in the City, including the redevelopment of the MCG and Southern Cross Station, the completion of the CH2 and the transition of the Docklands to the City. The hosting of the 2007 BPC Roundtable provided Melbourne the opportunity to showcase our capabilities in world class sports management and our leadership in sustainable urban development travel and renewal.
38. *'Letter from Melbourne'* has included two photos of the MBF, one of the Women in Business Lunch and another of the Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendation Awards in the 5th-9th October edition, Issue 28, as well as a brief write of the MBF on page 12.
39. The RACV is currently working on including a story on or referring to the Women in Business Lunch in the Royal Auto Magazine. The magazine is delivered to all RACV members 11 times a year.

40. Council's membership with the BPC Network and on-going effort in encouraging Melbourne businesses to participate the annual BPC mission have delivered tangible export outcomes:

Year/ Destination	No. of Companies	Export Revenues Expected
2002 / Ho Chi Minh City	8	A\$2,470,000
2003 / Seoul	6	A\$1,300,000
2004 / Shanghai	6	A\$42,000,000
2005 / Tianjin	No mission due to earlier Lord Mayor's mission to China	N/A
2006 / Mumbai	10	A\$4,000,000

(Source: Post Mission Surveys conducted by the Australian Industry Group)

Attachment:

1. 2007 Melbourne Business Festival and Business Partner Cities Roundtable Analysis



2007

MELBOURNE BUSINESS FESTIVAL

and BUSINESS PARTNER CITIES

ROUNDTABLE ANALYSIS

Business and International

November 2007

(1) BACKGROUND

2007 marked the fifth year of the Melbourne Business Festival (MBF). First held in 2003, over a one week period, the MBF quickly expanded into a two week festival in order to cater for the diverse needs of Melbourne's business community.

- The prime objectives of this year's MBF were as follows:
- Raise awareness of Council's business and trade support programs within the business community
- Provide value-add events/opportunities for the City of Melbourne, stakeholders and partners, allowing for the development of a cohesive business community
- Build and showcase Melbourne's business capabilities
- Offer the opportunity for businesses operating within the City of Melbourne to create networking relationships as well as facilitating interaction and collaboration amongst them
- Promote Melbourne domestically and internationally as a business and investment destination
- Inform, educate and raise awareness of key issues and opportunities available to organisations residing within the City of Melbourne
- Foster knowledge and enhancing learning through relevant workshops and seminars

- The target audience of the MBF was diverse including, but was not limited to,:
- The 14,000 business operating within the City of Melbourne
- Tertiary education and research institutions
- Business and trade professional associations
- Those wishing to start-up or expand into the City of Melbourne
- Business operating in the key sectors that the City of Melbourne is seeking to grow

The MBF reached the target audience through direct invitation and the assistance of external stakeholders promoting the festival to their key stakeholders.

The structure of the MBF was made up of three types of events. These events formed the basis of the MBF program.

- a) Council owned and managed events
 - Business Challenging the Future- Melbourne Business Festival Launch
 - Women in Business Lunch- Women Going Global
 - Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietors Commendations
 - Small Business Success Stories
 - Events Industry Forum (Events Melbourne)
- b) Events surrounding the Business Partner Cities Network (BPC) Roundtable that was this year hosted by the City of Melbourne in conjunction with the Australian Industry Group (Ai Group).
- c) Events held by outside partner organisations who held their events under the "2007 Melbourne Business Festival" umbrella.

(2) PROGRAM SUMMARY

The 2007 MBF commenced on Monday 1 October and concluded on Thursday 11 October. During this two week period the following events were held as part of the MBF:

- Business Challenging the Future: Incorporating the 2007 Melbourne Business Festival Launch/ Future Melbourne*
- VECCI Return to Work Seminar
- Focus on India- 3rd Leader's Innovation Series Luncheon
- Women in Business Lunch*
- Business Partner Cities (BPC) Seminar: "Inside Edge- Doing Business in Asia" *
- Opportunities for Australian Made
- The Domain: (Networking Evening for the ICT Industry)
- Carbon Neutral and Beyond: Conference and Exhibition for business
- Events Industry Forum*
- Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendations*
- Small Business Success Stories*
- 2008 Melbourne Financial Services Symposium Official Launch
- VECCI Workshop: "How to Stand Out From the Crowd"
- The Melbourne Cup Business Network: "The Business of Fashion"
- Melbourne Business School Small Business Seminar
- Business 3000 Awards Gala Dinner
- RMIT Business Planning Competition Awards Night

The following BPC related events were held during the 2007 Melbourne Business Festival:

- Opening Dinner (Invitation Only) *
- BPC Seminar: "Inside Edge- Doing Business in Asia" (Open event)*
- BPC Roundtable (Invitation Only)*
- Closing Dinner (Invitation Only)

(*City of Melbourne organised events)

As part of the 2007 MBF the City of Melbourne and the Ai Group co-hosted the 2007 BPC Roundtable. The BPC annually brings together government and business leaders from 13 key Asian cities to exchange ideas, information and new business opportunities. Member cities of the BPC include Osaka, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Mumbai, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Tianjin and Melbourne. Membership of BPC involves local governments working with local economic and trade associations to share information and facilitate business and trade opportunities for small and medium sized businesses. Melbourne last hosted the event in the year 2000.

This year the BPC Roundtable was attended by 9 key Asian cities; Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Seoul, Mumbai, Osaka and Tianjin discussing " City Strategies for Doing Business in the Global Economy."

(3) SPONSORSHIP

2007 marked the first year that the Council was able to source a level of external sponsorship of their events, necessitated by reduced funding from Council sources.

"Business Challenging the Future" –Incorporating the 2007 Melbourne Business Festival Launch secured sponsorship from KPMG. The offering included their venue, audio visual equipment, on-site support, catering staff pre-event set-up and support.

The Women in Business Lunch was also able to secure sponsorship. RACV Business Insurance sponsored the event and offering the RACV Club dining room and covered audio visual costs and function support costs.

The following organisations sponsored the Women in Business Lunch by donating products for gifts and prizes:

- Gollings Florist
- Samsonite
- Donna Hay Magazine
- Kikki.K
- Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
- Balance Water
- Ciao Bella Travel
- Tea Drop
- Queen Victoria Market
- Melbourne Theatre Company
- Priscilla the Musical
- MYCH

(4) COUNCIL MANAGED EVENTS

“Business Challenging the Future”- Incorporating the 2007 Melbourne Business Festival

Date: Monday, 1 October

Venue: KPMG, 147 Collins St, Melbourne

Time: 6.00pm- 8.30pm

Description: Moderator Rod Quantock and futurist Professor Neville Norman managed an entertaining and stimulating discussion about future business in Melbourne in an event that targeted small and medium enterprises. The discussion was followed by drinks, canapés and networking amongst the guests.

Approximate Number of Attendees:

60 people attended the event including the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Jetter and the Chief Executive.

Objective Outcomes:

- The target audience was attracted to the event, a majority of the attendees were small to medium enterprises representatives operating within the municipality
- Sponsorship of the event was secured
- Opportunity for the City of Melbourne to network with small to medium representatives
- Opportunity for the City of Melbourne to be identified collaborating with a respected private financial organisation for the benefit of small business.
- Informed, educated and raised awareness of key issues and opportunities available to organisations residing within the City of Melbourne
- Strengthened alliance with KPMG

Feedback:

Annually, the MBF has been opened with a lunch, this year a different event was trialled and was successful. Rather than a formal sit-down lunch the MBF was launched with an informal discussion and stand-up networking cocktail function. This format allowed the City of Melbourne to meet more than one of their primary objectives of the MBF, most importantly allowed businesses to network amongst themselves and with the City of Melbourne. The informal launch function assisted in raising awareness of a key issue concerning the City of Melbourne, Future Melbourne.

BPC Welcome Cocktail Reception

Date: Tuesday, 2 October

Venue: Melbourne Room, Melbourne Town Hall

Time: 5.00pm- 6.30pm

Description: An informal cocktail function hosted by Cr Snedden. This welcome reception was a networking session allowing the BPC delegation to meet with each other before the official beginning of the BPC Roundtable.

Approximate number of attendees:

20 people attended the event, including Councillor Snedden.

Objective Outcomes:

- Formally welcome the international delegates
- Provide a networking opportunity for the delegates

Feedback:

The opening cocktail function was useful in allowing international delegates to network amongst themselves and to have some knowledge of each other before the beginning of BPC formalities.

Women in Business Lunch: Women Going Global

Date: Wednesday, 3 October

Venue: Level 17, RACV Club, 501 Bourke St

Time: 12.00pm -2.00pm

Description: Facilitated by Rebecca Maddern, Chanel Seven, the three person panel consisting of Carol Schwartz, Chair of Future Melbourne, Amanda Briskin, Founder of Mimco and Anne Young, of ANZ, presented their diverse perspectives over a variety of themes. Guests were charged a fee for the first time. All profits made from the event went towards the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund. At this time payments for the lunch are still being finalised but it is expected that approximately \$1,000 will be donated.

Approximate number of attendees:

190 people attended the event, including Councillor Snedden and Councillor Ng.

Objective Outcomes:

- Provided value-added events/opportunities for the City of Melbourne, stakeholders and partners, allowing for the development of a cohesive business community
- Building and showcasing Melbourne's business capabilities
- Offering the opportunity for businesses operating within the City of Melbourne to create networking relationships as well as facilitating interaction and collaboration amongst them
- Sponsorship of the event was secured
- Confirmed that there is an appetite for women's networking events and charging a price is no barrier

Feedback:

The Women in Business Lunch met the expectations of participants. Feedback regarding the event was positive as 98% of attendees would attend the event again in future. This was one of the MBF's most successful events. This year the event was ticketed for the first time, there was over a 50% increase in attendees from 2006.

The RACV Business Insurance sponsorship allowed the City of Melbourne to offer a discounted ticket price that is below the average cost of other organisations lunches that are targeted to women.

Feedback indicated that the two hour time commitment restricted the networking opportunities of those who attended the event and in future a longer event would need to be considered.

Business Partner Cities Seminar: "Inside Edge- Doing Business in Asia"

Date: Wednesday, 3 October

Venue: Melbourne Town Hall

Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm

Description:

The 'Inside Edge to Doing Business in Asia' seminar offered local businesses the opportunity to meet with government and business representatives participating in the 2007 Business Partner Cities (BPC) Roundtable.

Companies that are interested in exporting or exploring investment opportunities in Asia were invited to participate in the seminar. After a preliminary session the seminar was split into 4 concurrent workshops, China, India, North Asia and South East Asia.

Approximate Number of Attendees:

Over 150 people attended the seminar, welcomed by Councillor Snedden, Chair of the Business and International Committee.

Objective Outcomes:

- To raise awareness of Council's business and trade support programs within the business community
- Providing value-add events/opportunities for the City of Melbourne, stakeholders and partners, allowing for the development of a cohesive business community
- Building and showcasing Melbourne's business capabilities
- Promoting Melbourne domestically and internationally as a business and investment destination
- Informing, educating and raising awareness of key issues and opportunities available to organisations residing within the City of Melbourne
- Fostering knowledge and enhancing learning through relevant workshops and seminars
- Provision of "in country" intelligence on market opportunities for domestic businesses.

Feedback:

This was the only public event held during the BPC and builds on the success of a similar event in 2000. The speakers and networking opportunities presented at the seminar met the expectations of the attendees. Local businesses were provided with the opportunity to participate in business matching activities with a business delegation from Osaka, (12 participants), coordinated by the Ai Group. At the conclusion of the concurrent workshops

many participants approached representatives of the City of Melbourne, Ai Group and the Department of Innovation Industry and Regional Development (DIIRD) for more information on how to do business in the international market. The business matching opportunities with the Osaka business delegation were well leveraged by Melbourne businesses, including the potential export opportunity for a sausage manufacturing company based in Melbourne

BPC Welcome Dinner

Date: Wednesday, 3 October

Venue: The Garden Restaurant, National Gallery of Victoria International

Time: 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Description: This was an invitation only event hosted by the Lord Mayor formally welcoming the BPC delegation to Melbourne. Guests included representatives from relevant bi-lateral chambers of commerce and past participants on BPC trade missions.

Approximate number of attendees:

There were 110 attendees, including the Lord Mayor, Councillor Snedden and Councillor Jetter and the Acting Chief Executive. Representatives of the BPC member's governments and consular representatives were invited to attend the dinner.

Objective Outcomes:

- For Council to formally welcome and introduce the BPC delegation to Melbourne
- Introduce key stakeholders in Melbourne, such as Austrade and Invest Victoria, to BPC delegates.

Feedback:

The dinner was a success in facilitating great networking opportunities between international delegates and the local community. One such example is that the Vice-President of a large Indian based organisation met with Invest Victoria to discuss investment opportunities in Melbourne.

BPC Roundtable- City Strategies for Doing Business in the Global Economy

Date: Thursday, 4 October

Venue: Council Chambers, Melbourne Town Hall

Time: 9.30am – 5.00pm

Description: The BPC roundtable consisted of a day of presentations around the theme "City Strategies for Doing Business in the Global Economy". The Roundtable was opened by a member of the Osaka BPC Council and Cr Snedden, on behalf of the City of Melbourne and Ai Group, Scott Chapman, Director Economic Development was the moderator. Each member city nominated a representative to deliver their presentation on the agreed topic. A working lunch was included and was followed by an exchange of ideas on the topic and how to move forward.

The Osaka BPC Council has a number of traditions that must be followed in order to host the Roundtable. One of the traditions is that the host city organises a welcome dinner, pays for two night's accommodation for the two most senior representatives from each member city and Osaka Council hosts a farewell dinner.

Approximate number of attendees:

30 people attended this event which was co-chaired by Councillor Snedden

Objective Outcomes:

- To bring together the BPC member cities in Melbourne to discuss the agreed topic.
- To assist in creating networking relationships

Feedback:

Positive feedback from the delegates and those who attended the Roundtable. New relationships were formed and suggestions were made for next year's BPC Roundtable. One of these suggestions is that focus groups can be integrated into the agenda examining matters such as climate change, transportation and infrastructure. Also, a member of the delegate who participated in the Roundtable keen in looking at investing into Victoria, on behalf of a major Indian organisation. Invest Victoria is currently assisting with this inquiry.

One observation that arose from the event is that there is an opportunity to build stronger "one to one" relationships with active trade and business member cities and organisations in Osaka, Tianjin, Mumbai and Hong Kong via a 2-3 year strategic program of activities in addition to Melbourne's participation in the BPC Roundtable activities.

BPC Farewell Dinner- Hosted by BPC Osaka Council

Date: Thursday, 4 October

Venue: James Squire Brew House & Restaurant, Docklands

Time: 6.30pm- 8.30pm

Description: The farewell dinner was organised by Council on behalf of hosts, BPC Osaka Council. The City of Melbourne utilised opportunities at this dinner to thank participants for their involvement in this year's Roundtable and associated events.

Approximate number of attendees:

There were 70 people at the farewell dinner, including all delegates, members of the Osaka business delegation and Japanese company representatives.

Objective Outcomes:

- Opportunity to conclude the BPC roundtable and events
- Last opportunity for international delegates to network with the local business community before the end of formal proceedings

Feedback:

The high level of participation in the Farewell Dinner was encouraging, as even after three days of intense meetings and events delegates were still interested in attending Council run events.

The Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendation Awards

Date: Monday, 8 October

Venue: Main Hall, Melbourne Town Hall

Time: 7.00pm- 9.00pm

Description: The Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendations acknowledged the long standing commitment of small business operators who have contributed to the prosperity and vitality of Melbourne over the past 10, 25, 40 and 50 years. This year there were 95 nominations from across a number of sectors, a 50% increase in nominations from 2006. 2007 was the second year the event was held and is an initiative of the City's small business community. The Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendation Awards are a small business initiative that has been made possible by the involvement and interest of Council.

Approximate Number of Attendees:

Over 200 invited guests attended this event along with the Lord Mayor, Cr Snedden and Cr Jetter.

Objective Outcomes:

- Opportunity for small businesses to network
- Opportunity for the City of Melbourne to celebrate the achievements and longevity of small business operators
- Showcased Melbourne's business community
- Heighten the general public's awareness of long standing businesses within the municipality
- Raised awareness of Council's business and trade support programs within the business community

Feedback:

The Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendations have gained momentum and strength this year. Not only are the number of recipients up but the interest and involvement from the public has also risen.

The event was very successful and attendees, especially the recipients were extremely satisfied with the running of the evening. Along with the Women in Business Lunch this event is another of the most successful events of the MBF.

Small Business Success Stories

Date: Wednesday, 10 October

Venue: Yarra Room, Melbourne Town Hall

Time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Description: The Small Business Success Stories event celebrated the success of the past year's Small Business Grant Recipients. This year two guest speakers, previous recipients, spoke about their accomplishments that were made possible due to receiving a Small Business Grant. Networking and connecting small businesses was the prime function of the event.

Approximate Number of Attendees:

40 to 50 people attended the event along with the Lord Mayor and Councillor Snedden.

Objective Outcomes:

- Event highlighted the importance of small business grants to businesses within the City of Melbourne via the two speakers
- Opportunity for the past small business grant recipients to receive their certificate from/network with the Lord Mayor
- Opportunity for small business to network with each other and identify any potential collaborations
- Release of the Small Business Grant Directory. This directory lists and describes the businesses who have received a small business grant over the past 10 years
- Recognition of the large alumni of past small business grant recipients

Feedback:

The Small Business Success Stories were a great networking opportunity for Melbourne's small business community. The release of the Small Business Grants Recipients Directory was warmly welcomed by the attendees as an avenue to connect with other small businesses.

(5) COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND MEDIA

Extending on last years communication's strategy the 2007 MBF was communicated to the public via a number of diverse channels. This activity was executed by the Corporate Communications branch of Council.

Communication to the public took place via the following mediums:

- Business Melbourne Website
- Newspaper Advertisements

MX	Thursday, 20 th September
The Age	Friday, 21 st September

- Radio Advertisements, Monday, 17 – Friday, 21 September

Triple R	
	5 x Breakfast
	4 x Morning
	2 x Drive
	2 x Early Morning
3AW	
	1 x Breakfast
	2 x Morning
	2 x Sports Today (early evening)
	2 x Bonus

- Other Forms of Print Media

Melbourne News

The Business and International Branch were able to utilise their relationships with external parties to communicate the MBF via the following methods:

- Via External Stakeholders

VECCI weekly email
Australia Made
Innovation Centre

- A copy of the program was sent out with invitations to:

Launch Function
Women in Business Lunch
Lord Mayors Proprietary Commendation Awards
Small Business Success Stories

Feedback from Attendees:

Direct invitations were the most popular way that participants found out about the MBF with the Business Melbourne website and word of mouth coming in at an extremely distant second.

The communication strategies were consistent across a variety of media yet did not reach the target audience with the impact that was anticipated. Over 50% of participants who filled out a feedback form could not rate the communications to the public strategy as they had not seen anything other than direct invitation or the little they saw did not meet their expectations.

Communication and media outcomes:

'*Letter from Melbourne*' has included two photos of the MBF, one of the Women in Business Lunch and another of the Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendation Awards in the 5-9 October edition, Issue 28, as well as a brief write of the MBF on page 12.

The RACV is currently working on including a story on or referring to the Women in Business Lunch in the Royal Auto Magazine. The magazine is delivered to all RACV members 11 times a year.

(6) BUDGET

The budget for this MBF was \$50,000 with the Lord Mayor's Small Business Proprietor Commendation Awards having its own budget allocation of \$10,000.

(7) EVALUATION

The 2007 MBF was a success, the number of participants attending the MBF was up great than other year's attendance. Analysis of online feedback forms following attendance to the events indicated:

- 38.8% of attendees were from an organisation employing 1 to 10 people, 27% from an organisation employing 11-49 people and 31% of attendees were from an organisation with over 100 employees.
- Approximately 40.5% of participants attended more than one event during the MBF.
- Over 81% of participants would like to be invited to future business events organised by the City of Melbourne.
- Only 26% of attendees belong to a professional association/network.
- 89.2% of attendees think that the MBF format and timing is convenient

Achievements:

The MBF generally achieved the objectives identified. Other achievements of the MBF include:

- This was the first major project of the newly formed branch and the working relationships formed amongst the branch assisted in the MBF 's success
- The MBF was delivered with less resources than any other year- both financial and staffing
- The events delivered by the City of Melbourne received increased attendance rates in comparison to the previous years
- Ticketing of an event, the Women in Business Lunch was trialled and was successful

A post event de-brief indicated a range of improvements that could be made to increase the effectiveness of the MBF. These improvements include:

- A stronger commitment organisation-wide for the MBF. This year resources were stretched in delivering the MBF and unless there is a firmer commitment from Council in going forward the same will occur next year.
- Greater educational component for small businesses within the MBF. The Melbourne Business Schools' seminar for the City of Melbourne's small businesses was held for the first time and was one of the most successful seminars of the MBF with over 50 people attending. The Melbourne Business School seminar achieved the MBF's objective of educating the small business community.
- The timing of this year's MBF was not ideal in relation to other major projects of the Business and International Branch, such as the Small Business Grant assessments and should be revised in the future.
- A year long program of events would be more effective than hosting the majority of Council's business events over 10 days

Additional matters to be reviewed include:

- Define the objectives of the MBF with measurable outcomes.
- To review the format of the MBF from a two week period to a series of events throughout the year.
- To assess the value-add the MBF offers the business community.
- To determine if there is a role in partnering with a number of organisations that have not been partnered events before, such as the Melbourne Junior Chamber of Commerce and other professional organisations in order to offer something new to the business community.

Additional BPC matter to be reviewed:

- Determine how it is possible to effectively leverage from BPC membership- evaluating the Roundtable, targeting key markets and partners, second tracking activities, strengthening the flow of information between the Ai Group and the City of Melbourne.

(8) OPTIONS

There are a number of options that have been considered in relation to going forward with the MBF next year. After a review by the Business and International branch the following has been brainstormed as potential avenues that the City of Melbourne can utilise in connecting with the business community:

- Host another two week MBF in the same format as has been successful for the past five years
- Host the four Business and International events at different stages throughout year, rather than compressing them into a two week program
- Combine the MBF with the State Government's Energise and Enterprise Month (August)
- Hold additional seminars/briefing throughout the year in conjunction with external partners, rather than relying on them to host an event during the MBF
- Review the events/festival held by external parties and examine if there are any possibilities the City of Melbourne can leverage off them rather than hosting the MBF
- Review the resource commitment within Council and discuss the potential of expanding the Business and International Branch's MBF into a City of Melbourne wide MBF. This scenario would encourage branches across the organisation who are active with the City of Melbourne's external community to host an event in order to connect with their external business stakeholders

(9) CONCLUSION

The 2007 MBF and BPC were a success. This was the first major project of the newly formed branch and the working relationships formed amongst the branch assisted in the MBF's and BPC's success, they were both delivered with fewer resources than any other year- both financial and staffing.

After an assessment of the possible options available to Council in moving forward the recommendation is that rather than hosting a two week 'festival' the City of Melbourne hosts a 'Business Series' with events being held throughout the year. This program will be developed during the remainder of 2007 with key partners for launch in early 2008.

In regards to the BPC, Council is currently determining how to best leverage from BPC membership and strengthening the flow of information between the Ai Group and the City of Melbourne. It is also recommended that Council separately pursue the following BPC member cities, Mumbai, Osaka, Tianjin and Hong Kong, to achieve specific business and trade outcomes.

FINANCE ATTACHMENT

**2007 MELBOURNE BUSINESS FESTIVAL- 1-11 OCTOBER AND BUSINESS
PARTNER CITIES (BPC) NETWORK 2- 5 OCTOBER 2007**

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of the report.

Joe Groher
Manager Financial Services

LEGAL ATTACHMENT

2007 MELBOURNE BUSINESS FESTIVAL- 1-11 OCTOBER AND BUSINESS PARTNER CITIES (BPC) NETWORK 2- 5 OCTOBER 2007

No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation to the report.

Section 3C(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* (“the Act”) provides that:

“The primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions.”

Section 3C(2) of the Act provides that in seeking to achieve its primary objective the Council must have regard to facilitating objectives including:

“(a) to promote the social, economic, and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district”; and

(d) to promote appropriate business and employment opportunities;”

The subject-matter of the report is within the objectives of Council.

Kim Wood
Manager Legal Services