

Australasian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM) Winter Symposium

Dates: 24 – 26 June 2009

Venue: Holiday Inn Esplanade

City: Darwin, Northern Territory

Delegates: 353

In 2008, Will Organise managed the ACEM Winter Symposium, held in Newcastle. Record numbers of 252 people were achieved at this meeting (expected around 170). The challenge therefore, was how to ensure the Darwin meeting, given the extra travel time and expense, could build on the success of the meeting the previous year.

Darwin, as a destination was extensively promoted, and a great deal of time was spent ensuring the conference was cross – promoted through other Associations who may have an interest in the sessions that were being held at the Conference. Three keynote speakers were invited, one from the UK and 2 from the Northern Territory, Australia.

A social program was designed to offer a variety of Darwin experiences. Firstly, an elegant evening was held at Parliament House, an impressive structure, with beautiful gardens overlooking Darwin Harbour. The second night, normally a free evening, included a casual visit to Mindil Markets – a ‘must do’ whilst in Darwin. Shuttle buses were organised to help get delegates there and back. Finally, the dinner was held at the well known restaurant ‘Pee Wee’s at the Point’. Pre dinner drinks were served with a backdrop of the setting sun behind the Pandanas trees – a truly ‘Darwin experience’. Music was played for those wanting to dance, with the evening ending with a packed dance floor, and a group who did not want to go home!

Some of the other highlights included:

- **Pre Conference Workshops**
Held at both the Conference venue and the local hospitals, Will Organise co-ordinated all aspects of the events including transport and catering. These workshops were in great demand and sold out very quickly.
- **Field Trips**
For those not wanting to attend a pre conference workshop, they had the opportunity of joining a field trip to the Oenpelli, a field trip to Litchfield National Park, a local deep sea fishing charter or a bush tucker trip. Will Organise again co-ordinated all aspects including chartered flights, boats, local transport, guides and catering.
- **Crocokus Cove**
Thursday afternoon’s plenary session was taken off site to a new local attraction called ‘Crocokus Cove’. The venue is located in the main street of Darwin, only a short 5min walk from the Conference venue and houses reptiles and crocodiles. Delegates had the opportunity to walk through the venue before the session on Antivenon began. Delegates also had the chance to pat and hold reptiles whilst at the centre.

Some feedback:

- The best conference I have been to in terms of educational value and value for time
- Registration service was faultless and easy to use
- Great event, well done to the organisers
- Informative, very well run and enjoyable
- A fantastic time had by all, and all I can say is we need more of them!