

Building & Environment

*Significant work on the building and its facilities signalled major improvements to customer access this year, improving the journey to, and experience within, Sydney Opera House. **The commitment to a greener and cleaner environment underpinned initiatives targeting energy use, waste management and environmental awareness.***



Improving the Building & Facilities

The Western Foyers were transformed this year into an elegant and functional gathering space aligned with Utzon's vision and design principles, featuring a new cloakroom and box office, multiple bars and accessible amenities.

Facilities for artists, guests and staff were improved as part of the Green Room refurbishment. The concrete beams were returned to their original condition, more energy efficient lighting was installed, existing furniture revamped and wireless network access provided.

Outside, construction commenced to replace the 214 metre long Parapet Wall and Handrail. This project will correct a number of maintenance issues and ensure compliance with modern standards. A new Forecourt Masterplan, designed to guide future development of the Forecourt and improvements to pedestrian access and safety, was completed this year. The Masterplan will be delivered progressively, subject to funding.

The new Information Systems Strategic Plan 2008/11 is designed to improve customer and event delivery services, core infrastructure and communications, back office applications, and strategy and governance. Initiatives completed this year include 'select your own seat' capability on the website, a refresh of office based print services and an order placed for a new telephony system. Refer page 58 for further information.

Enhancing Customer Access

(refer page 57)

Significant progress was made this year on the Access Masterplan, which guides the design of future physical access upgrades at Sydney Opera House. Work included customer access to facilities and back of house audits which will inform the Masterplan and concept design solutions.

The Accessibility and Western Foyers Project achieved a milestone with installation of the Opera Theatre and Concert Hall escalators and public lift. Opening to the public by August 2009, these initiatives will allow patrons to by-pass 72 steps on their journey from the vehicle concourse to the main theatres.

Work continued inside the theatres to improve the performance experience for patrons. Wheelchair seating capacity was increased in all Western Theatres, while two new Platform Stairlift climbers enable patrons who use wheelchairs to enter the Playhouse from the Western Foyers for the first time. A new permanent captioning system in the Drama Theatre and induction loop in the Box Office have enhanced services for patrons with hearing impairments.

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

(refer pages 58 and 65)

Environmental sustainability was strengthened this year through a variety of initiatives. From February 2009 the Sail Lights were turned off for an extra four hours per night, saving close to 12 megawatt hours per year. In a first for Sydney Opera House, biodiesel generators were used to light the sails for *Luminous* and *Smart Light Sydney* with carbon emissions offset through independently verified Greenhouse Friendly™ carbon credits.

With the new role of Manager, Sustainability and Energy appointed in November 2008, a 'Green Team' was created to encourage environmental awareness throughout the organisation using specially designed programs and information for staff and stakeholders. Other initiatives included waste audits, installation of water efficient spray guns in restaurant areas, a 'Greening the House' exhibition to celebrate World Environment Day and development of a Recycling and Waste Management Strategy. Consultation with stakeholders was undertaken to inform a new Environmental Sustainability Policy and Plan.



Maintaining a Safe Environment

Enhancing the safety of the building, the Fire Damper Replacement project (involving replacement of 964 fire dampers) was completed and Stage 1 of the Fire Hydrant Upgrade project commenced. Refer page 64 for POPE compliance works projects.

Promoting safer and cleaner work practices, 'Site Clean Up Week' was conducted from 6-8 April 2009 to assist staff, contractors and business partners in disposing of dangerous goods and hazardous substances. This initiative aimed to improve awareness of OH&S requirements and environmental compliance standards.

Ensuring the safety of visitors, staff and business partners, a new safety management system, including an OH&S Risk Register was developed. The register improves identification, monitoring and management of potential safety hazards across high risk areas of the site and will be operational in July 2009. Refer page 63 for more information.

The Year Ahead

- Official opening of the refurbished Western Foyers, Opera Theatre and Concert Hall escalators and new public lift.
- Completion of the Access Masterplan and progressive implementation of physical access upgrades.
- New Conservation Plan.
- Implementation of an Environmental Sustainability Policy and Plan.
- Organic waste recycling system trial.
- Air conditioning upgrades to reduce energy consumption.
- A centralised Material Safety Data Sheet Repository and Incident Reporting Register for more effective OH&S management.
- Commencement of Stage 2 of the Fire Hydrant Upgrade to improve overall fire safety.