

Message from the Premier

From its humble beginnings as a pilot program in 1984, ICN has evolved into one of Victoria's most successful and enduring business support services. Over the last 25 years, ICN has grown from a single location in Geelong, to a sophisticated network of 28 offices across



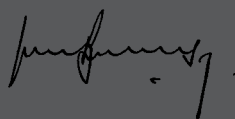
Australia, including eight here in Victoria. During this period ICN has assisted thousands of organisations to facilitate business connections and has significantly boosted local industry participation in major public and private sector projects.

Some highlights of ICN's success include the 2006 Commonwealth Games (87 per cent local content on the \$1.1 billion spent to stage the event), the ANZAC Ship Project (72 per cent Australian and New Zealand content on the \$3.8 billion spend) and the Australian Synchrotron Project (65 per cent Australian and New Zealand content leading to \$25.3 million in import replacement orders).

Overall, ICN has facilitated the negotiation of over \$2 billion in orders for local industry, equating to around 40,000 jobs.

I was delighted to join ICN for its 25-year anniversary celebrations last month. It was a fantastic evening and I enjoyed having the opportunity to reflect on ICN's achievements so far, as well as formally acknowledging the significant contribution that ICN has made, and continues to make, towards the Victorian and national economies.

In 2010, the Victorian Government will continue to focus on leading the State's recovery from the Global Financial Crisis. Creating and securing investment and jobs for Victorian families will be crucial to maintaining Victoria's momentum and to sustaining a competitive edge. ICN is expected to play a vital role in facilitating this investment.



HON JOHN BRUMBY MP
Premier of Victoria

ICN Celebrates 25 Years

On Tuesday, 1 December 2009, Premier John Brumby, Minister Martin Pakula and more than 250 industry representatives joined the ICN Victoria Board and current and former staff, along with representatives from across the national ICN network to celebrate ICN Victoria's 25 year anniversary at a cocktail party held at Eureka 89.

A more suitable venue could not have been picked to celebrate this milestone. Guests enjoyed the stunning 360 degree views from level 89 of Melbourne's Eureka Tower as the sun set over many of the State's major landmarks, such as the MCG, the Sports & Aquatics Centre, Etihad Stadium, the New Royal Children's Hospital and Victoria's trains and trams – all projects in which ICN played a vital role in securing the involvement of local industry.

Premier John Brumby provided the keynote address at the event and highlighted ICN's achievements assisting local industry over the past 25 years:

"It is a significant milestone and a reminder of the vital role ICN has played in building Victoria's industry capabilities."

The atmosphere was one of confidence as Mr Brumby talked of Victoria's resilience that allowed it to weather the Global Financial Crisis relatively well. Mr Brumby referred to ICN's role in establishing the State's 'strong and robust' economy:

"ICN has played a key role in bullet-proofing our economy, especially over the past 18 months."

"ICN has continued to do what it does best – which is to work with Government, and work with the business community, to boost local industry participation in major public project tenders."

Referring to ICN's results that show the organisation has assisted local industry secure \$2 billion in orders that may otherwise have been placed offshore, including \$206.3 million in the 2008 – 09 year, ICN

Victoria Chairman Tim Piper praised the organisation's team of 25 staff:

"We've got a passionate, committed group of people... I mean that is an amazing result given the number of people that we have in the organisation."

Mr Brumby said:

"Indeed, without the ICN, these kinds of figures ... these kinds of outcomes for Victorian industries ... would simply not be possible."

ICN Victoria Executive Director Peter Yates said that ensuring the ongoing viability and strength of Victorian industry is a joint effort:

"I am proud of what ICN has achieved to date, however none of these achievements would have been possible without the ongoing support of the Victorian and Federal governments, as well as that of local industry, which has been fundamental to ICN's success over the years."

"I look forward to continuing to work with government and with business to assist local industry continue to access the opportunities that will ensure its ongoing growth and diversification into new markets." said Mr Yates.



Premier John Brumby presents ICN Victoria Executive Director Peter Yates with a commemorative silver plate. From left to right: ICN Victoria Chairman Tim Piper; Premier John Brumby; ICN Victoria Executive Director Peter Yates; Minister Martin Pakula

Register Your Interest Now – Petrochemical, Oil & Gas Delegation to China

AUSEN is calling for expressions of interest from companies to participate in an industry delegation to the **China International Petroleum and Petrochemical Equipment Exhibition (CIPPE)**, which takes place from 22 to 31 March 2010 in Beijing.

Supported by the Victorian Government, AUSEN – which represents Australia's

petrochemical, oil and gas network – will lead the delegation, which aims to highlight Australia's industry capability and introduce participants to key industry representatives and prospective clients from major companies in the sector.

For more information visit www.icnvc.org.au and click on 'News & Events', or contact James Ewenson, 03 9864 6723 or james.ewenson@icnvc.org.au.



ICN to Host Six Networking Events at the 2010 FORMULA 1 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX

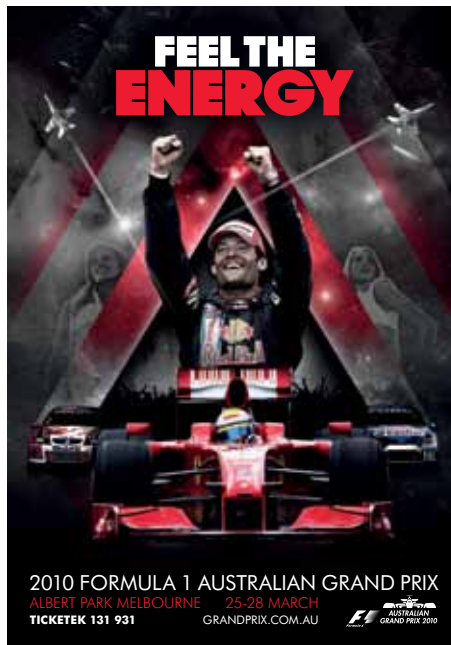
ICN will host a series of networking events at the 2010 FORMULA 1 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX. These events will take place from 25 – 28 March at Albert Park and will feature speakers from the world of business, government and Formula One™.

Feedback from similar events hosted by ICN at the 2009 Grand Prix was extremely positive, with many attendees commenting on the valuable business contacts that they were able to establish.

The events are aimed at senior management and are supported by the Australian Grand Prix Corporation, which provides its trackside indoor lounge venue, Torque Bar.

More information on the events, which will cover sectors such as transport, sports & events, aviation, automotive and cleantech/building will be posted on ICN's website – www.icnvic.org.au – as it becomes available.

For further information please contact Ellen Buswell on (03) 8689 2522.



Free Business Review Assists SME Become More Competitive

A Business Review delivered free of charge by Enterprise Connect has allowed Australian manufacturer Microfresh Filters to identify areas for improvement that will increase the company's profitability and international competitiveness.

Microfresh Filters is a 100% Australian-owned company that specialises in the research and development of a range of industrial filtration products.

ICN Business Capability Adviser James Ewenson had assisted the company to identify potential business partners and local suppliers in the past.

He recognised that the business could benefit significantly from the services offered by Enterprise Connect, the Australian Government's \$50 million a year business assistance initiative and introduced Managing Director Ray de Jersey to Enterprise Connect consultant Mal Clark.

After successfully applying for the initiative, Microfresh Filters worked closely with Mal on a comprehensive review that benchmarked the business against international competition and identified both the company's areas of strength and the areas in which it could improve.

"I found that Microfresh Filters performed well above its peers in many areas," said Mal.

"However there were areas in which it

could improve that would lead to increased profitability and a greater ability to compete on the world stage".

At the conclusion of the Review, Enterprise Connect offered Microfresh Filters 'dollar for dollar' support to engage expert consultants to work with the business to address the areas identified for improvement. These included the implementation of 'lean manufacturing' that would increase efficiency and subsequently profits.

Microfresh Filters Managing Director Ray de Jersey was impressed with the results.

"The review carried out by Mal Clark has been invaluable in identifying areas for improvement.

"Microfresh Filters, like many SMEs, tends to become insular and is unable to either see or accept that making changes could increase profitability.

"We look forward to utilising the support offered by Enterprise Connect in appointing expert consultants in the new year." said Mr de Jersey. "The support offered by both Enterprise Connect's Mal Clark and ICN's James Ewenson has been a significant factor in our success as a company."

To check your eligibility and to find out more about Enterprise Connect services call the Hotline on 131 791 or visit the website www.enterpriseconnect.gov.au.



Schools Building Program Secures Thousands of Jobs

More than six months into the three year program, the Commonwealth Government's \$16.2 billion Building the Education Revolution (BER) initiative is well underway and has delivered some significant contracts to local industry.

Many projects commenced and were completed under strict timelines in Victoria last year, ensuring the initiative had an immediate impact on jobs. BER projects secured thousands of jobs in local communities – for manufacturers and material suppliers, builders and tradespeople, the service and hospitality industries, as well as architects, engineers and small businesses.

New tenders to be released this year will provide even more opportunities for local businesses to become involved in building facilities such as libraries, multipurpose halls and science and language centres.

ICN is working with the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and the appointed project managers to identify suitable Victorian suppliers.

ICN has been advocating the use of local suppliers wherever possible and has assisted a number of local firms win significant BER contracts. Among these are Oakleigh-based Assa Abloy, which has been contracted to supply locks and door fittings to numerous schools, including 11 new super schools; and Geelong-based carpet manufacturer Godfrey Hirst, which has been contracted to supply carpet and carpet tiles to many schools being upgraded across Victoria.

BER projects are commencing in Victoria every week, providing many opportunities for businesses across the State.

Businesses interested in becoming involved should register their capability at www.regionalindustrylink.com.au

Information on individual projects can be found at www.workingvictoria.vic.gov.au.

For more information on the Building the Education Revolution program visit www.education.vic.gov.au/buildingrevolution.



Lucknow Primary School's new \$3 million multi-purpose centre

www.icnvic.org.au

To register your company's capability visit: www.icnvic.org.au ICN Victoria is a State Government funded not-for-profit organisation.

Melbourne
(03) 9866 6155
info@icnvic.org.au

Barwon South West
John Fullerton
0407 182 952
jfullerton@icnvic.org.au

Gippsland
Bob Stevenson
0403 195 512
bstevenson@icnvic.org.au

Grampians
Andrew Bradley
0447 446 091
abradley@icnvic.org.au

Hume
Tammy Atkins
0488 325 495
tatkins@icnvic.org.au

Loddon Mallee
Noel Morton
0409 182 952
nmorton@icnvic.org.au