

Media Release



2 December 2016

Sydney and Melbourne recognised for world leading program

The prestigious C40 Cities Awards today named the City of Sydney and the City of Melbourne the 'building energy efficiency' category winners at a gala ceremony in Mexico City.

C40, one of the world's leading climate change action organisations, holds the awards to recognise the innovation of cities worldwide to reduce carbon emissions.

The awards celebrate best practices from the world's cities, highlighting outstanding performances achieved in challenging environments.

Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore accepted the award with the City of Melbourne's Director of Strategy and Place Kate Vinot in Mexico City.

In a field that included strong entrants from San Francisco and Guangzhou, Sydney and Melbourne were recognised for their CitySwitch Green Office program: a service that supports commercial office based businesses to improve their energy and waste efficiency.

"If we are serious about tackling climate change in our cities, where around 80 per cent of emissions are generated by buildings, then we've got to find solutions that are practical," Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore said.

"Over the past five years, the offices of CitySwitch signatories across Australia have saved \$34 million on power bills, but their tremendous results go well beyond saving money. The outstanding leadership and action from our business community demonstrates that the market takes sustainability seriously, and their results contribute to the ambitious environmental targets in each of our cities."

"CitySwitch remains the only program in Australia that brings state and local government together with commercial tenants to improve environmental performance in this most critical sector - and it is one of the great success stories.

"Last year, a record 618,000 square metres of office space were added to the program – either from new tenancies signing up, or existing signatories adding new space. It now covers over three million square metres of office space."

When CitySwitch began in 2005, it was a small program in Sydney. Since then it has spread to states across Australia where it has received strong support from several councils, especially the City of Melbourne, which has recognised the need to engage the business community to improve building efficiency.

CitySwitch businesses across Australia carried out almost 1,500 environmental projects in 2016, reducing carbon emissions by 57,871 tonnes and purchasing a further 323,970 tonnes in carbon offsets.

Lord Mayor Robert Doyle said CitySwitch is one of a series of programs that helps the City of Melbourne work with small and large businesses to contribute to its goal of reaching Zero Net Emissions by 2020.

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“Melbourne and Sydney are occasional rivals on and off the sporting field but collaborations like CitySwitch show how our two cities are working effectively and collaboratively to preserve and generate energy,” the

“We have 150 offices covering more than 700,000 square meters in Melbourne committed to reducing their environmental impact through CitySwitch. This is equal to the area covered by 35 MCGs and represents 70,000 city workers.

“We are pleased that C40 has recognised CitySwitch with this prestigious award and hope it will encourage other businesses to get on board. This year alone CitySwitch participants have made electricity savings worth \$13 million or 60 million kWh,” the Lord Mayor Robert Doyle said.

A total of 571 signatories with 871 offices are signed up to the CitySwitch Green Office program including Sydney-based financial institution AMP Capital and Melbourne-based Frasers Property Group.

“AMP Capital strongly supports CitySwitch Green Office. As part of the program, we commit to continue to change our behaviour and influence others in cooperation with CitySwitch partners and the wider community, to make a difference to climate change and help shape a more sustainable future,” said AMP Capital Managing Director, Louise Mason.

General Manager of Sustainability at Frasers Property Group, Paolo Bevilacqua, said the company is committed to reducing the environmental impact throughout our business, while maximising social and economic returns for its customers.

“Our partnership with CitySwitch has led not only to better environmental performance in our own offices, but importantly educated our staff about practical things that can be done at home and within the buildings and communities we develop,” Mr Bevilacqua said.

“It is a world class example of governments at all levels supporting businesses large and small to implement meaningful change for the benefit of their business and the environment.”

For interviews with Lord Mayor Clover Moore in Mexico City, please contact Matt Levinson on 0499 319 385 or mlevinson@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

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