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SYDNEY SHOWGROUND WINS THE MEA QUINELLA

Winning one award is great, winning a second is special and it was smiles all round for the Sydney Showground team following the announcement of their dual success in the *Speciality Meeting Venue* and *Catering/Banqueting* categories at the annual Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) NSW State Awards held at the AJC Convention Centre on 17 March, 2005.

The *Specialty Meeting Venue* category is the second win in a row for the Sydney Showground. The criteria is based on venues without accommodation and is judged on a number of key elements including Business Planning and Event activity, Financial Management, Resource Management and Sales and Marketing.

During her acceptance speech General Manager, Malu Barrios, paid tribute to her team.

"We are truly honoured and very proud of these MEA awards. It would not have been possible without the creativity, dedication and down to earth professionalism of our Sydney Showground team," she said.

Three events were submitted for the *Speciality Meeting Venue* category and these included the General Practitioner Conference & Exhibition (3,350pax), Vodafone Conference (1,112pax) and Continuing Orthopaedic Conference (350pax).

Each event case study showcased challenges outside the normal sphere of meetings and event management and highlighted the practicality and diversity of Sydney Showground's premier venues, primarily The Dome and Southee Complex.

The Catering/Banqueting category is based on similar criteria relating specifically to the provision of catering and banqueting services. The Sydney Showground presented the 2003 Rugby World Cup (13,000 pax), Hillsong (16,000 pax) and the General Practitioner Conference & Exhibition (3,350pax) as well as the Royal Agricultural Society's 'Best of the Land' series of fine dining events as core submission case studies.

“Our catering business for the qualifying period presented a great challenge for our team. The ensuing success of these events enabled us to present a great submission, that really showcased our abilities as serious players in the catering industry,” added Ms Barrios.

The Sydney Showground will now go on to contest the National MEA awards to be held in Perth, Western Australia in April 2005.