



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **SYDNEY SHOWGROUND SET TO DOUBLE IN SIZE**

A plan to increase Sydney's major international event space proposes that Sydney Showground be almost doubled in size to make way for more local conventions and exhibitions.

The plans, which are the key recommendations of a report by the State Government Events Corporation's John O'Neill, are part of a strategy aiming to ensure Sydney remains competitive in the international and national events markets.

Sydney Showground's current space of 21,600m<sup>2</sup> would be increased to up to 40,000m<sup>2</sup>. This would allow more domestic conventions and exhibitions. Whilst in Darling Harbour the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre (SCEC) would be redeveloped at the same time to cater towards major international events.

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS NSW), which manages the Sydney Showground site in Sydney Olympic Park, is excited about the proposed developments.

"Sydney Showground already has the expertise to host large-scale exhibitions, conventions and events, and we do so annually with events such as AIMEX, Home & Giving Fair and Big Day Out.

"The proposed developments will double our space capacity creating a truly world-class, vibrant exhibition and convention site enabling us to offer so much more. The developments will complement what will be on offer at SCEC and put Sydney on the top of the list for both international and domestic events," says Peter King, RAS NSW's Chief Executive.

There is plenty of development taking place in the Sydney Olympic Park precinct with two new hotels that are due to open this year, new food and entertainment locations and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia are looking to relocate up to 4,000 staff to the Park over the next couple of years.

"We see this as great opportunity to work closely with Sydney Olympic Park Authority and the Government in a co-ordinated effort to implement the plan for the growth of Sydney Showground, in particular, but more broadly to allow Sydney to reap the economic benefit of this investment in quality facilities" says Mr King.

However, Mr King says that there is a sense of urgency to start acting on the recommendations. A report by the Tourism and Transport Forum and the Property Council Australia in February 2007 found that Sydney was already losing convention and exhibition business equivalent to one Rugby World Cup every year.

"The proposed plan is a great first step but now is the time to get moving with dedicated timeframes and actual budget allocations in the forthcoming State Budget," he says.

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**About Sydney Showground**

*Located in the geographic heart of Sydney, award-winning Sydney Showground comprises 20 unique venues which can be customised to suit any style of business event, from 50 to 4000 people. Continuous investment in infrastructure; state-of-the-art management systems; flexible indoor/outdoor spaces; highly awarded catering; and staff dedicated to providing client solutions means dependable, reliable quality every time.*

**Media enquiries:**

**Carla Ellerby**

**02 9704 1156**

**[cellerby@sydneyshowground.com.au](mailto:cellerby@sydneyshowground.com.au)**