

# Sustainable Choice Southern Sustainable Procurement Forum

Wollongong City Council, 8 May 2015

## Evaluation Report

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### Acknowledgements

The Sustainable Choice program gratefully acknowledges the support and contribution of Wollongong City Council for hosting the event and to the following presenters (in alphabetical order) for their time and considerable efforts:

- Mr Bradley Anderson, NSW OEH
- Ms Lyn Blain, SSROC
- Cr Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Council
- Mr Simon Bruce, StabilCo NSW Pty Ltd
- Mr Mark Fleming, NSW OEH
- Ms Jackie Gregory, BHP Billiton
- Ms Jenny Haining, Wollongong Council
- Mr David Howes, SSROC
- Ms Jessica Jones, LGP
- Mr Peter Meers, RMS
- Mr Ross Smith, Fairfield Council
- Mr Craig Vergelius, Fulton Hogan

Thanks are also extended to Local Government Procurement (LGP) for promoting the forum and to forum participants for making the event such an engaging and productive experience.

Sustainable Choice is a partnership program between Local Government NSW and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage

## Executive Summary

On 8 May 2015 at Wollongong City Council, the Sustainable Choice program held a forum for councils to present and explore strategies, innovation, resources and case studies to promote sensible, sustainable procurement.

Presentations from the Sustainable Choice Program Manager, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), Local Government Procurement (LGP), Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC), Wollongong City Council, Fairfield City Council and industry representatives were delivered to 28 Local Government participants. An end-of-forum panel discussion afforded participants the opportunity to develop issues further and have presenters address any queries or questions that emerged during their respective presentation. A trade show and 'meet the suppliers' facilitated discussion and networking session further engaged and connected participants.

The content, structure, duration, high calibre of presenters and the contribution of participants ensured that the event was a resounding success. This was evident in participant feedback, with an evaluation revealing that, overall, 92% of participants considered it good or excellent. The Sustainable Choice program team will use lessons learned and participant feedback to guide and inform future events.



## 1. Background

The Sustainable Choice program is a partnership between Local Government NSW and NSW OEH. It commenced in 2006 with the aim of facilitating NSW councils to increase the proportion of products and services procured that meet defined environmental and ethical criteria. It does so by:

- a) providing guidance and capacity building activities;
- b) supporting and assisting councils to implement sustainable procurement practices;
- c) improving internal procurement processes and systems; and
- d) providing networking opportunities to share knowledge and information.

Since commencement, program membership has grown annually and currently has 86 local council members. The number of suppliers has also grown with 318 suppliers now meeting eligibility criteria.

## 2. The Forum

The forum comprised a half-day event targeting Local Government staff involved in procurement, engineering, asset management, environmental management and sustainability. Invitations were sent to all NSW councils and promoted widely through LGNSW communication channels.

Forum objectives were to:

- a) Provide information, awareness and connectivity between:
  - i) councils; and
  - ii) councils and industry.
- b) Showcase sustainable products and services, including local/regional options where possible.
- c) Assist councils and industry to better understand the sustainability drivers and needs, expectations and barriers of each other.
- d) Promote council case studies to enhance learning by sharing the experiences and insights of practitioners.

Forty four people participated in the event across 22 different organisations, including representatives from ten councils, two State government organisations, seven Sustainable Choice suppliers and one regional organisation of councils (Table 1). There were also 13 speakers, one representative from LGP and two from Sustainable Choice.

**Table 1. Forum participants (n=44) categorised by organisation type.**

<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Councils	State Government	Industry	ROC	Other

### 3.5 Presentations

Presentations were delivered by 13 speakers. Details of presenters and an overview of their presentation are set out in order of appearance below. Copies of relevant PowerPoint slides (in pdf format) are available upon request from Sustainable Choice ([sustainablechoice@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:sustainablechoice@lgnsw.org.au)).



Presenter: Cr Gordon **Bradbery**, Mayor, Wollongong City Council

Mayor Bradbery welcomed participants to the forum, discussed the nature and importance of sustainability and delivered an Acknowledgement of Country.

Presenter: Jenny **Haining**, Wollongong City Council  
Title: **Local Sustainability Initiatives**

Jenny contextualised the event by delivering a presentation from an ‘on-ground’ practitioner’s perspective. She discussed Wollongong City Council’s ‘sustainability journey’, reviewing its policy and program context, areas where council is performing well and sustainability in buildings, transport and procurement. She wrapped up her presentation with a discussion on Council’s future proposed sustainability initiatives.



Presenters: Simon **Bruce**, StabilCo  
Peter **Meers**, RMS  
Jackie **Gregory**, BHP Billiton  
Title: **Reuse of Coal Wash Reject Material in Construction**

Simon, Peter and Jackie presented in turn. Simon addressed innovation in the reuse of coal wash reject material, including technical information. Peter provided an insight into the nature of road construction at RMS, materials, failure causes and characteristics, trials of coal wash reject material in roadbase and matters for further investigation. Jackie discussed the nature of coal wash and its use as a roadbase, including the results of a trial at West Cliff Coal Preparation Plant.



**Presenters:** David **Howes** and Lyn **Blain**, SSROC  
**Title:** **Sustainable Procurement Initiatives**

David and Lyn presented in turn addressing SSROC’s development and implementation of sustainable procurement initiatives across their member councils, in particular the THINK Procurement roadmap. The on-ground application of their initiatives across local government was also provided, including examples of successful systems and processes.



**Presenters:** Craig **Vergelius**, Fulton Hogan and Ross **Smith**, Fairfield City Council  
**Title:** **Development of Road Construction Material utilising Bitumen Emulsion and 100% Recycled Asphalt**



Ross and Craig presented details of a joint venture between Fulton Hogan and Fairfield City Council to develop a better performing road building product using materials produced by Fairfield Council’s Sustainable Resource Centre (SRC). The SRC Produces ~300,000T p.a. of recycled road building materials. They designed a high performance bituminous product for

structural layer application comprised of 100% recycled material and with comparatively less carbon emissions.

The development, trial and financial benefits of the innovative sustainable product were reviewed, including a financial analysis and comparison of the total life cost against alternative less sustainable products.



**Presenter:** Jessica **Jones**, LGP  
**Title:** **Sustainable Procurement – Keeping it simple**

Jessica discussed the role that LGP plays in helping Local Government achieve sustainable procurement outcomes and how it can identify opportunities in its everyday procurement activities.



**Presenter:** Tania Lalor, Local Government NSW  
**Title:** Sustainable Choice Database

Tania provided an overview of the Sustainable Choice Sustainable Products and Services Database, including what it is, its benefits, how to find it and how to use it. The database was accessed 'live' to demonstrate, interactively, key features, functional elements and outputs.

**Presenter:** Bradley Anderson, NSW OEH  
**Title:** Energy Efficiency Training

The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage's energy efficiency training delivers cost savings across a wide variety of sectors at low cost. As a government unit, Energy Efficient Business provides unbiased advice and information across a broad spectrum of energy efficiency matters for business and council. Bradley reviewed the concept of energy efficiency and how councils and local businesses can, with OEH's assistance, develop capacity to implement tailored energy efficiency measures.



**Presenter:** Mark Flemming, NSW OEH  
**Title:** Beyond 'Standard' Renewable Energy Options for Local Government

Mark's presentation addressed the NSW policy settings for resource efficiency, and outlined how these policies will be delivered and the methodology by which OEH will reach out to businesses, communities and Local Government. He informed participants about NSW government energy policies, the energy market and ways in which councils can participate in either a revenue neutral or profitable way.



### 3.6 Speed date a Sustainable Choice supplier

To promote networking and information exchange, a fun and engaging facilitated discussion and networking session was held between participants and tradeshow representatives. Participants were divided into six groups that rotated around each of the trade stalls in turn. Representatives provided participants with details of their products, including sustainability measures, their application and how they can be utilised by councils. Participants then had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss their individual council's needs.



### 3.7 Tradeshow

The forum included provision for six Sustainable Choice supplier stalls. Invitations to participate were extended to all Sustainable Choice suppliers, and considered on a ‘first come first served’ basis. The following organisations participated:

- Bokashi Composting Australia Pty Ltd
- Cardia Bioplastics
- Fulton Hogan
- Hivis Signs
- StabilCo NSW Pty Limited
- The Leaf Man Gutter Guard

## 4. Evaluation

A forum evaluation was conducted using a self-administered paper based questionnaire to assess performance against the event objectives and to gain insights and develop opportunities for enhancing future events.

Sixty four percent of respondents completed the questionnaire. Respondents separately rated five elements of the forum namely its information/content, session structure, quality of group interaction, venue/catering and facilitation/presenters. The majority of respondents gave ratings of good or excellent (Fig. 1). The venue/catering rated most highly with 48% of respondents considering them excellent. Although a majority of respondents (76%) thought the group interaction was good or excellent, the remaining 24% who consider it fair indicates that this is one area where future events can be improved.

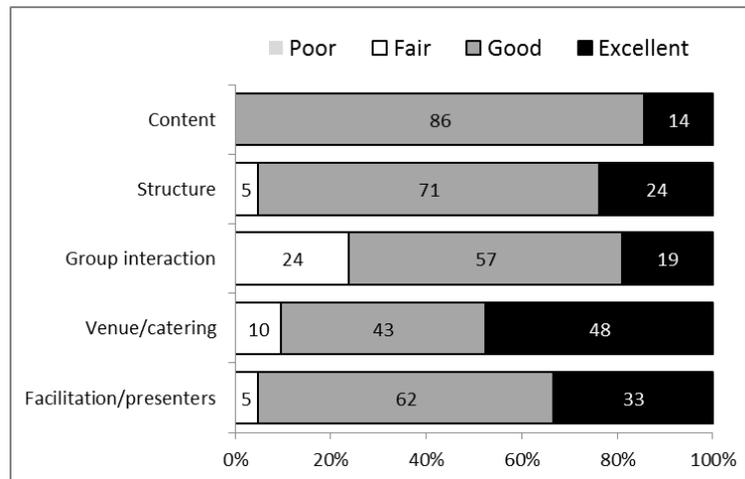


Fig. 1. . 100% stacked column chart of responses (n = 21) addressing quality of elements of the forum.

Summating results across the 5 questions above reveals that overall 92% rated the forum positively.

An open question asked respondents to list those aspects of the forum they most like and/or found useful, a number of which appear below:

*Opportunity to learn about innovations*  
*Information exchange*  
*Promotes understanding*  
*Great to engage and learn*

*Relevant to my position and worth considering*  
*Sharing ideas*  
*Something to learn from*  
*Gained knowledge*

*Potential cost savings*  
*Very useful information*  
*Knowledge building*

## 5. Conclusions

The Southern Sustainable Procurement Forum conducted at Wollongong City Council on 8 May 2015 attracted 44 participants representing 22 different organisations. Participants possessed a range of understanding of sustainable procurement from nothing to a fair bit. Ninety five percent said they were able to influence their council's procurement practices, which is important because all participants considered that sustainable procurement will become more significant over the next five years. Sixty percent said they would look to Sustainable Choice for help and information. The forum's content and structure was rated very favourably in the forum evaluation.

Presentations were delivered by 13 speakers addressing a range of technical and practical elements of sustainable procurement. All except one respondent considered the presenters and facilitation good or excellent.

Six trade stalls demonstrating Sustainable Choice approved products enabled councils to view, touch and hear about sustainable products from the suppliers' perspectives. Networking and engagement was further facilitated via an end-of-form panel discussion, 'meet the suppliers' facilitated discussion session, and networking lunch. Group interaction was viewed as good or excellent by 76% of respondents.

The structure, content and delivery of the forum were designed to meet the forum objectives in relation to sustainable procurement including increasing information, awareness and connectivity, showcasing products and services, and understanding the needs, drivers and barriers of others. The evaluation results confirm that the forum objectives were achieved. The forum also strengthened the opportunities for collaborations between councils and between councils and suppliers in furtherance of sustainability objectives.