

2011 Winner: Queen Victoria Market Creating a green procurement culture

Award for Excellence in Green Purchasing – People

This award recognises success in embedding sustainable procurement within the corporate culture, including engaging, training and holding staff accountable at all levels.

Queen Victoria Market (QVM) is an open-air retail market offering fresh food, souvenirs, apparel, and take-away food and coffee. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Melbourne City Council, has 140 leasehold premises, over 600 stallholders, and draws over 10 million visitors per year.

QVM is committed to minimising its environmental impact. With such a large number of diverse people operating within the Market and therefore contributing to the overall environmental footprint, the high level of engagement and commitment to sustainable procurement by both staff and traders is impressive.



A key reason for this success is that CEO, Jennifer Hibbs, actively supports green purchasing, as she demonstrated by signing QVM to the ECO-Buy Business Program and communicating this widely among the stall holders. Senior management further demonstrated their commitment to embed sustainable procurement into QVM business operations through the training of all relevant staff. This included an internal workshop on green products and identifying priority purchasing areas.

Forums have also been held with key traders to inform and encourage greener purchases.

QVM's Sustainability Officer, Kelly Green, is a senior member of the operations team and is responsible for sustainable procurement at the Market. Her role is clearly documented in strong procurement-related objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in her position description. She has also attended advanced ECO-Buy training sessions.



An example of other senior roles with core objectives relating to green procurement includes the Facilities Manager who must consider alternative “green” opportunities and technologies against similar technologies and traditional practices.

All staff also sign up to an 'Enterprise Agreement' which lays out key environmental targets for energy, water, and paper reduction, all of which employ green procurement principles and strategies. Employee appraisal is tied to the achievement of these targets. Progress against the targets such as the 25% reduction in paper use and 2.6% reduction in energy consumption achieved in 2009-2010 is communicated regularly by senior management to all staff via e-mails and newsletters.

Not only has QVM made green purchasing part of the everyday behaviour of its staff and traders, it is also influencing its million customers to adopt more sustainable purchasing behaviours. One high profile example is the 'Bag the Bag' Campaign, an initiative CEO Jennifer Hibbs is particularly proud of. “Our goal is to encourage our patrons to bring reusable bags into the Market and eventually have the entire Market plastic bag free – an ambitious goal but an important one,” says Ms Hibbs.

Plastic bags were phased out of the Deli and Meat Halls from July 2010, with plans to extend to the general merchandise traders by 2012. The 'Bag the Bag' Campaign was actively promoted through radio interviews, television news, articles, speaking engagements, and customer signage (as featured

below). QVM management worked hard to establish the business case for traders, pointing out the marketing opportunities of printing company logos on re-usable bags and the appreciation from customers whose environmental awareness is increasing.



Another successful initiative has been the adoption of BioPak compostable plates, cups and cutlery for the Night Market and Foodie Tours. Provided by ECO-Find supplier Going Green Solutions, the catering consumables are promoted via posters, emails and newsletters (such as the 'Market Life Magazine').

QVM ensures it consistently and thoroughly communicates green procurement initiatives before, during and after their implementation. The focus on consultation, involvement, and open discussion of the results and benefits of purchasing decisions encourages buy-in and helps drive lasting cultural and behavioural change. “Queen Victoria Market is proud of its work with the Market’s traders and their customers to achieve significant behavioural change that has resulted in substantial improvements to our local community”.

QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET: TOOLS TO CREATE AND EMBED A SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT CULTURE

- Active support from CEO, Jennifer Hibbs
- Sustainability Officer and expertise at senior level
- Clear documentation of green procurement responsibilities in position descriptions and staff core objectives
- Employee appraisal linked with the achievement of green procurement targets
- Staff training
- Effective communications via signage, presentations, interviews, articles and emails