

Australian Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (ACCSR) Conference

RAISING THE BAR: LEADING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS IN 2008 Geoffrey Durden, Head of School, La Trobe University Graduate School of Management

Sydney 20 February 2008

Ladies and Gentlemen –

I'm sure I speak for every one here this evening when I congratulate all of our presenters and Leeora and her team for the excellence of their contributions here today and for all the time and effort they have put in to making this conference such a resounding success.

From what was said by our various speakers, it is clear that Australian Businesses have made significant progress towards improving the level of professional practice in this critically important area of sustainable business and that their on-going commitments will drive further improvements throughout 2008 and beyond.

In the same spirit, I would like to just take a minute or so to outline a little of the work that my Faculty and School is currently doing in this area, that is broadly in support of the conference theme, and also to make an announcement about our future intentions.

Presently:

- Faculty membership of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative
- Internationally renown scholars in the area, including Professor Carol Adams, who holds a Chair in Accounting and Sustainable Development Strategy
- MBA stream in Corporate Social Responsibility
- Research stream in CSR

Looking to the future, I'm pleased to announce that we have very recently entered into a formal relationship with ACCSR – an MOU in fact - which is designed to provide an “umbrella” under which we can plan for the development of a number of new initiatives in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility - including what we believe to be the first Graduate Certificate in CSR in Australia.

It is our intention to offer this postgraduate qualification at the beginning of 2009.

We see this as a logical extension of our existing commitment to improving professional standards of practice in CSR, in line with the conference theme.

Finally, the School is also moving to become a signatory to the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative, which in turn is part of a wider “UN Global Compact” corporate citizen initiative. This we believe will provide synergies with our existing activities within the efmd GRLI.

In this way I hope our University can be seen to be playing its part in developments in the field.

That said, I think it only remains for me to echo again my thanks to all those who have contributed to the success of today's proceedings. And to wish everyone a safe journey home.

Thank you.

G R Durden