



SANDTON CONVENTION CENTRE

Johannesburg | South Africa

SCC'S EFFORTS TO STAY GREEN ARE PAYING OFF

With the world's focus turning more and more to environmental issues such as global warming, carbon emissions, waste management and energy efficiency, it is comforting to know that one of the leading convention centres in Africa has been flying the 'green' flag high and proud since its doors opened in 2000.

Sandton Convention Centre, based in Johannesburg, South Africa, was awarded Gold Classification status in the Heritage Environmental Rating Programme in 2002. Due to its ongoing commitment to reduce the impact it has on its environment and surrounding community through its 'Green Plan', the convention centre has managed to retain this prestigious status and has been nominated for another Green award for 2007.

Says Mati Nyazema, Executive Director of Sandton Convention Centre: "The implementation of our Green Plan is how we are able to show our commitment to the environment and responsible tourism. We know there is always room for improvement and it is this thought that spurs us on to continually search for new avenues for environmental improvements, to achieve the highest levels of sustainable development.

"We are very pleased that this commitment has been recognised once again, with Sandton Convention Centre being nominated as a finalist for its Energy Management plan, in the annual and prestigious Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards programme, which are presented at the end of October."

The Imvelo Awards, organised by FEDHASA (Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa) in conjunction with Absa Bank and the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, are now in their sixth year.

Sandton Convention Centre previously won two Imvelo Awards in 2002, for the Best Energy Management Programme and the best Air Quality Programme.

The term, 'bit by bit saves more', has become a philosophy for the entire team at the convention centre. Despite a 7,1% increase in occupancy levels over the past year, which directly impacts on the energy consumption in the building, the actual increase in energy consumption per percentage occupied space at Sandton Convention Centre during 2006/7 was a remarkable 0,1% year on year.

"In spite of our increased business this past year, and the increased energy consumption that must occur as a direct result, we managed to improve the efficiency of our energy management processes, as demonstrated by the minimal 0,1% increase in our usage/occupancy ratio," says Ms Nyazema.

Some of the initiatives to reduce energy consumption included: switching off the escalators that service the 12-storey building after the last event each evening; improved management of lighting and air-conditioning during set-up and break-down periods of events, and during the actual events; improved management of access doors to the main lobby area to reduce air-conditioning and energy demand; and ongoing staff awareness and training programmes designed to create more efficient use of energy.

“My management team and I are dedicated to reducing and managing our environmental footprint through commitment to the principles of the Heritage Environmental Management Programme.

“We realise that, while our efforts to manage and maintain energy consumption levels have produced positive results over the past year, we recognise that we still have a way to go before we can claim total success! However, our commitment to energy and resource management is based on continual improvement, and the implementation of internationally competitive standards and the adoption of best practice in these fields.

“We are also committed to constant review and reappraisal of our objectives to achieve the highest levels of sustainable development around all the events staged at Sandton Convention Centre,” concludes Ms Nyazema.

For further media information, please contact:

Janet de Kretser – Baird’s Renaissance, on (011) 504-4000 / Cell : 083 973 3531 /
e-mail : janet@bairds.co.za