



Articles & Commentaries



p-Watch — Australia



by Richard Barton, former Managing Director of Business Improvement Advisory Services. Previously he was the Business Process and Quality Management Executive for IBM in Australia & New Zealand. He was also General Manager with the Australian Quality Council. He has had a long and close association with the APO. Mr. Barton writes this column regularly for the *APO News*.

Olympic Gold for Aussie Business

In the past 12 years, an old disused clay mine and brick pit has been transformed into the main site for the Games of the XXVII Olympiad or the Millennium Games in Sydney 2000. The previous claim to fame for this once desolate location, known as Homebush Bay, is that it was the film set for the early Mad Max films.

Its location in the center of the Sydney metropolis adjoins the Parramatta River with main road and rail links close by. From this abandoned site has risen the new Sydney suburb of Newington, which includes the Olympic village and the major sports arenas. Direct rail and ferry linkages connecting freeways, and other transport services such as signage, have been put in place.

After the successful bid 6 years ago the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games location became the focal point for new business opportunities.

In 1995, the Sydney Olympic Co-ordination Authority was established to deliver the redevelopment of Homebush Bay, sporting facilities and venues for use during the 2000 Games and to meet the long term social, cultural and sporting requirements for the people of New South Wales.

An initial pacesetter for Aussie Olympic business achievement was the successful tender by a seat manufacturer to completely remake the seating of the main stadium for the Atlanta Olympic Games. Such success was achieved because the supplier focused on the origins and the future long term use of the venue. The seating design incorporated the Atlanta Braves symbol on the side panels and seats which folded up easily for cleaning and for patrons to pass by. A modern but robust art deco slat design in harmony with the ambience of the refurbished main stadium was included as well. At that time, who would have contemplated a small Aussie firm beating the best in the USA and the world for a slice of that Olympic business?

For the Sydney Olympic Games, several firms tendered successfully, and have since employed additional workforce, to handle Olympic contracts for the supply of materials and services and the completion of specific projects. Examples are:

Materials

- ▶ Structural steel, concrete and building supplies for new venues and accommodation
- ▶ Native trees and landscaping services for the new sites
- ▶ New technology used to power solar cells and recycle waste water for gardens and sewerage systems

Services

- ▶ Transportation services including the largest ever bus operation involving 3350 vehicles and 4500 drivers
- ▶ Pre-Games Olympic accommodation and facilities in regional NSW for several large competing teams will contribute to regional economies
- ▶ Tourism and hospitality will be a major economic growth engine for pre, during and post Olympic periods
- ▶ Personal services associated with industry, communications and transport and tourism sectors are projected to increase by 2.5%

Projects

- ▶ General reclamation remediation and infrastructure constructions of the Homebush Bay site in keeping with the "Green Games" objective
- ▶ New rail loop, Olympic village, re-locatable accommodation for the world media
- ▶ Construction of a complete equestrian training and event facilities
- ▶ Expansion and refurbishment of Sydney International Airport
- ▶ Pontoons and venues for regatta events and two new 5 star hotels at the Olympic park

Selecting suppliers by tender for the Olympic event required interested companies to meet specific criteria including conformity to the tender process, innovation, time, price vs budget, technical management, environmental capability and due diligence. Also considered were financial and physical resources, current commitments, previous performance, workplace relations, occupational health & safety records, maintenance & operating costs, proposed life and standards of materials and equipment including ISO 9000 Quality Assurance, local industry participation and customer relations.

International teams arriving at the Olympic Village will discover items of furniture ranging from chairs and beds to chests of drawers which have been supplied by an SME furniture factory. These are made from a new recyclable cardboard product. The company, Rambler Furniture, hopes to use this Olympic success to sell the innovative, environmentally friendly furniture product to the world.

Mr Sandy Hollway, Chief Executive of the Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG), discussed at the Deming Memorial Lecture last year the key quality management attributes of the Games. He observed that the business process and customer focus was a 'run once only' because there was no way to collect comprehensive customer and performance data, and apply

improvement methods to the process. In other words, everything has to be done right the first time once 15th September comes along. The key to the overall success of the Games will come from attention to process design and interlock planning to project management and execution of the processes. All this, complete with a thorough risk analysis and a full focus on the customers-the Olympic athletes of the world, should achieve the desired outcome.

A NSW Government Treasury study found that almost 100,000 full time jobs will be associated with the AU\$6.3 billion increase in economic activity relating to the Olympic Games over the 12 year period 1994 through 2006.

Additionally, Australia's international profile will be boosted because of the 45000 media staff from 2500 international media organizations attending the Games. Subsequent commercial benefits will flow on to Australian tourism and trade in future years.

The decision to hold the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney has, as the evidence shows, resulted in many and varied business opportunities. From a disused clay mine and brick pit has sprung a wealth of opportunity for the city of Sydney, for the state of New South Wales, and for Australia as a whole.



[Back to list](#)

To top of page