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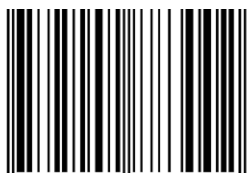
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2023-24 Hunter Business FUNCTION GUIDE

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2023-24 Hunter Business Function Guide

See this year's function guide between pages 16 and 17 of this issue

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From the Editor



This issue includes an Environmental Sustainability feature at a time Climate Change is making huge headlines across the globe.

Massive heatwaves have hit much of the northern hemisphere during their summer.

In our winter, July has been hottest on record in many parts of Australia.

Globally July has had the three hottest days globally on record.

With so much of the world's population experiencing record temperatures the push is increasing across the global for countries to reduce their carbon emissions.

At the political level, governments will face increased pressure from their own people and from other nations to not only set increasingly ambitious emission cuts but also to take the actions required to ensure these are reached. Some countries are looking at taking in account the emissions records of other nations when deciding upon imports.

Businesses will also come under increased political and consumer pressure to reduce their carbon footprint not only in their own operations but right through their supply chain. This will mean greater accountability and transparency being required.

Legislation in Australia will continue to evolve in regards to emissions. On page 20 of this issue is an article discussing amendments to Australia's climate safeguard mechanism and how it will affect business.

Coming decades will see major changes as we transition to a lower carbon economy and the Hunter will be one of the most directly affected regions.

Coal has been a major part of the Hunter economy since its founding days and will remain so for some years but is certainly facing challenges. Hunter coal may also have extended life than many other foreign suppliers because of its high quality, meaning it produces less other pollutants and produces more heat per unit burnt. But change is coming, with few new coal-fired power stations being built globally and older power stations coming to the end of their life.

The Hunter is of course home to some of the largest coal-fired power stations in Australia. Some have already closed and others have a closure timeline.

The good news for the Hunter economy is that there is a plethora of clean energy projects built, under construction or planned for the region, including solar, wind and green hydrogen.

We are in the midst of an historic revolution in energy and with all dramatic changes there are major challenges but also major opportunities.

It will be a complex transition that will need to be managed very carefully but the Hunter has every reason to be confident that it will remain an energy powerhouse.

Garry Hardie
Editor and Publisher

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Transformative terminal expansion gets underway at Newcastle Airport

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese was at Newcastle Airport for the official ground-breaking ceremony for the Terminal Expansion Project on 6 July.

The event marks the beginning of construction for the project, which will enhance the airport's capacity, efficiency, and overall user experience. Newcastle Airport CEO, Dr Peter Cock says the transformative construction project is a critical part of delivering the airport the region deserves.

"Aviation is a catalyst to our economy's growth and our region's transition.

"Newcastle Airport is committed to growing the airport the region deserves. As the sixth largest economy in the country, the people of our region are passionately behind our airport and connecting the Hunter to the rest of the world.

"I would like to thank the Prime Minister and all the Albanese Government for their ongoing support and commitment to our vision for Newcastle Airport," Dr Cock said.

Dr Cock acknowledged the combined effort necessary to get the terminal expansion to this point.

"We want to sincerely thank our local member, Meryl Swanson, for her tireless efforts in advocating for our airport.

"Member for Newcastle, Sharon Claydon, and Member for Shortland, Pat Conroy, have also been very supportive and it's great that they can attend the event today.

"We thank them, as well as our state MPs and local government representatives, for their ongoing support and advocacy for Newcastle Airport and the people of the Hunter."

Member for Paterson Meryl Swanson, whose electorate encompasses the Newcastle Airport, said the terminal expansion will be transformational.



"We are getting on with the job of delivering on our \$55 million election commitment to contribute to the upgrade of international terminal facilities at Newcastle Airport.

"The upgraded international terminal will be transformational for the whole Hunter region – for the aviation sector, for local tourism and for communities."

Newcastle Airport's Executive General Manager of Marketing and Communication, Burcak Sezar, says the Newcastle Airport team and Cox Architects have worked closely with stakeholders to develop a terminal that is uniquely reflective of Newcastle and the Hunter.

"The design incorporates the sand dunes, our beaches, and the iconic Hunter Valley in the design and colours.

"The new terminal is also deliberately inclusive, from including the stories of the Worimi people, to welcoming people with disabilities.

"We want people in our airport to know they are in Newcastle Airport. We want the people of the Hunter to feel that this is our airport and use it with pride.

"And we're confident this unique design achieves that and delivers a stress-free experience for passengers," she said.

The sod-turning ceremony to start the construction project was performed on the day.



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Minister visit shines spotlight on value of apprenticeships

Strengthening trades and access to jobs in the Hunter was a focus of Minister Repacholi's visit to HVTC in July.

The newly elected Member for the Hunter toured the renowned Rutherford Skills Centre, where more than 340 electrical, mechanical and fabrication students are learning core trade skills through HVTC's Registered Training Organisation (RTO), the Central Coast Community College.

HVTC Group CEO Sharon Smith said it was a great opportunity for the Minister to get a taste of some of the quality trade training on offer right here in the Hunter.

"The Minister is a former tradesperson who started his own career as an apprentice fitter and turner, so he knows firsthand the value of apprenticeships in giving young people valuable trade skills and setting them up for life," she said.

"Importantly, he recognises the importance of giving apprentices quality training, which is why we were proud to showcase our state-of-the-art training facilities, led by our team of passionate trade trainers.

"It was also a great opportunity for the Minister to meet some of our students, including Bradley Robinson, a fourth-year engineering fabrication apprentice hosted to Robinson Custom Fabrications who was recently awarded HVTC's RTO Student of the Year.


"The Minister spoke about Bradley in Parliament earlier this year after Bradley was a finalist for Student of the Year in the Community Colleges Australia Community Education Student of the Year Awards.

"Our facility is kitted out with quality equipment and technology to enhance the learning experience of our trade students. Apprentices like Bradley are learning core hands-on skills with




Central Coast Community College Trades Training Coordinator Richard Sellick with fourth-year fabrication apprentice Bradley Robinson and Minister Repacholi.

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the support and guidance of our trainers, that will benefit their careers both now and in the future."

With Australia grappling skills shortages and industries crying out for skilled workers, Ms Smith said there has never been a better time to undertake an apprenticeship.

"An apprenticeship is a great starting point for anyone in their career, especially school leavers transitioning into work for the first time. You get formal training and practical on-the-job experience to enhance your skill development, a paid wage, a stable job for four years and the opportunity to work alongside experienced and highly skilled people," she said.

"Importantly, many of our students benefit from fee-free training thanks to the NSW Government's Smart and Skilled Program. This means there's no course fees to pay and no study debt accumulated at the end of their training, which is a smart choice.

"Depending on what stage of their career journey they're at, some candidates may be eligible for subsidised training through the NSW Government's ACE (Adult & Community Education) program.

"As an adult community education provider, the College also delivers a range of ACE funded courses like RSA, RCG, White Card, and First Aid, giving students the opportunity to upskill, to start their careers, re-enter the workforce, pursue further study, or obtain valuable life skills for their futures.

"As an RTO and Group Training Organisation, HVTC Group has the capability and resources to train people, connect them to businesses for employment and empower them to reach their full potential."



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Athletics Amenities Building for Singleton

Construction of the new \$1.25 million Amenities Building Cook Park, Singleton began in July.

Damian Morris, Council's Acting Director Infrastructure and Planning said the project was just one of many in the 2023/24 financial year, with almost \$10 million being invested in upgrading, replacing, and building new sports infrastructure, enhancing the town's status as one of the leading sports destinations in the region.

The new building follows the opening of the new long jump pit, which was completed in Cook Park in 2021, and will include inclusive and fully accessible amenities, training room, canteen, bathrooms, and equipment storage areas for both athletics and cricket clubs.

"We're working very closely with our sports clubs to deliver the highest standard of sporting facilities for our residents now and into the future, and open up opportunities for new competitions and activities, as well as help attract regional sporting events to the area," Mr Morris said.

"The construction of this new amenities building signifies a new era for Singleton Track and Field, and is a major piece of the puzzle in their move to Cook Park from Alroy Oval."

Mr Morris said that Council worked in partnership with Singleton Track and Field on the concept design of the facility, following the completion of their Masterplan, which was funded by a Singleton Council sports grant.

"This multi-million-dollar facility will go a long way to help develop future athletes not only in Singleton, but the wider Hunter Region and beyond," he said.

"Construction works will also correspond with the installation of new spectator tiered seating at the front of the new facility, and new lighting for the field.



"Council recognises the value of sport and recreation to supporting the wellbeing of our community in a range of ways and is taking considerable action to provide the highest quality facilities."

Construction of the new Athletics Amenities Building is expected to be completed by December, weather permitted.

The Athletics Building is funded by the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund, the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program and Council.

Official launch of the Newcastle APS Academy Campus at University of Newcastle

On 5 July Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Finance, Women and the Public Service, launched the first Australian Public Service (APS) Academy Campus at the University of Newcastle. The launch welcomes the first group of entry-level data and digital participants and demonstrates the APS's commitment to reaching talent outside Canberra.

Senator Gallagher joined Australian Public Service Commissioner, Dr Gordon de Brouwer, University of Newcastle Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alex Zelinsky AO, and the Heads of the APS Data and Digital Professions, Dr David Gruen and Chris Fechner for a tour of the University's Callaghan Campus. The group met with program participants and was an opportunity to acknowledge the innovative partnership between the University and the APS to deliver the first APS Academy Campus.



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"We are delighted to be celebrating the launch of this campus and welcoming our new colleagues to the APS. These talented individuals will be supported by the APS Data and Digital Professions to build meaningful and rewarding APS careers as they shape a better data and digital future", Dr de Brouwer said.

The Newcastle campus at the university is the first of three APS Academy Campuses under the Australian Government's pilot policy initiative to address data and digital skills shortages in the APS. The initiative offers Australians looking for a career change and students in the Hunter region the opportunity to join the APS.

University of Newcastle Vice-Chancellor Professor Alex Zelinsky AO acknowledged the important partnership between the University and the APS that will provide meaningful experience and career opportunities for students.

"We are pleased to collaborate with the APS on such an innovative partnership bringing together the government and tertiary sectors. By combining and focusing our efforts we amplify the benefits for the University and its students, and the broader Newcastle community. For our students it provides them with hands-on practical skills that will mean they are more employable and have the opportunity to build connections within their chosen field", said Professor Zelinsky.

Newcastle-based sovereign company first to offer cyber security portfolio with CMMC services and IRAP assessments

Recognising the need for trans-pacific security compliance in the AUKUS era, the Newcastle-based business Pacific Aerospace Consulting (PAC) announced the launch of a new service dedicated to helping Australian businesses working, or interested in working, in the US Department of Defence (DoD) supply chain: Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Level 1 and Level 2 Services.

PAC is the only Australia-based company endorsed by the CMMC accreditation body, Cyber-AB, as a Registered Practitioner Organisation (RPO) with RPA-qualified personnel and the first company to offer both CMMC services and Information Security Registered Assessor Program (IRAP) assessments.



CMMC is an initiative designed to help protect the data shared within the USA's Defense Industrial Base (DIB) and the contract information essential for National Defense. Its primary objective is to verify the safeguards and practices that ensure basic cyber hygiene and the protection of controlled unclassified information.

"We know the industry's ongoing need to understand Australian and US cyber security accreditation requirements will be essential. This will be enhanced further, with the expected compliance due to AUKUS info-sharing requirements. Many SMEs may find it challenging to decipher IRAP and CMMC requirements, so we wanted to be sure we were ready to help", said Lee de Winton, PAC AUS CEO.

PAC's team has a multifaceted background in Government, Defence and commercial security domains. It can provide advice, consulting, and recommendations to other businesses to help them meet both AUS and USA requirements.

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Maitland Park's historic Robins Oval officially reopens after \$1.9 million facelift

Upgrades to one of Maitland's most historic sporting facilities have now wrapped up, with the new and improved Robins Oval at Maitland Park officially opening in July.

Jointly funded by the NSW Government, Cricket NSW and Maitland City Council, the \$1.9 million construction project involved refurbishing the Mick Hinman Pavilion, renamed in honour of Maitland cricket legend Harold (Mick) Hinman in 2003. The Pavilion is now complete with reconstructed tiered seating, upgraded changerooms, a new canteen, amenities building and storage area.

Mayor Philip Penfold said these upgrades are 'a big win for local sporting groups and the wider Maitland community. "There's a lot of history behind the facilities at Robins Oval, so it's great to see them upgraded to modern standards, while maintaining their heritage nature," Mayor Penfold said.

"The new and improved facilities give our community a space to watch and play their favourite sports, particularly cricket and we know they'll be well used by locals for many years to come."

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads and State Member for Maitland, The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP said she was pleased to attend the official opening and see the upgraded facilities in person.

"It's great to see the NSW Government, Cricket NSW and Council working together to upgrade this important facility for the benefit of the wider community. I'm sure these upgrades will improve sporting events for local clubs and spectators now and into the future," Minister Aitchison said.

Cricket Manager Hunter/Manning and Infrastructure Northern NSW, Gary Fisher said Cricket NSW is "proud to invest in this project which was a true collaboration between all parties."

"The upgraded Pavilion will be a great asset for cricket in Maitland and the wider Hunter Valley and these improvements will help the region attract more carnivals and other events from across the state," Mr Fisher said.

This project was funded by a \$150,000 grant through the NSW Government's ICC T20 World Cup 2020 Cricket Legacy Fund, a \$200,000 grant through the Australian Cricket Infrastructure Fund (ACIF) and Council.

Gary Fisher Cricket NSW, Jenny Aitchison MP, Mick Randall Maitland City United, Mayor Philip Penfold



Upgrades for major wastewater pumping station

Work has commenced on upgrades to the Newcastle West 1 Wastewater Pump Station located next to Marketown Shopping Centre car park, following successful preparatory work completed late last year.

The upgrade will reduce future maintenance, improve the existing pump station fixtures, improve amenity and support population growth in the area. Construction started in July which

will continue until early next year, assuming the weather is fine and we experience no major issues.

Hunter Water are installing a permanent odour control unit (OCU), having had an interim unit in place since last year, as well as remediating existing concrete, and some pipework, covers and hatches at the pump station.

Hunter Water Asset Solutions Group Manager, Justin Watts, said the upgrade will help to protect the pump station and pipework from corrosion and improve community amenity.

"The pump station next to Marketown, Newcastle West 1, is one of our biggest wastewater pump stations. It transfers wastewater to Burwood Beach treatment works from all or parts of 15 inner Newcastle suburb, extending from New Lambton to the Newcastle CBD.

"During the next six months of the major upgrade we'll switch out the interim OCU we put in late last year with a large permanent unit. This permanent OCU will continue the greatly improved experience for residents and shoppers by extracting and filtering bad-smelling gases like hydrogen sulphide, known as rotten egg gas.

"The added benefit of dramatically reducing hydrogen sulphide also limits corrosion, extending the sewerage system's operational life and making network management and maintenance more efficient.

"There may be some odour and noise along with movement of personnel and construction vehicles while this upgrade takes place. We will make every effort to reduce these impacts as much as possible.

"Some areas of the Marketown West car park will be fenced off and unavailable to the public for the duration of the project. We've advised Marketown management, nearby residents and tenants and we are in frequent contact with them."



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Newcastle Airport opens Premium Covered Car Park

Newcastle Airport has officially opened its new Premium Covered Car Park, providing travellers with a first-class undercover parking experience right at the front door. It features six Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations for passengers to use and the roof supports a large bank of solar panels designed to provide more than 30% of the airport's power needs.

Dr Peter Cock, CEO of Newcastle Airport, said the new Premium Covered Car Park gives locals the first glimpse of what the new terminal will look like.

"We're thrilled to open this car park, not only to provide more covered parking to our passengers, but it is the first step in the expansion project."

"Our team has worked tirelessly to ensure that the new car park meets the highest standards of quality and convenience, and we believe it will be a great asset to our airport."

"This car park is also a teaser into what our terminal will look like. We've used design elements in this car park that tie into the terminal," he said.

The roof of the new Premium Covered Car Park is constructed from 1236 solar panels. The 710 kW system will produce over a million kWh of power each year, providing more than 30% of the airport's energy needs. The new solar panels add to an existing solar bank on one of the airport hangars installed in 2021 that provides about 4% of the airport's electricity. The airport also has a contract to ensure any grid accessed electricity is from sustainable sources, ensuring the airport is powered by 100% sustainable energy.

"The new Premium Covered Car Park is an important and exciting step in the overall airport expansion, but it's also a very visible part of the airport's commitment to sustainability," Dr Cock said.

"Part of being the airport the region deserves means that we deliver on our commitment to sustainability, which is why we are serious about investing in on-site renewable electricity generation."

Shane de Wit, Executive Manager of Aviation at Newcastle Airport, said the fusion of function and sustainability is a priority for the business and sign of things to come with the new terminal.

"The addition of covered parking spaces for our passengers was a key priority for us in delivering the airport the region deserves. We have a total of 161 covered parking spaces now, directly across from the terminal.

"Sustainability is also a key focus for our team, so we made sure to include six electric vehicle charging stations. The terminal is being designed and built to target a 5-star Green Star rating accreditation, so it made sense to have a sustainability focus on this car park as well.

SHAC staff members become Accredited Professional Architects

Jessica Maher and Shane Gray at SHAC have become Accredited Professional Architects after successfully completing their registration and passing their exams to be accepted by the NSW Board of Architects.

Jessica Maher, Architect, started with SHAC in 2017 and is one of SHAC's most qualified staff, completing both her Bachelor of Design (Architecture) and Master of Architecture with Distinction, and was awarded the Parker Fellowship Travelling Scholarship in 2020. During COVID she added a Diploma of Project Management (2022) before becoming an accredited NSW Registered Architect in 2023. Along the way she has been one of SHAC's most consistent and capable employees and now heads up SHAC's North Coast Office in Coffs Harbour, NSW.

Shane Gray, Project Architect is a specialist in architectural detailing and documentation, with 25 years' experience in Design, Documentation, Specification and Contract Administration and

four architectural qualifications. The first half of his career was spent designing high quality luxury residences in Sydney, and he brings that importance of getting the details and finish right to every project he works on at SHAC, whether it is for a multi-residential development, a club, a school, or a works depot.

Shane is approved to review projects under the State Government BCRP scheme, and is a valuable mentor and coach, able to share his wealth of practical experience in designing and delivering built projects to SHAC's up and coming staff.



Transport for NSW finalising preferred Newcastle light rail corridor option

The NSW Government has requested a preferred transport corridor for Newcastle, including light rail, be accelerated to provide certainty in planning for all stakeholders.

Transport for NSW North Region Director Anna Zycki says Transport has been asked to finalise its corridor investigations, to support land use decision making in the wider Newcastle area by the City of Newcastle and Department of Planning and Environment.

"Significant investigation work has already been carried out around broader precinct and city planning, as well as an alignment that integrates with future land use," Ms Zycki said.

"The NSW Government is keen to finalise this transport corridor to ensure future infrastructure needs are being properly considered. Finalising the preservation of the light rail corridor will also provide certainty for developers in the Newcastle CBD, particularly in the precinct around the Newcastle Interchange".

"Preserving the corridor will also include work around the Broadmeadow regionally significant growth area, with the Department of Planning and Environment leading an exercise for the redevelopment of the Broadmeadow area, including housing and a major sport and entertainment hub."

Transport for NSW expects its findings from investigations into a preferred corridor option to be completed in coming months and will subsequently publish a report outlining this option.

Stakeholders including Council, the Department of Planning and Environment, and Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation continue to be engaged in these investigations with Transport.

The NSW Government has committed to delivering Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plans for the nine regions across NSW identified by the Department of Planning and Environment, including the Hunter.

The Hunter Plan will set the direction for continuing to improve every part of the region's transport system for the benefit of passengers, the community and the economy.

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Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards

An innovative speech pathology service for children with communication and feeding difficulties has taken out the top gong at this year's Lake Mac Business Excellence Awards at a sold-out gala ceremony at Belmont 16s on 21 July.

The annual awards had an exceptional response in 2023 with a record 146 applications received from a diverse range of companies and individuals across the city.

Warners Bay-based A Growing Understanding was named 2023's Business of the Year, with judges commending its innovation, contribution to the city, community support and work culture.

It was a stellar night for the company, which also won the Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award, and its founder Lauren Haskins, who took home the Outstanding Business Leader Award.

Lake Macquarie Mayor Kay Fraser said A Growing Understanding was a prime example of how passion, dedication, expertise and business nous could breed success.

"Over an extended period of time, and in many different ways, Lauren and her team have demonstrated the very best qualities of doing business in Lake Macquarie," she said.

A Growing Understanding Founder and Practice Director Lauren Haskins said she was humbled to receive the awards, "and grateful for the recognition of my team's hard work".

"We've had a clear vision to provide industry-leading speech pathology services," she said.

"I've been able to build a team of amazing humans who share our values of care, and ensure ongoing excellence in speech pathology services and client experience."

Lake Mac's growing reputation as a hub for allied health also echoed in the Outstanding Employee category, won by Sensational Start Occupational Therapy Practice Manager Kathryn Barker.

Joshua Marks from Academy Sheetmetal was awarded Outstanding Young Business Leader.

Academy Sheetmetal is a leading steel fabrication and metal laser cutting business based in Cardiff. They can help domestic, commercial and construction clients with sheetmetal, roofing, guttering, custom fabrication, water tanks, flashing, fascia and laser cutting across the Central Coast, Hunter and Sydney areas.

Gateshead's firefighting equipment supplier Fire Response took out the Excellence in Small Business Award, winning accolades for its move to transition to next-generation sustainable firefighting foam, and its drive to bring international best practices to the region.

CoastXP won the revamped Outstanding Tourism Experience – Tourism and Hospitality category for its popular small-group tours off the Lake Mac coast and around Lake Macquarie, while the non-profit Business Growth Centre at Gateshead was named Outstanding Community Organisation.

The Business Growth Centre Site Manager, Barbara Lane, said being awarded Outstanding Community Organisation at the 2023 Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards was exciting.

"With the vast majority of businesses in Lake Macquarie being small and micro businesses, the Business Growth Centre is passionate about giving every enterprise the opportunity to thrive," Barbara said.

"Through the new trade centre, we are able to contribute to meeting the skills needs of the community and provide opportunities for the young people of Lake Macquarie to find their passion and pursue trade careers.

"We are thrilled to have been named Outstanding Community Organisation and look forward to continue working with local businesses, schools, and government departments to invest in the future of Lake Macquarie."

The Excellence in Micro Business Award was taken out by psyborg® a branding, graphic design, web design and interactive



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Business growth Centre

Outstanding Community Organisation
2023 Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards

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Trade training and student pathways programs

Business advisory and mentoring

CONTACT



02 4942 3133



Barbara Lane - Site Manager



blane@cccc.nsw.edu.au



48 Oakdale Rd, Gateshead NSW 2290



businessgrowthcentre.org.au



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media studio focused on creative and useable communication. psyborg® Creative Director and Founder Daniel Borg was pleased to win this category for the second time, haven previously taken out the awards in the 2021 Awards.

"Winning for a second time is a testament to our unwavering commitment to innovative design solutions that fuel our clients' growth. We may be micro in size, but we are macro on ideas," said Daniel.

Lampson took out the award for Excellence in Large Business. Managing Director John Lee said he was absolutely thrilled to be selected.

Lampson supply heavy lift and transport services on a large scale throughout Australia and in turn support other businesses in Lake Macquarie

"Lampson Head Office has operated from Lake Macquarie for over 30 years," said John.

"Lake Mac is a beautiful place to call home and has the local support our business needs to operate."

This year's awards featured a first-ever People's Choice Award, determined by popular vote online.

Cr Fraser said The Wholesome Collective, a social enterprise addressing poor nutrition and low home-cooking rates in disadvantaged communities, was a deserving winner.

"I'm thrilled to see such a diversity of finalists and winners for this year's awards," she said.

"These companies and organisations work so hard to succeed, often in very challenging circumstances. The measure of that success is not just in their financial bottom line, but in what they do to enrich and improve our community."

The Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards are supported by gold sponsor Dantia, media partner Newcastle Herald, silver sponsors Allambi Care, Newcastle Permanent, Oasis Media, Charlestown Square by the GPT Group and University

of Newcastle, and bronze sponsors Hunter Water, Kent Conveyancing, Lake Mac Holiday Parks, Ramsay Health and Weekenda.

2023 Lake Mac Business Excellence Awards winners

Outstanding Employee: Kathryn Barker, Sensational Start Occupational Therapy

Outstanding Young Business Leader: Joshua Marks, Academy Sheetmetal

Outstanding Business Leader: Lauren Haskins, A Growing Understanding

Employer of Choice - 20 or Less Employees: SAPHI

Employer of Choice - 21 or More Employees: Evolution Advisers

Excellence in Innovation: SAPHI (Critical Infrastructure Monitoring System)

Excellence in Sustainability: Imaginelle

Outstanding Community Organisation: Business Growth Centre

Outstanding Visitor Experience - Tourism and Hospitality: CoastXP

Outstanding Start-Up: Astalty

Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion: A Growing Understanding

Excellence in Micro Business: psyborg®

Excellence in Small Business: Fire Response

Excellence in Large Business: Lampson Australia

People's Choice Award: The Wholesome Collective

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Outstanding Young Business Leader:

Joshua Marks



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2023-24

Hunter Business

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GARRY



SANDIE



JASON

Welcome to the **2023–24 Hunter Business Function Guide**, an annual special coverage by HBR to help business people with planning and running a successful event in the Hunter region.

The Hunter has a well-earned reputation as an ideal location for business functions, with a growing number of local, Australian and overseas business people experiencing the excellent locations and services available.

One of the exceptional strengths of the Hunter is its extremely broad range of venues available, satisfying all tastes and budgets. The Hunter can readily accommodate any type of function, from small, intimate gathering, to large expos and international symposiums.

The locations vary immensely, from the CBDs of major centres, to water-front venues, vineyard experiences and rural retreats.

The Hunter also has a wide range of excellent support services to help ensure that you have a successful event. Whether you need help with just one aspect of an event or someone to take responsibility for almost the entire event, the Hunter has an experienced organisation ready to work with you.

The region is also unique in its range of accommodation, dining options and activities for delegates and visitors. The Hunter is truly the perfect location for almost any type of business function.

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FUNCTION GUIDE TABLE 2023-24

Venues	Location	Room Capacity					Facilities	Onsite activities	Accom. rooms	See page
		Conference rooms	Max Area/M²	Max Cocktail	Max Theatre	Max Banquet				
The Anchorage Hotel & Spa	Port Stephens	5 (9)	144	160	160	110	AV equipment, data projector, whiteboard, flip chart, sounds system and WiFi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spa treatments at on-site Spa Lucca Cocktail Masterclasses Whisky Tastings High Tea by the Sea Sailing experience The Galley Kitchen – all-day dining Moby's Bar – Bar Onsite parking Two pools, one adults-only Poolside Bar 	80	2
Cessnock Hospitality Group	Cessnock	7	460	200	400	350	Microphones (roving), data projectors, PA system, Wi-Fi, free parking, catering, accessible amenities, break out rooms, video conferencing capabilities for small to medium groups.	Bistro, bar and gaming.	50	7
Merewether Surfhouse	Merewether	2	390	350	250	250	Two projector & screens available + a HD Plasma Screen, 5 microphones available, a stage to hire. Guest wifi is also available.	Restaurant, Rooftop Bar and Mexican Beach Bar	N/A	9
Murrook Culture Centre	Williamtown	3	502	600	420	240	3 data projectors and motorised screens, In-room sound system with wireless microphones, Wi-Fi, whiteboards, flip charts, lectern, tea and coffee station in each function room, catering packages available, ample carpark.	Cultural Workshops & Training, Sand Dune Adventures Quad Bike tours, Cultural Services, Murrook Café, Cultural Gallery	N/A	12
NOAH'S On The Beach	Newcastle	7	380	300	300	200	Lectern, lectern microphone, roving microphone, Data projector, projector screen, wireless internet, whiteboard, flipchart stand.	Restaurant & Cocktail bar.	90	3
Novotel Newcastle Beach	Newcastle	3	166	140	150	140	WiFi and dancefloor available complimentary. All audio-visual equipment can be hired via our preferred supplier for an additional cost, eg, LED TV, data projector and screens, lectern, microphones, flipcharts and whiteboards.	<p>Novotel In balance meetings includes 2 complimentary team activities when taking our day delegate packages. Other team building activities can be arranged at an additional cost via our preferred supplier.</p> <p>Onsite restaurant and bar, room service, secure underground self-parking, gym, spa, steam room.</p>	88	5
Pacific Dunes - Greenhouse	Medowie	2	270	200	220	160	Full integrated data projector, drop down projector screen, 4 roaming microphones, wifi internet, lectern, iphone/hdmi/PC/mac etc connectors, white board, flip chart, black out blinds, sound proof interna; walls if you want to close the room in half.	18 hole championship golf course with practice facilities, full stocked golf shop, amenities with disability amenities, bar, full eatery menu located in the club house. Out door terraces.	N/A	5
University of Newcastle – Great Hall	Callaghan	4	720	750	1230	320	Flat polished timber floor with moveable seating, a spectacular ceiling, fixed tiered seating at rear and large fixed stage. Full in house lighting and audio system, projector and screen, foyer area, break out room, outdoor courtyard with lecture theatres nearby. Catering available.	Suitable for hosting a large conference, gala dinner, ball, cocktail event, expo, graduation or school formal.	N/A	11
University of Newcastle – Local Connections Restaurant	Callaghan	1	200	150	N/A	80	Licensed bar, dedicated chef and kitchen team, wait staff, food and beverage packages, hand-held microphone and inbuilt sound system. Book a table or book the whole restaurant.	Degustation dining, beer and wine tasting events, networking and cocktail events, awards nights and celebration events, breakfast functions.	N/A	11
University of Newcastle – Q Building	Newcastle	4	162	120	110	N/A	High speed WiFi, lectern, zoom capabilities, hand & lapel microphones, projector & screen, tables, chairs, white board, kitchenette, instant hot & cold water.	Presentations, workshops, classes & networking events.	N/A	11

FUNCTION GUIDE TABLE 2023-24

SUPPORTING SERVICES

The Hunter Region is blessed with a wide variety of organisations that can provide services and expertise to help make your event be a success.

COMPANY	SERVICES	PAGE
Pinnacle Team Events	Team Building Activities	8
Scion Audio & Events	Audio, visual, staging & event equipment	6





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MAKING YOUR EVENT A SUCCESS

It can be an arduous task to organise a successful event, particularly if it is large. The disappointing aspect for the organiser is that most attendees probably have no comprehension of how much work has been involved. Those without function organising experience often think it is just a matter of booking a venue and sending out the invitations. The organisers are often not really thought about unless there is a really big wow factor or if something major goes wrong.

Every event is different and will have its own requirements; however, the following general tips will help you to achieve a successful event:

Getting help

There are a range of local businesses that can help with your event, from assisting with one aspect (like catering) to organising almost the entire event.

Even if you gain the services of an event planner, this does not mean that you will have no responsibilities in the planning stages. First and foremost you must have good communications with the planner and ensure both sides have a clear understanding of the type of event, its goals and its budget. The event planner will also require input from you along the way with necessary information and options requiring a decision. These should be attended to promptly but with due consideration. In the end the event planner wants the event to meet the client's expectations, so your input is important and required.

Initial planning

The first task is to clearly define what your event is trying to achieve. Finalise the type of event or function it will be – launch, networking session, end of year party, exhibition, seminar, team building etc. Next set the budget available, including both revenue streams (if applicable) and expenses. If it is re-run of a similar earlier event, these stages will be much easier. Make sure to also have realistic and measurable targets.



Event budget

Set a budget at the start and monitor it as each stage progresses. It is usually best if you can allocate some of the budget for unforeseen expenses as these often occur.

Date and venue

Much care must be taken when setting the date and venue as it is not usually easy to change these. When considering the date take into account public and school holidays, other major or competing events, staff and equipment availability and any other issue that may restrict the timing.



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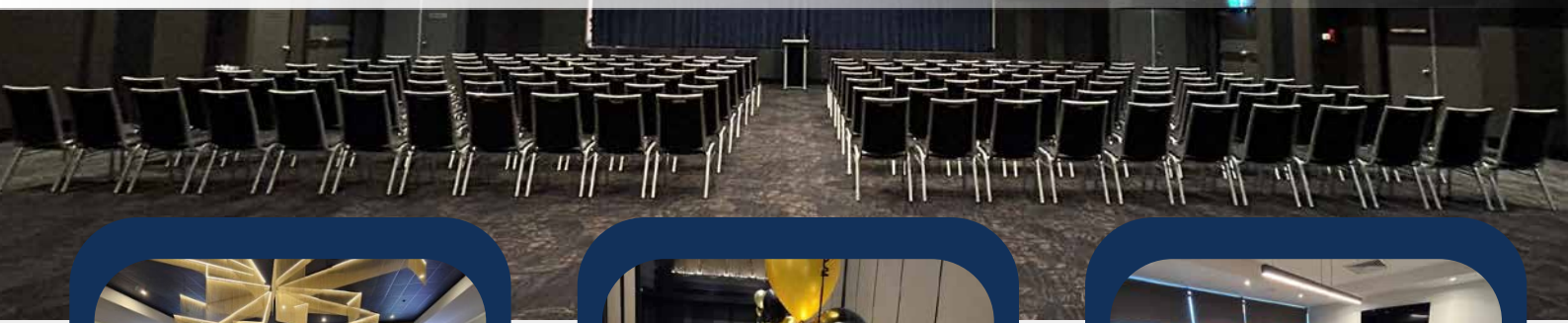
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MAKING YOUR EVENT A SUCCESS

Risk management

Create a risk management plan and ensure any appropriate insurance is in place and current. Create a contingency plan for factors outside of your direct control on the day.

Timeline

Prepare a project timeline with tasks that must be accomplished by specific dates. These may include:

- When to announce the event
- Preparation of promotional material
- Selection of caterer and menu
- Selection of entertainment
- Organisation of audio-visual needs
- Selection and confirmation of speakers
- Selection of accommodation
- Organisation of insurance or permits
- Preparation of a contingency plan for the event
- Organisation of transportation
- Organisation of marketing, signage and social media
- Finalisation of program
- Confirmation of attendees
- Preparation of event material
- Organising set up

At the event

The better the planning and preparation, the better the chance that all will go smoothly on the day. Often it won't go exactly to plan, but most attendees will be unaware. Try to stay calm, even if there are a few hiccups, and finally try to enjoy yourself.



After the event

When the event is finished you will need to remove equipment and possibly rubbish from the venue. Depending upon the nature of the event, sponsors and participants may be thanked and possibly given a questionnaire for feedback. In the days following the event have a debrief session on the event, covering the successful aspects as well as those that could have been improved. If appropriate, a report on the event can be sent to participants and sponsors. Plans for future events can also be included.

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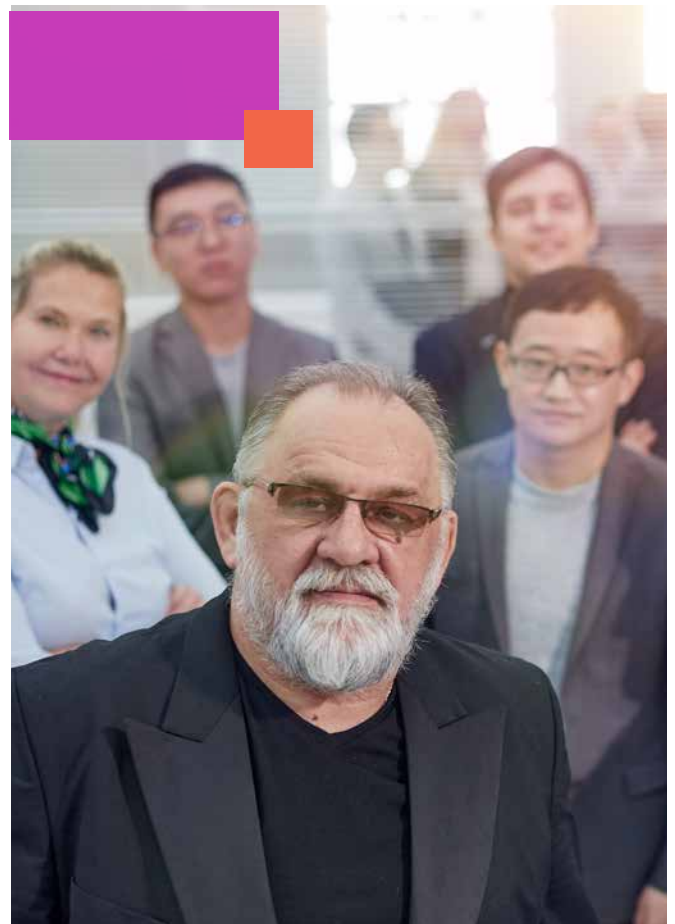
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SELECTING YOUR VENUE

One of the most important decisions when planning a business event is the venue. Assuming you do not have suitable in-house facilities, you will likely be faced with a range of venue options and these must be evaluated early in the process.

The following are factors to consider when you are deciding upon the venue for your next event:

Location – The venue should be easy to get to for participants and attendees. It is usually good to be located close to most of attendees to minimise travel time and increase attendance. If you think many will use public transport then these links should be evaluated. If most will be driving then close-by parking facilities will be an important consideration.

Venue suitability – Obviously the venue must be the right size for your event. If it is too small you will not have enough room for everything you need as well as attendees. But if it is too large, it may feel quite dead and empty. If the venue is not air-conditioned you should consider ventilation or heating options, particularly if the event is being held in summer or winter. If extensive setting up is required, such as in an expo, then ease of access to the venue can be important. The venue also may need to be available for ample time before and after the event. Wheelchair and invalid access may also be a consideration.

Facilities & services – The available facilities and services provided by a venue can be of major benefit in the quality of an event, the total cost of an event and the ease of organisation. Check there is sufficient chairs and tables (if required). These days' microphones, audio visual facilities and internet access are essential for many functions. If food and drink facilities are not available, or not available to the desired quality, then there are a number of excellent caterers available in the Hunter that can help.

Availability – The venue does of course need to be available. The earlier the venue is locked away, the better the chance of having it for your desired time. You will also have more flexibility in settling on a date if you start early.

Cost – Cost is always a factor to consider, particularly if operating on a tight budget but make sure you are taking all costs into account. For example a more expensive venue that provides additional facilities at no charge may well work out cheaper in the long run than a cheaper venue that provides little and you need to arrange additional facilities.

Venue staff – The quality of the venue staff is sometimes overlooked. Good venue staff are a major help both in the organisational phase and on the actual event day. Alarm bells should start ringing if you find them disinterested or they fail to respond to enquiries.

Other help – Don't be shy to ask other organisations that have had similar types of events about their experiences. Event organisers can take away most of the venue selection work. They also have more detailed intelligence on possible venues and the range of options available.



UNIVERSITY SPACES ARE FOR EVERYONE

While teaching is the priority for the University of Newcastle, the University spaces are not just for students. Enabling connected communities is a priority of the University with the aim of creating a stronger, more inclusive society by collaborating with communities to build local capacity, social connectedness, and sense of belonging.

The campuses have on-site facilities and services such as licensed restaurants, cafes, post office, pharmacy, sporting fields, parklands and more. If you live or work nearby the University encourages you to make the most of these facilities. If you are hosting a function, these facilities make the campus more of a suburb than just a venue.

With venues dedicated for hire throughout the year - meeting rooms with spectacular views, large outdoor spaces, a live music venue or a grand hall – and an even wider range of spaces during semester breaks. As a teaching facility the venues are set up for presentations and conference style events with AV facilities, food options and intra/inter campus shuttles.

The Great Hall is one of three large venues in Newcastle, big and flexible enough for expos, conferences, and licensed events such as gala dinners or balls. As a conference venue it can simultaneously hold an expo, up to 500 in plenary, and smaller break out lecture theatres, or could host something like a TED talk for up to 1200 people.

The bushland campus allows attendees to spend time outside during breaks and offers a relaxing atmosphere compared to the bustle of the city. The location on the fringes of the city becomes a central location for businesses who operate outside the CBD.

The full range of available facilities is available at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/venuesandevents>

THE GREAT HALL, THEATRE STYLE
PHOTO COURTESY OF: BOX CAR RALLY LAUNCH



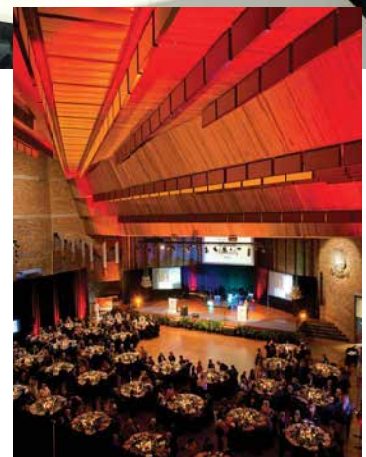
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MAJOR RENOVATIONS FOR MURROOK CULTURAL CENTRE

Guudji yiigu, Yii "Murrook"ga, Yii Warrimay barrayga. Mara yiigu, ngarrigi yawutung nyiirunba

The Murrook Culture Centre has undergone major renovations over recent years and now offers state-of-the-art technologies and excellence in gallery, event and conferencing facilities and catering.

Located only 5 mins drive from the Newcastle Airport at Williamstown, Murrook is well placed for families, corporates and independent travelers visiting the Port Stephens, the City of Newcastle or Hunter Valley Regions.

Murrook will launch the official opening and success of renovations with the local community in September 2023 after which the doors will swing open to walk-ins and clientele seeking one of the many services currently on offer.

Conferencing and events

The purpose-designed, fully-equipped and newly built conferencing space boasts three large modern spaces with start of the art technology and in-house catering (with both mainstream and cultural menu options provided) to perfectly suit your need. Contact Murrook to piece together a personalised booking for your next event at bookings@worimi.org.au

Murrook Cultural Gallery and Interactive Experience Centre

Listen & Learn the Worimi Story by spending the day in our exhibition and interaction spaces; with local community and staffing onsite and ready to accommodate your personalized experience.

The face to face and digitised interactive gallery and exhibition spaces give first hand introductions to Worimi Country, Custodians and Community.

Murrook Café

Delivering delicious coffee and a variety of light meals, including appetising culturally inspired menus the Murrook cafe currently operates to cater for onsite events and venue hire clients.

Murrook café will be open to the public in September 2023.

Sand dune – Adventure Tourism

Offering both cultural quad bike touring and walking country experiences, visitors can travel with local guides on an 'exclusive access' to Aboriginal land that form part of the largest coastal sand dunes in the Southern Hemisphere – a truly unique and National Award winning tourism experience.

Find out more at www.sandduneadventures.com.au

Culture heritage and education

The Cultural Centre also offers a hands-on experience of cultural activities that set the scene for a 'safe place' where Truth listening/ talking happens. It is designed to unpack what you think you know as you are asked to leave your inhibitions at the door and enter into conversations that promote relationships as Custodians together (Wakulda = as one) that inspires growth and understanding.

Worimi Green Team

Caring for Country the Worimi Green Team service the local area through land management contracts. For more information contact the Worimi Green Team email: WGT@worimi.org.au

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DIAMOND IT

Kate Bernardino has commenced as a Business Technology Associate at Diamond IT. Her previous roles equipped her with a strong, engaging, and analytical approach, working within IT Business Analysis and Stakeholder Engagement, Public Relations, Marketing and CIO positions. Kate is excited to be getting back into a role with direct customer interactions, an area where she thrives.



AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS LAWYERS & ASSOCIATES

Australian Business Lawyers & Advisors (ABLA) has promoted **Kate Thomson** to Associate Director. The promotions follow the recent decision to shift focus solely on workplace relations and employment law. Kate Thomson has been with ABLA for eight years and joined when the Newcastle office opened in 2015.



SHAC ARCHITECTS

Emma Fox is now full time at SHAC after completing her Master of Architecture. She started working at SHAC in 2020 as an Architectural Assistant after completing her Bachelor of Design (Architecture) at the University of Newcastle. Now with her Master's complete Emma is a rising star, delivering sustainable Early Learning Centres, School State Significant Developments & Ausgrid Infrastructure.



NEWCASTLE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Matt Macoustra has commenced as Head of School at Newcastle Grammar School. Matt graduated from the University of Sydney in 1992 and began teaching at Macquarie Boys' High School in Parramatta. In 1997 he joined Barker College in Hornsby and in 2001 accepted the role of Director of Sport. In 2008 he joined the College's Senior Executive Team, first as Head of Middle School and finally as Deputy Head of School. Matt also completed a Master of Leadership and Management in Education from The University of Newcastle in 2013.



SHAC ARCHITECTS

Grace McLean has commenced full time at SHAC after completing her Master of Architecture in 2022 and being awarded Graduate of the Year. She has played a fundamental role in the SHAC team since 2018 when she joined as an Architectural Assistant. Her Final Year Independent Thesis, Wambuul Birthplace, received a Commendation for the AIA NSW Architectural Communications Award. Most recently, Grace was a finalist for the 2023 ARB NSW Architect's Medallion.



DIAMOND IT

Diamond IT has welcomed **Tayla Scott** as their new Customer Success Associate. Tayla will be supporting and coordinating the delivery of products and services to customers as part of the CX team. Her background providing administrative supports across various organisations within the finance industry sets her in good stead for the driven, fast paced nature of this new role.



AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS LAWYERS & ASSOCIATES

Caitlin Vincent has been promoted to the position of Associate Director at Australian Business Lawyers & Advisors (ABLA). The promotions follow the recent decision to shift focus solely on workplace relations and employment law. Caitlin Vincent joined ABLA in 2019, moving back to Newcastle after spending 5 years at a top-tier firm in Sydney.



SHAC ARCHITECTS

SHAC has appointed **Claudia Smith** a full-time position after graduating her Master of Architecture (Distinction) from the University of Newcastle in 2022 and being awarded the University Medal (Architecture). She has been an integral part of the SHAC team for over 5 years, joining as an award winning undergraduate. Claudia was also awarded a Learning Environments Australasia NSW Chapter Young Designer Scholarship. Claudia is already one of the stars of the SHAC Graduate Development Program.

LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR PEOPLE!

We would be pleased to receive information about your new appointments.

Just email around 80 words on the employment plus a high resolution head shot to editorial@HBRmag.com.au

Submissions are **FREE** but subject to editorial control.



COMING EVENTS.....

23 & 24 August 2023, 7:30 am – 10:00 pm

Hunter Defence

2023 Hunter Defence Conference

Venue: Rydges Resort – Hunter Valley

Cost: \$1190 - \$1290

<https://hunterdefence.org.au/hdc2023/>

25 August 2023, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Business Hunter

2023 Business Hunter Awards

Venue: NEX

Cost: N/A

<https://www.businesshunter.com/hunter-business-events/business-hunter-awards>

31 August 2023, 7:00 am – 9:00 am

Singleton Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc

August Business Breakfast 23

Venue: Horse & Jockey

Cost: \$35 - \$42.50

https://www.stickytickets.com.au/duq6k/august_business_breakfast_23.aspx

5 September, 10 October, 14 November &

5 December 2023, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Newcastle Business Club

Newcastle Business Club Luncheon

Venue: Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club

Cost: \$75 - \$85

<https://www.newcastlebusinessclub.com.au/events/>

8 September 2023 & 23 November 2023, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Business Hunter

The Business Hunter Energy & Resources Lunch

Venue: McDonald Jones Stadium

Cost: \$110

www.businesshunter.com/hunter-business-events/our-events/business-mining-lunch-series

19 September 2023, 7.15 am – 8:45 am

nfp connect

September Breakfast

Venue: Soul Hub Newcastle

<https://www.nfpconnect.com.au/event/2023-sept-breakfast/>

22 September 2023, 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm

Newcastle Business Club

90th Celebration 2023

Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club

Cost: \$140 - \$160

<https://www.newcastlebusinessclub.com.au/event/luncheon-november-2023-3/>

9 October 2023, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Business Hunter

Business Hunter Innovation Series

Venue: Fort Scratchley

www.businesshunter.com/hunter-business-events/our-events/business-innovation-lunch-series

20 October 2023

HMA, Inc

2023 Hunter Manufacturing Awards

(applications close 18 August)

Venue: NEX

www.hma.org.au

20 October 8:30 am – 21 October 2023 4:00 pm

HIA

Business Excellence Summit

Venue: Chateau Elan at The Vintage Hunter Valley

Cost: \$952.22

<https://hia.com.au/awards-and-events/events/housing-awards-hunter-nsw/2023/hia-housing-awards-newcastle-oct21>

21 October 2023, 6:00 pm – 11:00 pm

HIA

HIA – CSR Hunter Housing and Kitchen & Bathroom

Venue: Nex

Cost: Members \$230, Non Members \$460

<https://hia.com.au/awards-and-events/events/housing-awards-hunter-nsw/2023/hia-housing-awards-newcastle-oct21>

24 October 2023, 7.10 am – 8:45 am

nfp connect

October Breakfast

Venue: Soul Hub Newcastle

<https://www.nfpconnect.com.au/event/2023-oct-breakfast/>

27 October 2023, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Business Hunter

Business Hunter Infrastructure Lunch Series

Venue: McDonald Jones Stadium

Cost: \$110 - \$1600

<https://www.businesshunter.com/hunter-business-events/our-events/business-infrastructure-lunch-series>

21 November 2023, 7.10 am – 8:45 am

nfp connect

November Breakfast

Venue: Soul Hub Newcastle

<https://www.nfpconnect.com.au/event/2023-nov-breakfast/>

5 December 2023, 10:30 am – 4:30 pm

Newcastle Business Club

2023 AGM

Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club

<https://www.newcastlebusinessclub.com.au/event/2023-agm/>

ARE YOU ORGANISING A COMING BUSINESS EVENT?

We would be pleased to receive basic information as above for consideration for inclusion in a coming issue of HBR.

Advertising opportunities in HBR and the HBR email newsletter are also available. Please email garry@HBRmag.com.au

Hunter councils partner with national climate network

The councils of the entire Hunter Region has committed to collaborating on shared climate goals, entering into a Regional Partnership with Australia's largest local government climate network, the Cities Power Partnership.

The Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) has partnered with the Cities Power Partnership to enable collaboration and support on clean energy initiatives in an effort to set the region up for a prosperous future.

The Chair of the Hunter JO and Mayor of Singleton Council, Cr Sue Moore, said the collective agreement strengthened the Hunter's reputation as a region that supported meaningful action on climate change.

"In order to make an impact on climate initiatives, our councils need to be able to support one another and coordinate our efforts to benefit our communities across the region. By partnering with Cities Power Partnership, our councils and the Hunter JO are ensuring that we take joint action for our region and our communities," said Mayor Moore.

"Working collaboratively, we aim to attract more funding, expertise and resources to support region wide and council specific projects such as electrifying council fleets where possible and boosting energy efficiency."

"In 2021, the Hunter became the first region in Australia to have all Councils become members of the Cities Power Partnership, so it makes sense that we are also the first region that has committed to a Regional Partnership Agreement."

Councils taking part in the Cities Power Partnership pledge five actions to tackle climate change locally, from ramping up renewable energy through to planning sustainable transport systems.

The Hunter JO is the first Joint Organisation nationally to partner and make pledges with the Cities Power Partnership, creating a new regional partnership model that can be replicated across the country.

Hunter JO pledges to:

- Support regional collaboration on electric vehicles by identifying opportunities and working together in delivering solutions.
- Support the region's evolution to a clean energy future by facilitating regional collaboration, planning and project delivery and/or information sharing.
- Advocate to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions in the Hunter region.
- Sharing knowledge and learning to boost impact.

Cities Power Partnership director, Dr Portia Odell, commended the Hunter JO on its leadership towards creating a better future for the region.

"It's brilliant to see a region of diverse industries sign up to the program and pledge to support its community by working together towards a clean energy future," said Dr Odell.

"Right now, local governments have an opportunity to get on the front foot of the global shift to clean energy and accelerate projects that will deliver local jobs quickly, drive new investment and tackle long term challenges like climate change."



Ampcontrol recognised for commitment to sustainability efforts through NSW Government initiative

Ampcontrol has been recognised for their commitment to sustainability as a member of the NSW Government Sustainability Advantage initiative by receiving a bronze plaque at the Sustainability Advantage Recognition Gala.

Hosted on Monday 24 July 2023 in the Yallamundi Rooms at the Sydney Opera House, Sustainability Advantage used the gala to publicly acknowledge the sustainability achievements of their partners and to say thank you to leaders from a variety of sectors for their ongoing commitment to building a resilient, thriving NSW.

Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC, NSW Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Heritage awarded Ampcontrol with a Bronze plaque at the gala to recognise our commitment and progress with Sustainability Advantage over the past two years through their commitment to achieving United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Net Zero targets, as well as working to support their customers and suppliers in achieving their goals.

"Through a staged plan of installing solar panels on our workshops and site-specific energy efficient projects such as the installation of LED lighting, we have been able to reduce operational emissions by 28% from 2020 and have set a target of a 60% reduction by 2030. Ampcontrol is now also a member of the Clean Energy Council, supporting the mission to accelerate Australia's transition to renewable energy," says Simon Coleman, Ampcontrol General Manager – HSEQ.

Rod Henderson, Ampcontrol Managing Director & CEO accepted the award on behalf of Ampcontrol at the ceremony.

"It is an honour for Ampcontrol to be recognised for our sustainability efforts as a business. We're committed to join global efforts to reach Net Zero emissions. Through changes made within our own business, we are in a better position to provide innovative solutions to help our customers remain competitive in a low carbon economy," says Mr Henderson.

"We have ambitious Net Zero targets because we believe challenge drives innovation. We are committed to using our own Net Zero learning to support our customers with their decarbonisation journey."

Ampcontrol has been working with Sustainability Advantage for the past two years during which time they have developed a Net Zero Emissions Pathway and participated in the Net Zero Emissions Leadership Accelerator.

Ampcontrol has created a Responsible Supply Chain Framework and are partners in the Hunter Sustainable Development Goals Taskforce that has now developed Baseline Indicators for the Hunter region, to help mobilise and measure future action.



New greenhouse gas emissions limits could see a trickle-down impact on your business

Abby Yates
Advitech

Amendments to Australia's climate safeguard mechanism could impact your business – even if you're not one of the 215 big facilities.

What is the safeguard mechanism?

Australia's climate safeguard mechanism is an important federal government climate policy. It came into effect on 1 July 2016 and regulates the emissions of Australia's 215 biggest polluting facilities. If implemented correctly, the policy is key to Australia achieving its 43% emissions-reductions target by 2030. Up until now it has not incentivised emission reductions as starting (or "baseline") levels were set above actual facility emissions (often referred to as "emissions headroom").

How is it changing in 2023?

A new "hard cap" has been set on the amount big greenhouse gas emitters can produce each year, which now affects Australia's 215 largest greenhouse gas emitters. This cap then reduces by 5% each year until 2030. In the past if facilities did in fact exceed their baselines and emit more greenhouse gases, then they could offset their excess emissions (for example, through Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs)). Facilities can no longer rely on offsetting all their excess emissions under these new



amendments and will be incentivised to make genuine cuts to emissions by investing in green technologies and paths to decarbonise.

What happens if emissions rise?

If industries struggle to meet these new emissions targets and real emissions do rise above the "hard cap", the government has committed \$1bn in funding for manufacturing and trade-exposed industries to decarbonise, which included an extra \$400m for critical industries such as steel, cement, and aluminium.



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How does this affect new fossil fuel projects?

By putting a “hard cap” on total emissions this also means that new and expanded fossil fuels projects, such as new coal mine, are required to have net-zero carbon emissions from day one of operation.

How will the scheme be monitored?

With these new amendments, the government has also agreed to more transparency when it comes to offsetting emissions by these 215 companies. If these companies use offsets to reduce more than 30% of their baseline emissions, they will need to justify and take accountability of why they need to offset so much of their emissions (rather than reduce the emissions directly).

How does this affect your business?

Even if your business doesn't meet the threshold as a heavy emitter under the safeguard scheme you may be still swept up in its wake. It is only a matter of time until big businesses come knocking on the doors of those businesses who work for them (their value chain) to ask what their carbon footprint is and what they are doing to reduce their emissions and be more sustainable. The Australian Government will also build on this momentum to introduce more environmental laws and emissions reporting schemes across all levels of businesses.

What can you do to prepare?

Start now - you can't manage what you don't measure! Before you start to report and put reduction targets in place you need to identify your emissions from business operations.

Monitor your bills – energy use (e.g., electricity, gas, fuel, etc.), water use, paper and stationary use, business travel, and waste bills are a great data resource for collecting information on your business operations emissions.

Data collection tool – something as simple as an excel spreadsheet can be used as a starting point to store all your data and identify where your emissions are coming from.

Where is this all heading?

If we look towards what other countries have been implementing to reduce their emissions, it is evident that Australia will be required to step up and do more. The UK and the EU are not just looking at industries that are the biggest emitters but also those businesses that meet certain annual turnover or balance sheet thresholds or employee numbers to measure and report on their energy and carbon usage.

The strengthening of the safeguard mechanism will go a long way in supporting Australia's goal of reaching a 43% emission reduction by 2030. It will also see stronger environmental laws that have climate triggers and climate-related financial disclosures put in place, the limiting of fossil fuel subsidies and suspect offsets, and a ban on 'greenwashing'.

For further information contact Advitech on (02) 4924 5400, email mail@advitech.com.au or visit www.advitech.com.au



Abby Yates is Manager – Sustainability at Advitech. Abby studied Applied Science (Geography) at the University of NSW before commencing work in Australia as an environmental scientist. She then studied for a Masters degree in Environment and Business Management at the University of Newcastle. Abby spent 13½ years in London where she worked for Mitsubishi Power Europe in engineering and scientific service and maintenance delivery projects in the energy sector across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA). She returned to Newcastle in 2022 to take up her position at Advitech.



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Offshore wind zone declared off the Hunter coast

The Federal Government has officially declared an offshore wind zone in the Pacific Ocean off the Hunter, paving the way for energy and job security in a region that has helped to power Australia for generations.

This is the second officially declared Australian offshore wind zone – and being in a heartland of heavy industry, will support future onshore manufacturing and energy security in NSW for decades to come.

The strong, consistent winds off the coast, along with the region's skilled energy and manufacturing workforce, make the Hunter an ideal location for an offshore wind industry.

The final area was declared after two months of public consultation with a smaller footprint than the originally proposed zone – balancing the views of the local community, local industry and sea users.

The declared area, stretches over 1,800 sqkm between Swansea and Port Stephens and could generate up to 5 GW of wind energy, enough to power an estimated 4.2 million homes and power local industries into the future.

The revised zone will be 20 km from the coast in the north and over 35 km from the coast in the south.

These changes enable continued safe management of shipping and other sea industries. Offshore infrastructure will also be limited to a height of 260 m to address aviation safety.

Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen said the declaration was another big step for Australia to reap the huge benefits of offshore wind.

"The Hunter is undergoing significant economic change, and the prospect of creating new job opportunities for decades to come through a new offshore wind industry is a game changer," Minister Bowen said.

"Today's declaration opens the door for a new industry in the Hunter, which could create over 3,000 construction jobs and another 1,560 ongoing jobs.

Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Claydon MP said this was an exciting opportunity for Newcastle to diversify its economy, while becoming home to a new offshore wind industry.

"The Albanese Labor Government has listened to community feedback and revised the offshore wind zone accordingly to ensure it coexists alongside whale migration, bird and sea life, and our shipping industry.

\$70 million awarded for Hunter Hydrogen Hub

Origin Energy Future Fuels has been selected to develop the Hunter Valley Hydrogen Hub in collaboration with Orica.

The funding is part of the Australian Government's Regional Hydrogen Hubs Program. This Program is investing more than \$500 million in up to seven hydrogen hubs across the country. Hydrogen hubs are locations where producers, users and exporters of hydrogen work side by side to share infrastructure and expertise.

The Hunter Hydrogen Hub is located at the Port of Newcastle, New South Wales. The port is an ideal location for a green hydrogen hub that can support decarbonisation of heavy industry in the region.

The investment will make a strong contribution towards the infrastructure needed to build a production facility that can produce up to 5500 tonnes of green hydrogen per year.

The project aims to establish a green hydrogen export pathway and support regional job opportunities. It will do this by building workforce capabilities and support the creation of a new industry centred around green hydrogen availability.

Planning is underway for green hydrogen to flow to Kooragang Island for use at the Orica ammonia and ammonium nitrate facility. This will lead to a significant reduction in CO₂ emissions from the site. Further reductions will come from the use of hydrogen in heavy transport like buses.

The Regional Hydrogen Hubs program is part of the government's \$40 billion investment to transform Australia into a powerhouse of green energy generation and innovation.



"This is an important part of a suite of measures which will position Newcastle and the Hunter as a clean energy hub, including an \$100 million investment to ensure hydrogen readiness at the Port of Newcastle. Newcastle has a bright future."

Feasibility licence applications for offshore wind projects in the Hunter area are open from 8 August until 14 November 2023.

During the feasibility licence stage, developers will be required to undertake further consultation on individual proposals, including detailed environmental assessments and impacts on other marine users.

Construction can only begin after feasibility stage is completed, and environmental and management plan approvals are gained.

The final declared zone can be found at <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/energy/renewable/establishing-offshore-infrastructure>



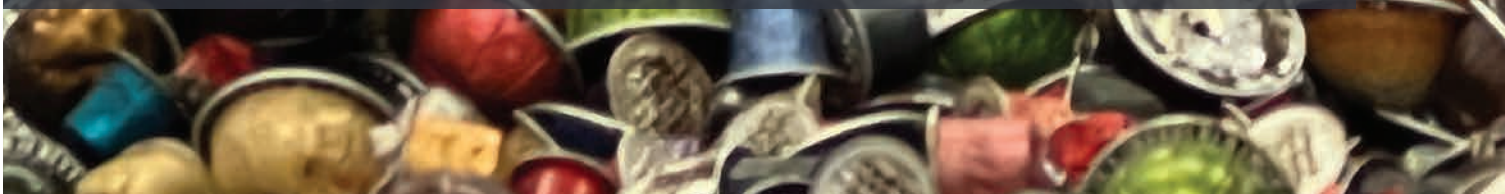
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Minister unveils clean energy partnerships to drive Port of Newcastle into the future

On 12 July Port of Newcastle has unveiled, during a visit by Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, that 30 supporting partnerships will underpin its advancement towards the enablement of a world-class clean energy economy in the Hunter Region.

The partnerships, which include domestic and multi-national organisations, complement the backing of the Commonwealth Government, with the Port securing a \$100-million funding grant in the 2022 Federal Budget for the Clean Energy Precinct.

Port of Newcastle CEO Craig Carmody said the once in a generation project is one of two key developments in the Port's 2030 diversification strategy.

"Our dedicated 220-hectare Clean Energy Precinct offers the perfect platform for large scale clean energy production. It will be supported by common user, open access, shared infrastructure across clean energy storage, transport and export facilities servicing production from the Precinct itself and from right across the Hunter Region," Mr Carmody said.

"We are standing at the forefront of the development of a new industry. Partnerships, both local and international, which bring together infrastructure, investment, knowledge, skills and resources, will be critical in the establishment and scale-up of a domestic clean energy economy and export trade pathway at Port of Newcastle.

"Creating a place for local, Australian and international commercial expertise and research knowledge to work collaboratively, ensures Newcastle and the Hunter remains Australia's energy powerhouse," he said.

Port of Newcastle's Board Chair, Prof Roy Green, said the Port was advancing the Hunter region, the state and Australia's global ambitions to be a leader in clean energy.

"For several years, Port of Newcastle has pursued a strategic direction outlined in our diversification strategy to deliver a clean energy industry. With today's announcement, providing a clear path forward as to how these plans become a reality through the strength of our domestic and international partnerships," Prof Green said.

"The Clean Energy Precinct not only supports Commonwealth and state governments clean energy targets, it forms part of a domestic and global collective, all pursuing a common goal of producing and transporting sustainable energy," he said.

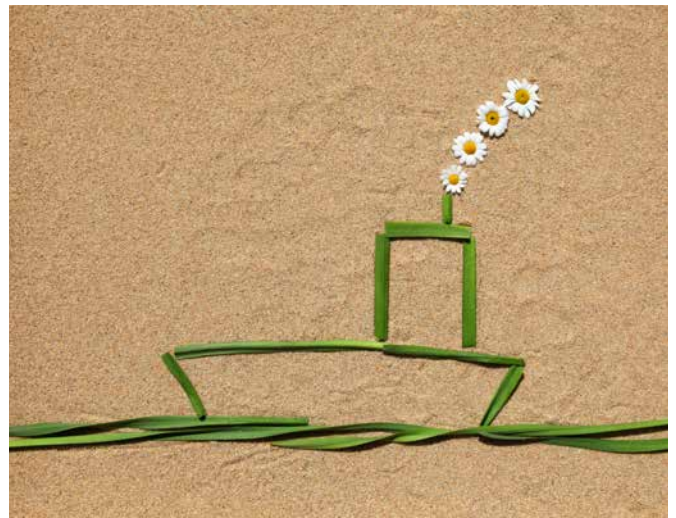
As the Commonwealth Government priority hydrogen hub in NSW, to date, Port of Newcastle has signed 15 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) agreements to support the development, storage and export pathway enablement of a clean energy economy at Port of Newcastle.

"These formal MOU agreements are also strengthened by the backing of 15 other critical organisations for the Clean Energy Precinct project via Letter of Support or a Letter of Intent for future collaboration," Port CEO Craig Carmody said.

"Collectively, these relationships represent key industry support across clean energy production, mobility, export and bunkering, energy generation, transport, infrastructure, offtake, agriculture, education, innovation, research and development.

"This kind of collaboration allows for connections to be forged from the outset between the State's renewable energy projects, clean energy production projects and the Port's biggest assets, its deepwater channel and existing global partnerships," he said.

Memoranda of Understanding agreements have been formalised with: coNEXA, EnergyCo, Energy Estate, Eurus Energy, Fortescue Future Industries, Hunter Hydrogen Network,



KEPCO (Korea), Lake Macquarie City Council, Lumea (Transgrid), Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (Japan), MOL Group (Japan), Orica, Origin, Platform Zero (Rotterdam) and University of Newcastle.

Among those to also pledge their support formally for the Port's Clean Energy Precinct plans are: AGL, Ampcontrol, Aurizon, bp Australia, Business Hunter, Hunter iF, Hyundai Australia, Infrabuild, Jemena, Keolis Downer, Linde Engineering, NewH2, Newcastle City Council, Snowy Hydro and Westrac.

Project Lead and the Port's Chief Commercial Officer, Simon Byrnes, said the Clean Energy Precinct MOUs spanned collaboration on the development of inland and offshore wind projects, electricity transmission and water supply, clean energy production, clean energy storage, distribution and export facilities, export and bunkering, skills and training pathways, advanced manufacturing and innovation hubs.

"By collaborating with all levels of government, with industry partners and education providers, we are working to deliver a shared ambition to accelerate innovation, foster technological advancement, generating jobs and educational pathways for this new industry at scale," Mr Byrnes said.

"Our vision is a thriving Hunter community which is viewed as the best place to work in the clean energy industry, both in Australia and across the world.

"Port of Newcastle is working to create connections between infrastructure, markets and people. The Port has secured letters of intent from each of the entities that have the potential to be significant clean energy offtakers in the Hunter Region, and we are also working with existing export customers in key markets across Asia, such as Japan and Korea, to understand their needs and potential opportunities.

"Our existing supply chain is one of the most efficient in the world and we are seeking to leverage that expertise to generate economies of scale and scope," he said.

The Port released Stage 1 renders of its Clean Energy Precinct vision in May.

"Port of Newcastle has a long history in energy export and is diversifying further to drive the clean energy trade flows of the future. We are harnessing the Hunter region's capability and critical energy assets to deliver Australia's decarbonisation objectives whilst creating new, and additional trade opportunities, jobs and economic growth for clean energy export at scale in Australia and locally," Port CEO Craig Carmody said.

"There is a long way to go to make this project a reality, but we are committed to diversifying to support jobs growth and economic security for generations of locals and Port workers to come. We look forward to working closely with industry and the community to bring a clean energy economy to life in sustainable and safe way that secures the prosperity of Newcastle and the Region for decades to come," he said.

Looking beyond environmental catchphrases

Andrew Mack
Talis Consultants

In the ever-evolving environmental landscape, we find ourselves inundated with catchphrases and buzzwords such as - ESG, Circular Economy, Environmental Stewardship, Net-Zero – to name but a few. While these terms may have their place in communicating sustainability efforts, I believe it is crucial to look beyond the rhetoric and focus on tangible actions and outcomes.

In my view, not much has really changed over the years. There's always a new set of terms for people to hang their hats on, whether it be Triple Bottom Line, Climate-friendly, Renewable, Eco-friendly or similar. While they may have a role to play in promoting awareness and showcasing environmental responsibility, typically, this jargon is externally directed towards investors who are wanting to see this aspect of a company's credentials out there in bright, glossy colours. The challenge lies in ensuring that they are more than just hollow promises and marketing tactics.

As a practitioner with over 25 years of experience in environmental regulation and management, my approach is to look beyond the surface and evaluate the real impact on the ground. What is your team actually achieving and are they supported (personally and professionally) by upper management? I want outcomes that protect the environment whilst also addressing legal and reputational issues. I want companies to genuinely prioritise making a positive difference to the environment and back up their claims with concrete actions.

New industry jargon has also found its way into job titles like "ESG Consultant" and "Circular Economy Specialist"; Rather than being enamoured by flashy job titles, I firmly believe that these roles all boil down to the same thing - fostering good environmental management practices within organisations.

Creating value within a company and providing a high level of environmental management isn't about merely throwing around a plethora of buzzwords. It is about making informed and responsible decisions in the planning, operation, and closure of sites. If industry jargon can assist in this process and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of environmental challenges, then it serves a useful purpose. However, I approach these terminologies with a healthy dose of skepticism and prioritise a practical, evidence-based approach to solving environmental issues.

"Being a skeptic just means being rational and empirical: thinking and seeing before believing." Michael Shermer

For further information contact Talis Consultants on 1300 251 070. email enquiries@talisconsultants.com.au or visit www.talisconsultants.com.au



Andrew Mack is an Environmental Consultant with an extensive track record spanning 25 years in the public and private sectors. His qualifications in Environmental Engineering, Business, and Law underpin his expertise in approvals, compliance, and statutory advice for mining, industrial, land development, and waste management initiatives. He has successfully represented clients in negotiations with Government authorities and served as an Expert Witness in legal proceedings. Andrew's reputation within the industry and among his peers is built on his exceptional environmental knowledge and empowering leadership style.

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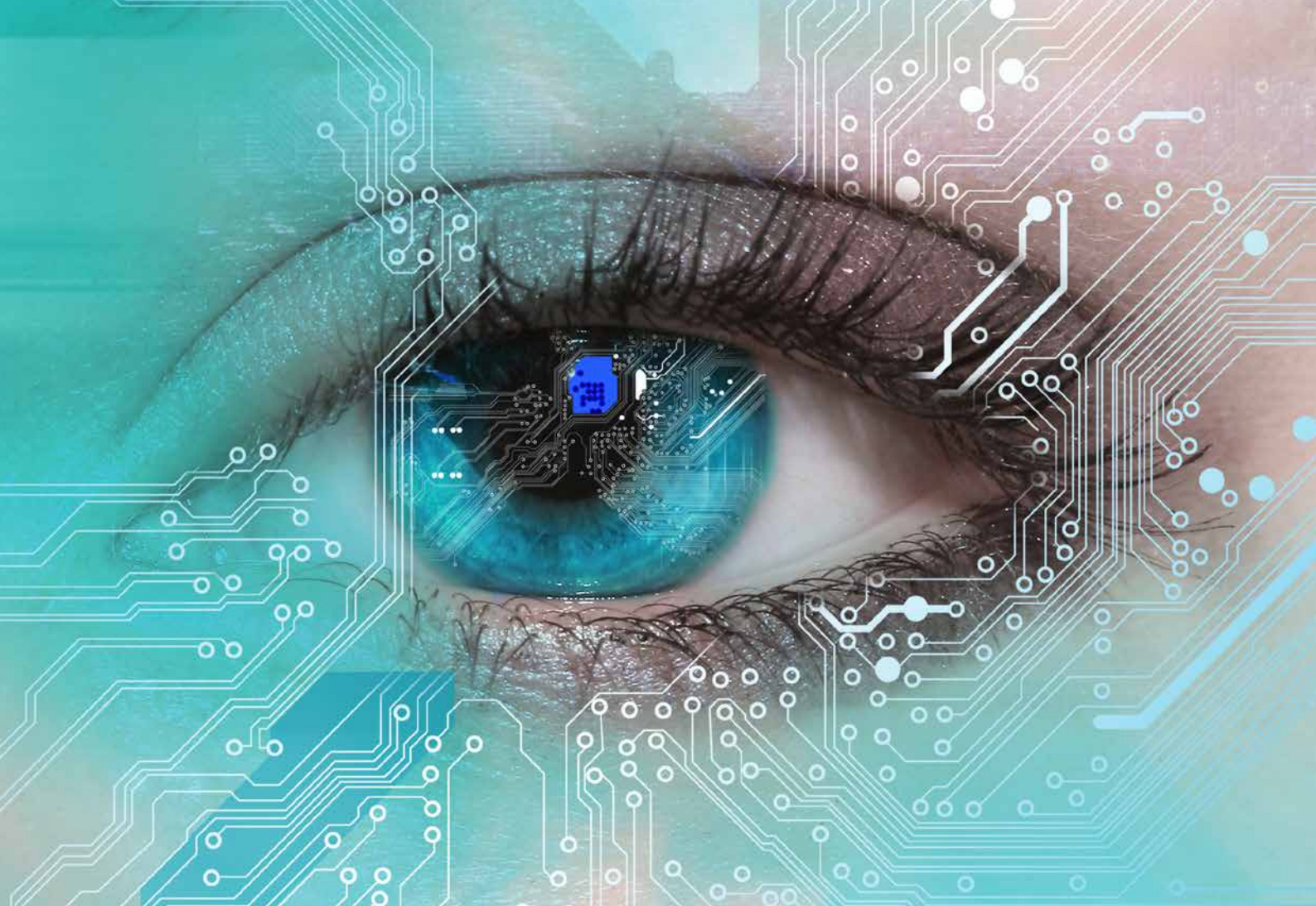
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An old gentleman lived alone. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison.

The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament.

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

"Dear Dad, Don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried. Love, Vinnie."

At 4 a.m. the next morning, police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologised to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son.

"Dear dad, Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances."

Before you marry a person, you should first make them use a computer with slow internet to see who they really are.

Upon entering a little country store, a stranger noticed a sign posted on the glass door that read: "DANGER! BEWARE OF DOG!". Inside he noticed a harmless old hound dog asleep on the floor besides the cash register.

He asked the store manager: "Is that the dog folks are supposed to beware of?"

"Yep, that's him," he replied.

The stranger couldn't help but be amused. "That certainly doesn't look like a dangerous dog to me. Why in the world would you post that sign?"

"Because," the owner replied. "Before I posted that sign, people kept tripping over him."

My wife left me because I'm so insecure.

No wait, she's back.

She just went to make a cup of coffee.

My Tinder bio says that I have a corner office with views of the entire city, drive a \$300,000 vehicle, and that I'm paid to travel.

My dates never seem too happy when I tell them I'm a bus driver.

A wife comes home late one night and quietly opens the door to her bedroom. From under the blanket, she sees four legs instead of just her husband's two.

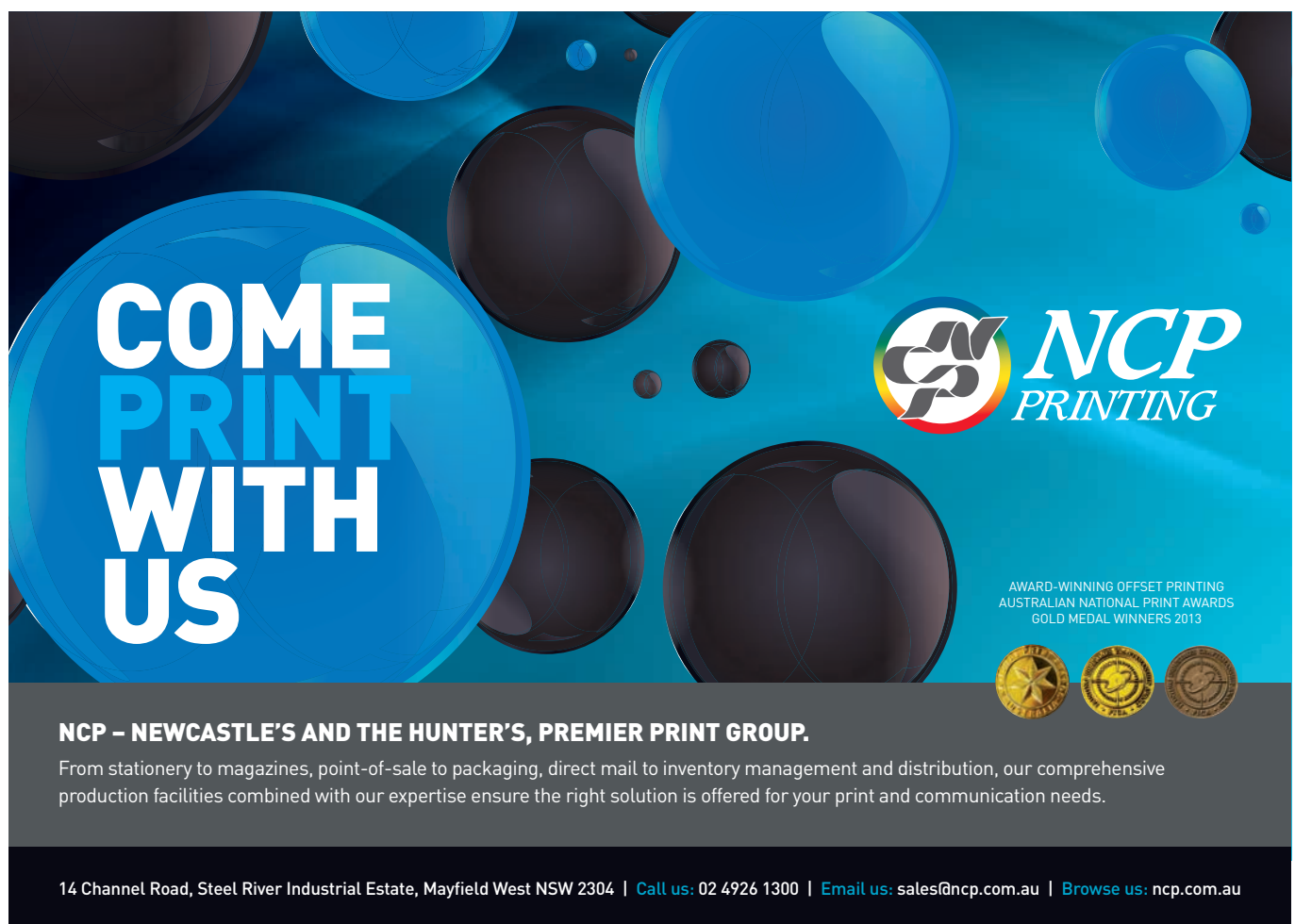
She reaches for a large vase of water and tips the contents over the bed while letting out a torrent of expletives. Once she's done, she goes to the kitchen to have a drink. As she enters, she sees her husband there, reading a magazine.

He says, "Hi darling, your parents have come to visit us, so let them stay in our bedroom. Did you say hello?"

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."

— Robert Swan



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