

Lessons Learnt: An insight to delivering an ISCA rating on a WestConnex Project

Delivering an ISCA rating is no easy task so here are some tips and tricks from the Sustainability teams on WestConnex M4 East and New M5.

Tips and Tricks to remember:

- **Planning is key** - Create a timeline for your submission including notes with as much detail on everything from evidence, completion percentage, difficulty and anything you will need to secure your points. Update the credit summary forms (CSF's) progress to date and keep notes on who will review your credits before submission. Stick to your timeframes!
- **Integrating social enterprises into procurement during Project start up** - Use organisations like Social Traders and Supply Nation to match your packages of works with potential social enterprises and indigenous business.
- **Social Traders:** <https://www.socialtraders.com.au/>
- **Supply Nation:** <https://supplynation.org.au/>
- **Make sure you have an air tight base case from the beginning** - Finalise your base case as soon as possible, you will need to refer to it multiple times during the submission process. Piggy back off the base case from similar projects in the same area, no point reinventing the wheel when it comes to business as usual assumptions.
- **Define “significant” issues on your Project from start up and make sure this is well documented for the Man-7 credit-** Determining the decisions early on creates more traction for this credit and makes it easier in the long term plus it gives you the necessary evidence.
- **Make the most of your Case managers** - Creating a relationship up front is paramount to helping with your submission. Ask as many questions as possible and bring them along for the ride. Breaking the submission into different sections and submitting them separately, for example, may be a possibility for a major Project.
- **Make the most of your feedback session with verifier-** Record these sessions or take extensive notes so that you can refer to them at a later date. If possible, have the feedback sessions in person, it will give you a much better understanding of what they require of the Assessors to receive more points for the project. Be prepared for the sessions, ensure you know exactly what credits you want to talk about and what issues you are seeking clarification on.
- **Remember you're not in this alone** - Use your support networks within your own Project, your Parent Company and within your JV partners. Build a network outside your Project (and JV) as early on in your submission as possible. This will be the gift that keeps on giving.

What we did well on the Projects:

- **Communication and relationships are necessary especially on site** - Encourage site staff to be creative with their sustainability initiatives. Build healthy relationships and make connections with as many people as possible. Make sure they all know who you are, what you need from them and why you need it. Empower all workers to speak up with any ideas they have and ensure the senior leadership team are on board. Culture always comes from the top so make sure your managers are always in the loop.
- **Set up regular design and construction opportunities workshops from the beginning** - great way to get an early involvement with the design team. Get to know all the individual design teams e.g. structures, tunnels, M&E, and know exactly what scope they are responsible for. Always target the lowest hanging fruit - lighting. Schedule these workshops quarterly, at a minimum.

- **Complete Waste Audits with other JV's or Projects** - Join forces with other sustainability managers from other projects in your area who are also using the same contractors and waste service providers and share the work load. This is also an excellent opportunity to share knowledge between Projects and discuss waste management practices (or providers) that are working well, or that need improvement.
- **Swap Stakeholder Auditors with other JV's or Projects** - swap your Stakeholder/Community Manager (or Senior team member) with another Project to complete the Stakeholder reviews. This saves time, cost and adds genuine value to the whole process.
- **Spend as much time on site** - as possible. This is extremely helpful in infiltrating all commercial, construction and engineering teams and knowing who to obtain all reporting data from. You cannot consolidate an ISCA submission from your desk in head office. Having a presence on all sites will be your golden ticket.
- Likewise, **build strong relationships** with the HR, Community, Training, Commercial and Procurement teams. Each of these teams are responsible for compiling the evidence for their relevant themes so don't double up on work. People are your strongest ally and can prevent hours of trolling for the necessary evidence when it's time to write your CSFs.
- **Establish a transparent network with Contractors and Suppliers** - attend progress and contract meetings. Reward performance when Contractors are doing well and manage them appropriately when they are not supplying the data they are required to (e.g. concrete SCM%). Involve your commercial managers when you are not getting what you need in the agreed timeframes for reporting. This will also help you achieve Level 3 in Procurement 4 CSF, (supplier reward program or similar and examples of rewards given).

Areas for improvement – things we could have done better:

- **Starting your submission early**- an ISCA design submission is a lot of hard work and takes much longer than you expect. Be realistic about your time lines, transparent with your reporting timeframes and clear with your teams about what exactly you need from them, why and when.
- **Embedding sustainability policies in Procurement from Project start-up** - These are essential to the project obtaining all the procurement points and are easily won if set up properly. Be sure to track the completion of these requirements as the Project progresses. Just because the requirements are embedded in the tender schedules, doesn't ever mean they are being completed.
- **Create a centralised data collation spreadsheet** - that is either shared or the same for each site and ensure there is a someone in charge of document control and change management. Track who is responsible for each credit and the progress against it. Use this spreadsheet as a guide for client completion % updates.
- **Emphasizing importance of EPDs to Contractors and Suppliers** - and requesting documentation as part of the tender and procurement process. Ensure tenders are evaluated based on a minimum of 20% non-cost elements. Encourage commercial teams to place an emphasis on choosing contractors based upon this particularly for large material suppliers e.g. Concrete and Steel and capture this process for your procurement CSFs.
- **Establish relationships with Contractors and Suppliers early** - embed all reporting requirements into their contract and ensure the data is received from them in accordance with the agreed timelines. If the data isn't coming in, raise it to the CA and manage the Contractor accordingly e.g. stop payment.
- **Keep your credit summary forms simple** - Address criteria and the 'must' statements only. Don't waffle. Always remember that the Verifier has a limited amount of time to read through an extraordinary amount of information on a Project they know very little about. Don't waste time trying to justify something that doesn't exist. Keep it concise and point to the evidence specifically (page number and highlighted specific text). A CSF should never be an essay.