

Horticulture Innovation Australia

Final Report

Turf Industry Conference Program 2013 -15

Richard Stephens
Turf Australia Limited

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TU12703

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Fax: (02) 8295 2399

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Summary

Industry Conferences & Field Days do more than just provide new information and an opportunity to network. They can empower participants by helping them to clarify the purpose of their business through challenging their goals and business decisions. This is what happened at the 2015 Turf Australia Conference & Field Day held at Twin Waters and Beerburum Queensland.

The conference program covered the need to, and how to: continually challenge oneself and business decisions; understand actual business costs; know which parts of the business are making money; tap into social media; and how to make savings through implementing more efficient irrigation practices.

Attracting a total of 159 participants, the 2015 Turf Australia Conference & Field Day provided a combination of keynote presentations, workshops, networking events, field day demonstrations and time for reflection. The Sunshine Coast location provided a relaxing atmosphere and a wide selection of interesting venue options.

Both formal and informal feedback received indicated that the event enabled participants to professional network within an enjoyable atmosphere and they were able to learn and share information that can improve their businesses.

Extensive media coverage following the 2015 Turf Australia Conference & Field Day further extended the information that was presented at the event.



2015 Conference Trade Display, Novotel Twin Waters.



Turf Australia Field Day Site, GoTurf Beerburum QLD.

Evaluation of effectiveness – survey results

The conference program was packed with inspiring national and international presenters and the field day at one of QLD's leading turf farms, GoTurf, featured multiple 'hands-on' workshops covering issues such as soils, irrigation & fertigation, and the latest turf chemicals.

Conference feedback was extremely positive with delegates saying:

- "The TPA conference was great. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to the Association. It is important to have a strong association in order to have a strong industry."
- "Thank you for the wonderful turf conference."
- "I would recommend other growers to attend as we get caught in our own world and forget the bigger picture and changes in the real world."
- "Thanks again, I really appreciate your time in helping us improve our business."
- "Great job by Turf Australia with the conference. It is easy to see the dedication you have!"
- "I was very happy with the conference. I found some information very helpful"

Overall, the feedback received indicated that the participants learned valuable information and made worthwhile contacts that will benefit their businesses by helping them improve professionalism and profitability. The mix of keynote presentations, workshops, networking activities and demonstrations was well received.

The opportunity to consider holding bi-annual conferences and/or field days was considered by many as appropriate and this should be assessed more thoroughly.

Please refer to the Participant Feedback section for a detailed summary of the feedback received.



Immediate Past TA President, Anthony Muscat, with Senator Richard Colbeck



Turf laying competition at the Field Day

Conference program

Wednesday 26 August

12.00 - 1.30pm **Registration – Main Foyer**

1.30pm

Networking Activities

- Dik Murphy Golf Tournament
- Lagoon Day Spa Luxurious Pampering

5.00 - 6.30pm

Registration – Main Foyer

6.30pm

International Welcome Reception – Lagoon Beach

- MC – David Smiedt
- Fire Juggler & Guinness World Record Holder, Tanya Abbey, and a Jumping Castle for the kids
- Indian, American, Italian & French International Food Stalls



2015 Welcome Dinner on the beach at Novotel Twin Waters.



International food stalls - Welcome Dinner.

Thursday 27 August

8.00am-8.30am	Registration – Lily’s on the Lagoon <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrival tea and coffee
8.30am	David Smiedt, Master of Ceremonies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome – Anthony Muscat, Turf Australia President
8.40am	Senator Richard Colbeck, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official conference opening
9.00am	Ben Peacock, Republic of Everyone <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be inspired about greenspace
9.45am	Peter Vaughan, Nursery & Garden Industry Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential partnerships for the turf industry
10.15 am	MORNING TEA
10.45 am	Tania Chapman, Chair – Voice of Horticulture & 2012 Victorian Rural Woman of the Year <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to shine, empower and inspire within a family farm business
11.25 am	Associate Professor Kevin Kenworthy, University of Florida <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The many new turf varieties
12.10 pm	Andrea Brydges, Bite Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lawnspriration: Successes, plans and how you can benefit
12.40pm	LUNCH – Lily’s on the Lagoon
1.40pm	Kevin Kosky, Big Hat Professional Services <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turf telephone sales and dealing with difficult customers
3.10pm	AFTERNOON TEA
3.30pm	David Smiedt, Wrap up session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet the sponsors and exhibitors• What stood out? What did you learn? What can you put into practice?
4.00pm	CLOSE
4.15pm	Turf Australia AGM – Lily’s on the Lagoon
4.45pm	CLOSE
6.15pm	Pre-dinner drinks & canapés – Mudjimba Veranda
7.15pm	Conference Dinner – Mudjimba Ballroom <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MC – David Smiedt• Industry Awards & Turf Hall of Fame• Live Music – Felicity Burdett
6.00pm – 10.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kids Disco (2-12 years), includes dinner & refreshments

Friday 28 August

- 8.50am **Buses Depart Novotel Twin Waters for GoTurf, Beerburrum**
- 10.20am **Anthony Heilig, Director GoTurf**
- How to build your business. The GoTurf story
- 11.00am - 2.45pm **Educational Workshops:**
- Managing Soils for turf - Suzette Argent, DAFF QLD
 - Using turf research data as a marketing tool - Shane Holborn, BioScience Australia
 - Irrigation technology for turf - tba
 - Fertigation for turf - tba
 - New Turf Chemicals - Various presenters - tba
- 12.30 -1.30pm **BBQ LUNCH & TURF LAYING COMPETITION – Rolls versus Slabs**
- 3.00pm **Buses Depart for:**
- Novotel Twin Waters
 - Brisbane Airport for flights leaving after 5.25pm, booking essential
 - Sunshine Coast Airport for flights leaving after 5.15pm, booking essential



Official opening, Senator Richard Colbeck.



Turf Industry Award recipients.

Delegate list

Turf Australia Conference 2015

Turf Australia – Fun in the Sun

Confirmed Delegates

01-Sep-15

Name	Organisation
Sponsor/Exhibitor SIMON Adermann	Lawn Solutions
Sponsor/Exhibitor TIMOTHY Alexander	CBA
Delegate TERRY Allen	Windsor Turf Supplies
Delegate ROBYN Anderlini	Tropical Lawns Pty Ltd
Delegate TERRY Anderlini	Tropical Lawns Pty Ltd
Delegate DAN Aposhian	Firefly Equipment
Delegate MATT Aposhian	Firefly Equipment
Speaker SUZETTE Argent	Department of Agriculture & Fisheries
Delegate CHRISTOPHER Attard	Green Life Turf
Sponsor/Exhibitor HARRY Baccus	Sammut Agricultural Machinery
Delegate CRAIG Banbury	Glenview Turf
Delegate KAREN Banbury	Glenview Turf
Delegate GREG Banff	Golden Finch Lawns
Delegate WARREN Barker	Evergreen Turf
Field Day JASON Barrett	Hillside Turf
Delegate SANDY Bauman	Australian Lawn Concepts
Exhibitor RAY Beavis	Monsoon Irrigators
Sponsor/Exhibitor PHILIP	Lindsay International
Field Day DOUG Benjafield	Stanley River Turf
Field Day JETHRO Berry	Tinamba Turf
Sponsor/Exhibitor ANTHONY Betts	Lawn Solutions
Sponsor/Exhibitor MIKE Bevege	The Pump House
Delegate LYNELLE Boyle	Rosemount Turf
Delegate ROSS Boyle	Rosemount Turf
Sponsor/Exhibitor JENNY Broderick	Hillside Tractors
Sponsor/Exhibitor MARK Broderick	Hillside Tractors
Speaker ANDREA	BITE Communications
Sponsor/Exhibitor PETER Chadband	The Pump House
Speaker TANIA Chapman	Voice of Horticulture - Citrus Australia
Delegate BRENDAN Clark	Epar Group
Speaker RICHARD Colbeck	Senator for Tasmania
Delegate GRAEME Colless	Dad & Daves Turf
Delegate MEGAN Colless	Dad & Daves Turf
Field Day JOHN Commens	Coastal Turf
Sponsor/Exhibitor WAYNE Cooper	Prolube Lubricants
Delegate SHAUN Corbett	Hamilton Plains Turf
Delegate TONY Cornwell	Mardi Park Turf
Field Day MICHAEL Cox	Elders
Sponsor/Exhibitor DION Cunningham	Rodney Industries
Delegate BRETT Currie	Waterwise Turf
Sponsor/Exhibitor ROB Davey	Evergreen Turf
Delegate WENDY Davey	Evergreen Turf
Delegate RICHARD De Vos	De Vos Consulting
Delegate MELISSA	Harden Park Lawns
Delegate MICHAEL Denney	Harden Park Lawns
Field Day WAYNE Dibley	Golden Finch Lawns
Sponsor/Exhibitor ALASTAIR Dowie	Turfcraft International
Sponsor/Exhibitor DR DAVID Elmoultie	BASF
Sponsor/Exhibitor - BRUCE Ensing	David Evans Group

Sponsor/Exhibitor - LEE Falappi
Delegate KATIE Fisher
Sponsor/Exhibitor DANIEL Gafa
Field Day ANDREW Galea
Field Day LAWRENCE Galea
Field Day SCOTT Gillam
Field Day BENJAMIN Gowen
Sponsor/Exhibitor ROB Green
Sponsor/Exhibitor TERRY Griffiths
Delegate ASHLEY Grogan
Organiser PAULINE
Organiser TONY Handy
Field Day ALLAN Hatch
Sponsor/Exhibitor PETER Heibloem
Sponsor/Exhibitor ROXANNE Heibloem
Sponsor/Exhibitor ANTHONY Heilig
Sponsor/Exhibitor SONIA Heilig
Speaker SHANE Holborn
Field Day MATTHEW Holmes
Sponsor/Exhibitor BARRY Howard
Delegate LEIGH Hunt
Delegate JOHN Keleher
Speaker Prof. KEVIN Kenworthy
Speaker BRANDI Kenworthy
Delegate Justin King
Exhibitor PETER Kirby
Delegate DARREN Kirkwood
Speaker KEVIN Kosky
Sponsor/Exhibitor ED Kryskow
Delegate NATHAN Layt
Organiser RACHEL Layt
Sponsor/Exhibitor TODD Layt
Delegate JOHN Maas
Delegate SARAH Mason
Delegate TONY Mason
Sponsor/Exhibitor LIZ McGrath
Delegate LACHLAN Moncrieff
Delegate SACHA
Delegate ANTHONY Muscat
Delegate MARGARET Muscat
Delegate PATRICK Muscat
Sponsor/Exhibitor ASHLEY Neuendorf
Field Day MICHAEL Newton
Delegate PETER Newton
Delegate CRAIG Nichols
Delegate MARGOT Nichols
Field Day CHRIS Nys
Delegate ANDREW Page
Delegate CON Paino
Delegate LUCY Paino
Delegate JAMES Palmer
Delegate ANNABELLE Peacock
Speaker BEN Peacock
Sponsor/Exhibitor COLIN Perket
Sponsor/Exhibitor CRAIG Perring
Sponsor/Exhibitor CHRISTINE Pitcher
Delegate ADRIAN Pitsikas
Sponsor/Exhibitor COLIN Purnell
Delegate DAVE Raison
Delegate KARLA Raison
Sponsor/Exhibitor BRETT Redman
Delegate EVA Ricci
Sponsor/Exhibitor LINTON Ritchie
Sponsor/Exhibitor GAVIN Rogers

Globe Australia
Agrihort Communications
Sammut Agricultural
Premium Turf
Premium Turf
Golden Finch Lawns
Department of Agriculture & Fisheries
Nu Turf
Qturf Machinery Pty Ltd
Allen View Turf
Handy Events &
Handy Events &
Greenfield Turf
Roxanne Insurance Brokers
Roxanne Insurance Brokers
Go Turf
Go Turf
Bio Science Australia
Syngenta
Nu Turf
Cervadon Ltd
Australian Lawn Concepts
UF/IFAS
UF/IFAS
Allen View Turf
Bayer CropScience
West Coast Turf
Big Hat Consulting
Turfcraft International
Ozbreed Pty Ltd
Turf Australia
Ozbreed Pty Ltd
Greenfields/Bullsbrook Turf Farm
Coastal Turf
Coastal Turf
Polymet Australia Pty Ltd
Paragon Gardens
Paragon Gardens
Greener Lawn Supplies Pty
Greener Lawn Supplies Pty
Green Life Turf
Living Turf
Bay Turf Gladstone
Bay Turf
Roberts Turf Supplies
Roberts Turf Supplies
Clifton Park Turf
The Pump House
Westland Turf
Westland Turf
HG Turf
Republic of Everyone
Republic of Everyone
Sammut Agricultural Machinery
Horticulture Innovation
The Pump House
Greenacres Turf Group
Earthlife
Turf Australia NSW
Turf Australia NSW
Lawn Solutions
WA Turf Industry
Polymet Australia Pty Ltd
Lawn Solutions
Page **9** of **34**

Sponsor/Exhibitor JOE Rogers
 Field Day TERENCE Roy
 Sponsor/Exhibitor DANIEL Sammut
 Field Day JAKE Schroeders
 Field Day MICHAEL Scott
 Delegate BEC Sellick
 Delegate TERRY Sellick
 Speaker MICHAEL Setch
 Delegate MICK Shaw
 Sponsor/Exhibitor TREVOR Shaw
 Sponsor/Exhibitor TODD Simmons
 Speaker DAVID Smiedt
 Sponsor/Exhibitor ANDREW Smith
 Delegate AMANDA Smyth
 Delegate DEAN Smyth
 Delegate PAUL Spencer
 Delegate BRUCE
 Delegate MICHELLE Stephens
 Delegate OLIVER Stephens
 Organiser RICHARD Stephens
 Delegate HUGO Struss
 Delegate STEPHEN Struss
 Delegate GAVIN Sutherland
 Sponsor/Exhibitor BRETT Sweeting
 Exhibitor STEVE Taiapa
 Sponsor SIMON Taylor
 Exhibitor MICHAEL Thompson
 Delegate HELEN Tramacchi
 Delegate SCOTT Tramacchi
 Delegate SOPHIE Tramacchi
 Sponsor/Exhibitor KIM Tranter
 Delegate JIM Vaughan
 Speaker PETER Vaughan
 Sponsor/Exhibitor KATIE Voight
 Sponsor/Exhibitor DREW Wagner
 Sponsor/Exhibitor TOBY Wanger
 Delegate MARTIN Walsh
 Delegate SAM Wasmund
 Delegate PAUL Weldon
 Sponsor/Exhibitor MAX Whatman
 Sponsor/Exhibitor ALEX White
 Sponsor/Exhibitor ERIN Wilder
 Delegate BROOKE Williamson
 Delegate PETER Williamson
 Sponsor/Exhibitor PETER Woods
 Sponsor/Exhibitor ADAM Wright

159 People Listed

Lawn Solutions
 Coolhaven Turf
 Sammut Agricultural Machinery
 Tinamba Turf
 Coastal Turf
 Lawn Doctor Turf Farms
 Lawn Doctor Turf Farms
 The Pump House
 Evergreen Turf
 Sammut Agricultural Machinery
 Rodney Industries
 Master of Ceremonies
 Nu Turf
 Wild Horse Turf
 Wild Horse Turf
 Greenway Turf Solutions
 Anco Turf
 Turf Australia
 Turf Australia
 Turf Australia
 Tinamba Turf
 Tinamba Turf
 HG Turf
 K Line Industries
 Roxanne Insurance Brokers
 CBA
 Monsoon Irrigators
 Sunset Turf
 Sunset Turf
 Sunset Turf
 Lawn Solutions
 Turf Queensland
 Nursery & Garden Industry Australia
 Chubb Insurance
 Sod Solutions
 Sod Solutions
 Department of Agriculture
 Rosemount Turf
 Simplot Partners
 Living Turf
 K Line Industries
 Sod Solutions
 Wide Bay Turf
 Wide Bay Turf
 Globe Growing Solutions
 Water Dynamics



Key outcomes of the conference

Based on formal and informal feedback, the 2015 Turf Australia Conference & Field Day was highly successful. With a total of 159 delegates over the 2.5 days and extensive media coverage following the event, the entire industry has had an opportunity to learn from the event.

The first key note presenter, Ben Peacock from 'The Republic of Everyone' gave an inspiring presentation on the importance and value of greenspace. Ben shared his vision for 2020, putting emphasis on creating a brand and how to gain loyal followers.

Peter Vaughan, CEO of Nursery and Garden Industry Australia, outlined potential partnerships between the turf and nursery industries. Explaining the benefits of collaboration, alliance, coalition and cooperation.

Delegates were inspired by Tania Chapman, Chair of the Voice of Horticulture, Tania showed how farming families can shine in spite of adversity.

Professor Kevin Kenworthy from the University of Florida covered the latest in turf grass breeding from the USA.

Andrea Brydges from Bite Communications explained the levy funded turf marketing program.

One of the conference highlights was a highly interactive presentation by Kevin Kosky from Big Hat Professional Services. Kevin is working with Turf Australia to help improve the telephone sales techniques of turf businesses and he was able to reenact poor phone sales techniques (many of these were based on real life examples) and show how to increase your conversion of phone inquiries into actual turf sales.

Another highlight was the formal conference dinner in the Novotel Twin Water's Ballroom. Music was provided by local musician, Felicity Burdett, and a stand-up comedy routine by David Smiedt had many people in stitches. The formal part of the evening was devoted to the new '*Turf Hall of Fame*' program, which was sponsored by Lawn Solutions Australia. The members benefit auction raised over \$5,000.

The Field Day was held at Go Turf, Beerburum. Probably the biggest attraction at the field day was the newly imported Firefly Turf Harvester. With a fully electronic cutting mechanism and high speed operation, the Proslab 155 Firefly Turf Harvester has been affectionately named 'Blue Steel'.

Several workshops were also on offer at the Field Day, including: Managing soils for turf, Using turf research data as a marketing tool, Irrigation and fertigation for profit. Prior to lunch Turf Australia held a turf laying completion, rolls versus slabs.

Many of the delegates made commitments about what they could put into practice following the event, including: Better telephone etiquette; Telephone techniques – staff training starts this week! Relationships, with your staff, customers, other growers, etc, are the key; Telling the benefits of our turf, (IE acclimatised varieties, soil fumigated – 100% weed free; top quality, State wide delivery; next day delivery to doorstep, large range of varieties, free starter fertilizer); To check out 'Cooker and a looker' blog; Strive for a continual 1% improvement tweak of all elements – this will result in business excellence (IE the ambition of the Sky team over a 5 year development plan and now dominating the Tour de France); Having a positive attitude and process, cannot have off days; Thank you Kevin Kosky for the sales training (and chocolates). We found it very informative and useful. Now we just have to sharpen our technique and improve our closure rate over

the phone. I learned that Australian humor is very funny. I learnt and will put into practice is getting contact numbers and names and following up on quotes.

The 2015 Conference & Field Day received significant media coverage, which helped further extend the key messages to the turf industry. This included:

- The 2015 Spring edition of the Turf Australia Industry Magazine, pages 6 - 27.
- The 2015/16 Summer edition of the Turf Australia Industry Magazine, pages 11 - 13
- The Sep – Oct 2015 edition of the TurfCraft magazine, pages 61 - 62.
- The Nov - Dec 2015 Australian Turfgrass Management Journal, page 66.
- The 63rd Turf Australia E-newsletter, 17th September 2015, featured key messages and photographs from the Conference & Field Day.

Most of the feedback received was extremely positive and demonstrated significant outcomes for individual delegates. This included:

- *"The speaker content was perfect"*
- *"Ben Peacock had a great positive attitude"*
- *"Peter [Vaughan] gave me food for thought of our promotions"*
- *"I learnt a lot about US research from Kevin [Kenworthy]"*
- *"It was disturbing from an industry perspective to hear the many grower responses from Kevin [Kosky's] investigative phone calls. What if a caller is tossing between natural grass and synthetic?"*
- *"Enjoyable night, it was great to see the recognition of our 'Founding Fathers'"*
- *"Machinery exhibitions were very helpful and full of great ideas".*



The Field Day workshops covered a variety of topics, including, soil management, fertigation, chemical use and irrigation.

Recommendations

The feedback received indicated that the format which includes keynote presentations, an active field day and practical workshops is highly regarded by delegates. The range of topics, presenters, conference organisation and venue also received a positive response. See the 'Evaluation of Effectiveness – Survey Results' chapter for a detailed summary of the delegate feedback.

Based on the formal and informal feedback received following the last three annual turf Australia Conferences & Field Days, the Turf Australia Board decided to run biannual conferences & field days and hold State Based, half day Forums in the alternate years. A proposal for this has been submitted to HIA as these types of events that enable direct industry engagement are a worthwhile investment and should continue to be supported by the Turf Levy.

Detailed planning for these future events will take into consideration the feedback received from the 2015, 2014 and 2013 conferences and field days.



2015 TA Conference Dinner



Kevin Kosky and Sarah Mason delivering the telephone sales techniques workshop session.

Acknowledgements

A big thank you goes to all 30+ sponsors, exhibitors and auction items donors, as without their support, the conference could not have gone ahead.

The major sponsors were:

- Horticulture Innovation Australia (HIA)
- Evergreen Turf, with Kesmac-Brouwer
- Lawn Solutions Australia
- Sammut Agricultural Machinery, with Trebro
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- Pro-lube

Thank you also to the turf Australia Board members, each of whom played a significant role in designing and running the conference.

The Turf Australia Board Members:

- Anthony Muscat (Chairman), Greener Lawn Supplies, NSW
- Ross Boyle (Vice Chairman), Rosemount Turf, Qld
- Anthony Heilig (Treasurer), GoTurf, Qld
- Tony Cornwell, Mardi Park Turf, NSW
- Bec Sellic, The Lawn Doctor, WA
- Sarah Mason, Coastal Turf, NSW

Also, thank you to Tony & Pauline Handy, Handy Events, as well as Rachel Layt, Turf Australia, for their tireless efforts in making this conference & Field Day a success.



Participant Feedback

35 Written Responses Received

1. How did you find out about the Turf Australia 'Fun in the Sun' 2015 Conference & Field Day?

From a conference brochure received in the mail	5
From the Turf Australia Industry Magazine	2
From E newsletters or emails from Turf Australia	9
From friends and/or colleagues	6
From TurfCraft magazine	-

Other: On the TA Board, via Anthony Muscat

2. Wednesday 26 August - Welcome Reception

Enjoyment				Organisation			
v good	good	fair	poor	v good	good	fair	poor
12	6	-	-	8	6	-	-

Comments: Unique venue & concept; Great way to kick off the conference. Good Food. Great night. Weather was beautifully organized. The laid back atmosphere was a great way to meet and great people.

3. Thursday 27 August – Speaker Session 1

	Content				Presentation			
	v good	good	fair	poor	v good	good	fair	poor
Senator Richard Colbeck – Opening address	1	9	7	1	3	10	2	-
Ben Peacock – Being inspired about greenspace	10	5	3	-	10	6	-	-
Peter Vaughan – Potential partnerships	2	10	5	-	3	7	5	-

Comments: Ben & Peter gave me food for thought of our promotions. Senator Colbeck didn't answer the questions but talked on. Ben gave a great presentation but it had limited turf references.

4. Speaker Session 2

	Content				Presentation			
	v good	good	fair	poor	v good	good	fair	poor
Tania Chapman – How to Shine	9	6	1	-	8	6	-	-
Prof Kevin Kenworthy – New turf varieties	9	6	1	-	7	7	2	-
Andrea Brydges – Lawnspriration & Marketing	3	10	3	-	4	9	2	-

Comments: Good to hear first hand what is happening in the USA; Learnt a lot about US research from Kevin; Wasn't very impressed with Andrea.

5. Afternoon Presentations & MC

	Content				Presentation			
	v good	good	fair	poor	v good	good	fair	poor
Kevin Kosky – Telephone sales workshop	8	5	-	-	8	5	-	-
David Smiedt – MC & wrap up session	2	2	2	-	2	1	3	-

Comments: It was disturbing from an industry perspective to hear the many grower responses from Kevin's investigative phone calls. What if a caller is tossing between natural grass and synthetic? Enjoyed the movement in Kevin's presentation. David Smiedt was very dry.

6. Thursday 27 August – Conference Dinner

Enjoyment
v good 6 good 3 fair - poor -

Organisation
v good 6 good 1 fair 1 poor -

Comments: GOOD!; Enjoyable night & great food; It was great to see the recognition of our 'Founding Fathers'; The title 'The Turf Hall of Fame' lacked imagination; Presentation of Hall of Fame recipients was great; Auction went well; Dinner food was amazing; LSA were extremely happy to be able to work with and support TA at your conference. It is important that LSA works closely with the PIB and offers support to the entire turf industry: It was a privilege to be able to present the TA Hall of Fame awards. The fellowship time at the banquet and the field day. I also learned more about the history of TPA.

7. Friday 28 August - Field Day Exhibition

Enjoyment
v good 3 **good 4** fair - poor -

Organisation
v good 2 **good 4** fair - poor -

Comments: Machinery exhibitions were very helpful and full of great ideas; Thanks to the sponsors for both days and how do you make it more attractive for the sponsors to go?

8. Field Day Workshops

	Content				Presentation			
	v good	good	fair	poor	v good	good	fair	poor
Suzette Argent – Managing soils	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	-
Shane Holborn – Using research data	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-
Peter Chadband & Mike Bevage – Irriga & fert	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Various Presenters – New turf chemicals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Comments: I tended to spend time with the machinery, not the workshops; Didn't attend.

9. Overall, the things I really liked were:

Location; Ben Peacock; Great Positive attitude by all involved; Lunch menu; Conference setting; The accommodation; Being close to the airport; The speaker presentations related to marketing. As most farmers know how to grow turf, the speaker content was perfect; The marketing information; New turf varieties; Social & networking times; Listening to other people to learn if there is a better way to do, fix or market; Looking at Tractors; Networking. The friendly and accommodating service of Rachel. Networking

10. Overall, the things that could have been improved were:

Better attendance by growers; Perhaps run it Tuesday to Thursday as this gives you a chance to get back to the Office on Friday; Less time sitting inside, more movement; Less people telling us of our 'evils', more positive spins; If other growers will get off their arse and support our industry, especially when the event is held in their area! Need more time for open discussion. There needs to be more interaction. Perhaps a forum speaking and taking questions would work well. The growers need to be more interactive. I don't think too much could have been improved on it was self-explanatory.

11. Things I learnt and could put into practice are:

Better telephone etiquette; Telephone techniques – staff training starts this week! Relationships, with your staff, customers, other growers, etc, are the key; Telling the benefits of our turf, (IE acclimatised varieties, soil fumigated – 100% weed free; top quality, State wide delivery; next day delivery to doorstep, large range of varieties, free starter fertilizer); To check out 'Cooker and a looker' blog; Strive for a continual 1% improvement tweak of all elements – this will result in business excellence (IE the

ambition of the Sky team over a 5 year development plan and now dominating the Tour de France); Having a positive attitude and process, cannot have off days; Thank you Kevin Kosky for the sales training (and chocolates). We found it very informative and useful. Now we just have to sharpen our technique and improve our closure rate over the phone. I learned that Australian humor is very funny. I learnt and will put into practice is getting contact numbers and names and following up on quotes.

12. **Turf Australia should hold similar combined conferences, field days & workshops**

Annually **6** **Bi-annually 7** Other -

13. **If held separately, Turf Australia should hold conferences (IE speaker presentations)**

Annually 7 Bi-annually **3** Other: Don't hold separately

14. **If held separately, Turf Australia should hold field days (IE equipment exhibitions)**

Annually 5 **Bi-annually 5** Other -

15. **If held separately, Turf Australia should hold seminars & workshops (IE training sessions)**

Twice a year **3** **Annually 7** Bi-annually - Other -

16. **What time of year suits you best to attend Turf Australia Events?**

May **5** June **1** July **3** **August 9** September **1** Other -

17. **General Comments**

- Run a big field day & conference every second year in Sydney. As it is close you'll get a great turn out from exhibitors. Then run a farm day, tour/conference every other year in a different state, EG Broome, Darwin, Tas, etc.
- The TPA conference was great. Thank you and Richard for your hard work and dedication to the association. It is important to have a strong association in order to have a strong industry.
- Thanks for that Rachel, the conference was good fun. It was nice to meet everyone. Thanks very much for the opportunity to come along and support Turf Australia.
- Well done Richard and team! Had a great time thanks.
- Thank you for the wonderful turf conference. It was great to meet you.
- Lachlan and I had a wonderful time meeting so many kind people, who were extremely generous with their time and information. We came away with lots of little nifty ideas that I am sure we will be able to apply here at our little farm. Before we left the field days we received a call from another Townsville Turf Farmer who gave us the impression that changes were already being made to our water restrictions, this isn't the case. Things remain the same. Lachlan and I will be in touch for help with a letter once we get sorted. Your offer of assistance is gratefully appreciated. In the meantime, I wonder if you could please put that fantastic video Richard showed at the start of the Field Days a USB for us and put it in the post. Thank you very much!!
- The conference section was great.
- Giving vendors and opportunity to share their products is a good idea. Don't be afraid to engage vendors and allow them to be an integral part of the association. They bring valuable assets to the association. Never let vendors or individual companies overtake the association but highly engage them.
- Thanks Rachel, Great job by Turf Australia with the conference but more so yourself, it is easy to see the dedication you have!

- Annually is good but be sure and move them around the country. Pick a date and own it so that attendees can plan ahead every year.
- Pick a week and own it. Be consistent to get on growers calendar and you will build attendance. Go after some great speakers ie business building, motivational speaker, speakers that can help business owners make their business better.
- Overall the conference was good. Don't be over sensitive to any business big or small. Be objective and don't worry about ruffing feathers. Do what you think is best for the association members and the industry. Develop a clear message for the association and set goals. Develop protocol and time frames to reach the goals. Publish the goals and how they will be achieved. This is very important.
- Great to meet you and your family. Was an excellent few days indeed. Well organised and thanks for the airport pickup
- I was very happy with the conference. I found some information very helpful and have put them in place to see what response I have and it had worked very well so thank you for that. The only thing I learnt and will put into practice is getting contact numbers and names and following up on quotes.
- I would recommend other growers to attend as we get caught in our own world and forget the bigger picture and changes in the real world.
- The only thing that comes to my mind in additional training would be marketing strategies, with so many competitors out there and the uncertainty of ones credentials in that field its assuring you have the right partners on board when marketing your business.
- Thanks again, I really appreciate your time in helping us improve our business.
- Lastly, give Rachel an increase in salary. She is spectacular in how she interacts with people. Very gifted and engaging.

Proceedings



**Turf
Australia**

Grow Green

Fun in the Sun



Conference Handbook



Turf Australia Conference & Field Day

**Novotel Twin Waters Resort & Beerburrum
Sunshine Coast Queensland**

26-28 August 2015

Horticulture
Innovation
Australia

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Chairmans Welcome

Welcome to the 12th Annual Turf Australia National Conference & Field Day. The theme for this year's conference & field day is 'Fun in the Sun'.

While the theme suggests you will have fun in the warm Queensland sunshine at the end of a long and cold Winter, we hope that you will also learn valuable information and make worthwhile contacts that will benefit your turf business.

The conference program is packed with inspiring national and international presenters and the field day at one of QLD's leading turf farms, GoTurf, features multiple 'hands-on' workshops covering issues such as irrigation, erosion control and new chemicals for the turf industry.

The Master of Ceremonies for the conference is well known comedian, David Smiedt while the Federal Senator Richard Colbeck, also Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, will officially open the 2015 Turf Australia Conference & Field Day.

Key note speakers include, Ben Peacock from Republic of Everyone who is one of the brain child's behind the very successful 202020 Vision program and Dr Kevin Kenworthy from Florida University will present the latest on breeding new turf varieties.

Peter Vaughan from Nursery & Garden Industry Australia will uncover potential 'Living Green' partnerships for the turf industry, while Tania Chapman (who has an extremely long list of personal achievements) will show us how to shine, empower and inspire within a family farm business.

Andrea Brydges from Bite Communications will explain the key funded turf marketing program for 2015/16, including how to tap into the successful 'Lawnspiration' Facebook page that already has over 11,000 likes.

Also, an interactive workshop by Kevin Kosky from Big Hat Professional Services will address the various sales techniques that growers and their staff should be using to draw-in and service today's customers as well as how to deal with those difficult customers.

There will be a prestigious conference dinner on Thursday night which will feature the new 'Turf Hall of Fame' presentations.

And Friday's Field Day will be spectacular. GoTurf at Bearburum is one of Queensland's leading and unique turf farms. Situated between coastal mangroves and plantation forests, GoTurf operates 3 Centre Pivot Irrigators and grows a variety of Soft Leaf Buffalo, Zoysia and Couch grasses. There will be the latest turf machinery on site, including the newly imported ProFly Turf Harvester, and multiple 'hands-on' workshops covering issues such as irrigation, erosion control and new chemicals.

Thank you for making the time and effort to come to 'Fun in the Sun'. I know you will have a good time while learning valuable information that will help you make your business more professional and profitable.



Welcome!
Anthony Muscat
Chairman, Turf Australia.



Anthony Muscat
Chairman

The Turf Australia Board

- **Anthony Muscat** (Chairman), Greener Lawn Supplies, NSW
- **Ross Boyle** (Vice Chairman), Rosemount Turf, Qld
- **Anthony Hellig** (Treasurer), GoTurf, Qld
- **Bec Sellick**, The Lawn Doctor, WA
- **Tony Cornwell**, Mardi Park Turf, NSW
- **Sarah Mason**, Coastal Turf, NSW

Turf Australia Staff

- **Rachel Layt**, Administration Officer
Phone 02 4588 5735
Email admin@turfaustralia.com.au
- **Dave Ralsen**, Communications Coordinator
Phone 0413 837 837
Email comms@turfaustralia.com.au
- **Richard Stephens**, Business & Industry Development Manager
Phone 02 4588 5735
Email bidm@turfaustralia.com.au

Conference Secretariat

The following Handy Events Conference staff will be present to assist during the conference. Please don't hesitate to contact them if they can help in any way.

- **Tony Handy**, Director Handy Events & Conferences
Phone 0412 652 780
Email tony@handyevents.com.au
- **Pauline Handy**, Director Handy Events & Conferences
Phone 0421 567 539
Email info@handyevents.com.au

Conference & Field Day Venues

The 2015 Turf Australia Conference will be held at Novotel Twin Waters Resort Maroochydore with the Field Day being held at GoTurf, 434 Makins Road, Beerburrum.

Registration

The conference registration desk is situated in the Conference Foyer, Novotel Twin Waters Resort and the field day registration desk is at the entrance to the field day site.

Registration Times

Wednesday 26 August 12.00 noon – 6.30pm

Thursday 27 August 8.00am – 4.45pm

Friday (Field Day) 28 August 8.30am – 3.00pm

Conference **Social Program**

Wednesday 26 August

Dik Murphy Golf Challenge

Includes twin share buggy and golf club hire

Lagoon Day Spa Luxurious Pampering

Includes a choice of treatments and light refreshments

International Welcome Reception

6.30pm

Lagoon Beach, Novotel Twin Waters Resort

Thursday 27 August

Conference Presentation Day

8.30am

Lily's on the Lagoon, Novotel Twin Waters Resort

(See page 5 for Presentation Day program)

4.15pm

Turf Australia Annual General Meeting

Lily's on the Lagoon, Novotel Twin Waters Resort

Conference Dinner

6.15pm

Pre-dinner drinks and canapés

Mudjimba Veranda, Novotel Twin Waters Resort

7.15pm

Dinner

Mudjimba Ballroom, Novotel Twin Waters Resort

8.00pm – 10.00pm

Kids Disco (2-12 years), Includes dinner and refreshments

Friday 28 August

Turf Australia Field Day

10.00am

GoTurf, Beerburum

(See page 5 for Field Day program)


CONFERENCE ATTIRE

Smart Casual attire is appropriate for most conference sessions, including the Welcome Reception on Wednesday night, the speaker presentations on Thursday and the Dinner on Thursday night. Dress for Friday's Field Day is casual with solid shoes and weather appropriate attire recommended.





2015 Turf Australia Conference & Field Day Program



Wednesday 26 August

12.00pm - 1.30pm	Registration - Main Foyer	
1.30pm	Networking Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dick Murphy Golf Tournament • Lagoon Day Spa Luxurious Pampering 	
5.00pm - 6.30pm	Registration - Main Foyer	
6.30pm	International Welcome Reception - Lagoon Beach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC - David Smlodt • Fire Juggler & Guinness World Record Holder, Tanya Abbey, and a Jumping Castle for the kids • Indian, American, Italian & French International Food Stalls 	SPONSORED BY 

Thursday 27 August

8.00am - 8.30am	Registration - Lily's on the Lagoon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival tea and coffee 	
8.30am	David Smlodt, Master of Ceremonies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome - Anthony Muscat, Turf Australia President 	
8.40am	Senator Richard Colbeck, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official conference opening 	
9.00am	Ben Pocock, Republic of Everyone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inspired about greenspace 	
9.45am	Peter Vaughan, Nursery & Garden Industry Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential partnerships for the turf industry 	
10.15 am	MORNING TEA	
10.45 am	Tania Chapman, Chair - Voice of Horticulture & 2012 Victorian Rural Woman of the Year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to shine, empower and inspire within a family farm business 	
11.25 am	Associate Professor Kevin Kenworthy, University of Florida <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The many new turf varieties 	
12.10 pm	Andrea Brydges, Bito Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawnspiration: Successes, plans and how you can benefit 	
12.40pm	LUNCH - Lily's on the Lagoon	SPONSORED BY 
1.40pm	Kevin Kosky, Big Hat Professional Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turf telephone sales and dealing with difficult customers 	<small>©2015 TURF AUSTRALIA</small>
3.10pm	AFTERNOON TEA	
3.30pm	David Smlodt, Wrap up session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the sponsors and exhibitors • What stood out? What did you learn? What can you put into practice? 	
4.00pm	CLOSE	
4.15pm	Turf Australia AGM - Lily's on the Lagoon	
4.45pm	CLOSE	
6.15pm	Pre-dinner drinks & canapés - Mudjimba Veranda	
7.15pm	Conference Dinner - Mudjimba Ballroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC - David Smlodt • Industry Awards & Turf Hall of Fame • Live Music - Faldy Burdett • Turf Australia Member Benefit Fund Auction 	SPONSORED BY 
6.00pm - 10.00pm	• Kids Disco (2-12 years), includes dinner & refreshments, booking essential	

Friday 28 August

8.50am	Buses Depart Novotel Twin Waters for GoTurf, Beerburum	
10.00am	Anthony Heilig, Director GoTurf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to build your business. The GoTurf story 	
11.00am	Educational Workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Soils for Turf - Suzette Argent, DAFF QLD • Using turf research data as a marketing tool - Shane Holborn, BioScience Australia • Pumping, Irrigation and Fertiligation for Profit - Peter Chadband & Mike Bevega, The Pump House 	
12.30 - 1.30pm	BBQ LUNCH & TURF LAYING COMPETITION - Rolls versus Slabs	SPONSORED BY 
2.00pm - 2.45pm	Educational Workshops continue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Turf Chemicals - Various presenters 	
3.00pm	Buses Depart for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novotel Twin Waters • Brisbane Airport for flights leaving after 5.25pm, booking essential • Sunshine Coast Airport for flights leaving after 5.15pm, booking essential 	



Keynote Speakers

Senator Richard Colbeck

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture
Senator for Tasmania

Richard Colbeck has been a Liberal Senator for Tasmania in the Australian Parliament since 2002.

Prior to entering politics, Senator Colbeck worked in the construction industry, was an Alderman on the Devonport City Council and a Director of the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Senator Colbeck has a strong affinity for regional communities – which he credits to spending his younger years on a dairy farm at Wilmot – and he enjoys working with primary industries to achieve better outcomes for rural and regional Australia.

Senator Colbeck is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture with responsibilities for Fisheries and Forestry and Agriculture in Tasmania.

<http://twitter.com/richardcolbeck>

<http://www.richardcolbeck.com.au/>



Peter Vaughan

CEO Nursery and Garden Industry Australia

Peter Vaughan is the new CEO at NGIA and has worked across several agricultural industries over the last 20 years, including horticulture, seed, grains and livestock. Working at the interface of research and development, Peter has commercialised a number of innovative products and services, including horticultural, cereal and pasture plant varieties.

Before joining NGIA, Peter was the General Manager of the On-farm research and development business unit with Meat and Livestock Australia. Prior to that his roles included working as the General Manager at Austgrains, the Managing Director and Commercial Director at the Value Added Wheat Cooperative Research Centre, the Cultivar Manager at SGB Australia and the R&D Manager with Agricultural Licensing Australia.

Peter has particular interest and expertise in strategy development, communication across stakeholders, the ability to work with and lead a team and delivering value to stakeholders and industry. He has a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from the University of Melbourne and an MBA from Macquarie University.



Tania Chapman

Chapman Citrus

Tania owns and operates a 350 acre citrus property in the Sunraysia region of Victoria and provides specialised bookkeeping services to horticulturists and a variety of other rural businesses. Since March 2010, Tania has been Chair of Citrus

Australia, represents citrus at Plant Health Australia and is the Chair of "the Voice of Horticulture". Tania holds a Diploma of Accounting and Advanced Diploma in Business Management, is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Member of the Australian Institute of Management. A recipient of the 2012 RIRDC Victorian Rural Women of the Year Award and a finalist in the 2012 National Rural Women of the Year 2014 Nuffield Farming Scholarship, and is a Co-Founder of a Children's charity in Mildura "the Lucas Foundation" which aims to provide financial assistance to children from Sunraysia suffering from sudden illness or unforeseen circumstances. Tania continues to fulfill her passion of empowering farming families to believe in themselves, in their abilities and to step up to leadership roles within their industry and the communities in which they live.



Kevin E. Kenworthy

Associate Professor, Turfgrass Breeding and Genetics, University of Florida

Dr Kenworthy has a PhD in plant breeding & genetics, from Oklahoma State University, and Bachelor & Master of Science degrees from Texas Tech University. His 25 years of combined industry and academia turfgrass experience covers the collection, evaluation and breeding of grass germplasm and turf production practices. In addition to being chair and/or co-chair for 10 graduate PhD students, author of 3 patents, 1 Plant Variety Protection, and co-developer of 14 cultivar releases. Dr Kenworthy has authored 60 refereed journal articles, 36 trade publications, 58 abstracts and teaches Introductory Genetics annually to 300 students. He is a member of the Crop Science Society of America, the American Society of Agronomy, the Florida Turfgrass Society, Turfgrass Producers of Florida, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, the Turfgrass Breeders Association, and the Turfgrass Water Conservation Alliance.



Keynote Speakers

Andrea Brydges

Managing Director,
Blite Communications

Andrea has over 20 years of experience in public relations and marketing for the food, nutrition, healthcare and lifestyle sectors. Prior to establishing Blite Communications, Andrea held positions as Director of Food & Nutrition at Edelman Public Relations and Account Director at Saatchi & Saatchi's PR arm, The Rowland Company.

Blite Communications is the agency selected to implement the public relations and social media marketing program for Turf Australia.



Ben Peacock

Managing Director,
Republic of Everyone

Ben is founder of do-good agency Republic of Everyone, co-founder of the multi-award winning Garage Sale Trail and chief architect of the 2020 Vision, a campaign to create 20% more green spaces in our urban areas by 2020.

His company specialises in finding the human in the environmental and turning sustainability into something everyone wants to be part of.



Suzette Argent

Development Horticulturist,
Department of Agriculture and
Fisheries

Based at the Maroochy Research
Station in Nambour.

Previous work has included: Land and
Water Management Planning, helping
farmers adapt to climate change,
pasture rundown and soil organic matter and carbon.

Currently working on Healthy Waterways project, funded by Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, focused on improving nutrient management in horticulture within the Pumicestone catchment.



Shane Holborn

Managing Director,
BioScience Australia

Shane Holborn has an honours degree in Environmental Science from Griffith University. He has been involved with the turf industry as the research team leader with the Queensland Government for over 10 years. In 2012 he formed



the company BioScience Australia in order to continue servicing the industry as a private research provider. He has conducted a number of low funded turf projects relating to erosion control and the environmental benefits of turf as well as an examination of turf groundcover in the greater Sydney and Melbourne regions.

Dave Smledt

Comedian MC

Is described by Adam Hills, host of "Spicks and Specks", as "a living breathing joke machine". David Smledt has been delighting audiences around the country and overseas with his brand of warm inclusive, uplifting, intelligent comedy and is one of Australia's finest comedian MC's and corporate performers.

A regular on television shows David is the author of seven humorous books and writes for a wide range of over 30 magazines including, Virgin Airline Mag, Elle, Home Beautiful, Cleo, Men's Health, Women's Health, Body & Soul, Sunday Style and Vogue where he specialises in a humorous take on style health trends and celebrity profiles. Aside from being the current grooming editor for GQ magazine he is the only journalist in Australian publishing history to be in concurrent issues of lads-mag Ralph and Your Garden. Topical and charming, David's comedy will entertain and uplift.



Kevin Kosky

Big Hat Professional Services

Are you looking for more customers, increased sales and bigger profits? Kevin Kosky from Big Hat Professional Services will give you the tools you need to do just that. Kevin is a renowned specialist in sales communication training, and his passion is ensuring sales people communicate better to make more profitable sales.

For decades Kevin thrived in the highly competitive music industry. As a successful event promoter, Kevin launched a booking agency for musical entertainers and the business grew internationally. Kevin's clients included: P&O Cruises, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, Princess Cruises, The Hilton Hotel and The Raffles Chain.

Kevin attributes his success to mastering the art of rapport. Kevin also teaches accredited training courses, holds a nationally recognised award for public speaking, and is an active member of The National Speakers Association of Australia. Along with David Staughton, Kevin provides sales and business profitability coaching and training, to entrepreneurs and senior management, from large corporate to small business via the Big Hat Professional Services team.



Turf Australia **Field Day**

GoTurf
434 Mekins Road, Beerburrum
ph: (07) 5496 0530



DO NOT RELY ON GPS DIRECTIONS
– Access farm via Steve Irwin Way, not Bruce Highway.



Bruce Highway from North –
take Landsborough exit onto
Steve Irwin Way



Turn onto Red Road
at Beerburrum

Follow GoTurf signs
once on Red Road

Bruce Highway from South –
take Beerburrum exit onto
Steve Irwin Way



Turf Australia Partners, Sponsors & Exhibitors



