



## Green Music Australia Info Sheet

### Festivals - Reducing Emissions

Planning is so important when it comes to limiting environmental impacts, either through achieving energy efficiency gains or changing and/or reducing the scope of certain energy intensive activities.

Once again, the skills of festival producers, site managers, production managers and food and beverage managers are needed to develop an energy management plan. Such a plan doesn't have to be time consuming or complex – you can achieve significant environmental improvements by focussing on the areas that matter. One of the biggest emitting activities associated with festivals is the travel emissions generated by fans getting to and from the event. This is also probably one of the easiest aspects to address. It just requires a bit more attention and the occasional bright idea.

While it is recognised that there are certain emissions that cannot be avoided (like flying international artists to play at the event - let's face it, they not going to travel by boat), there are almost always options to reduce emissions.

Reducing emissions falls into four broad categories:

1. Powering the festival;
2. Festival related travel;
3. Fans related travel; and
4. Waste and recycling.

### Powering the Festival

Festival producers should investigate the following options:

- Work with production to incorporate energy efficient stage lighting set ups (for example by using ultra energy efficient LED lighting where possible);
- Where possible, use PA systems that draw less power (this might also involve configuring stage layouts so that the projection of sound to all audience members can still be achieved even with lower than normal sound power outputs);
- Minimise the time that staging equipment is left running;
- Use energy efficient lighting around the site and ensure it is switched off during daylight hours;
- If using mobile lighting towers or mobile vehicle messaging boards, only operate when needed and, where possible, run on bio-diesel fuels;



- Minimise the number of cold rooms required for bars and catering where possible (e.g. through smart site layouts that allow resources to be shared between end users) and ensure that cold room doors are kept shut when not in use;
- For high traffic cold rooms, install drapes at the entrance to reduce temperature losses;
- For sites that are grid connected, arrange to purchase up to 100% Australian accredited GreenPower (sourced from approved wind, solar and hydro energy generators);
- For sites that require mobile generators, try to secure generators that can be run on bio-diesel;
- Strictly limit the operating times of diesel and bio-diesel generators where possible (specifically assign this responsibility to a particular crew member);
- Encourage and actively seek suppliers who can provide services to the festival using renewable energy (i.e. solar powered indoor cinemas or mobile phone charging stations);
- Encourage and actively seek partnerships with alternative technology service providers who may be able to provide small but valuable onsite energy generation systems to power specific festival functions;
- Work with all food vendors, markets and caterers to minimise the energy requirements for their services. In some cases it may be prudent to advise in advance the maximum power draw per vendor, etc;
- Actively encourage all food vendors, markets and caterers to use energy efficient equipment and lighting;
- Green Music Australia can help find suppliers and negotiate relationships.

### **Festival Related Travel**

Travel (air, sea, road) associated with putting on a festival includes:

- Artist and artist crew travel;
- Festival crew travel;
- Production and site equipment travel;
- Caterers, food vendors, markets and other stall holders;
- Utilities travel (such as water, waste and sewerage, etc); and
- Suppliers (i.e. fencing, tents, barriers, etc).

Together, festival related travel can literally add up to hundreds of thousands of kilometres and can result in significant carbon emissions. That magic P word (planning) is the key to reducing the amount of festival travel required, and you would be surprised at the level of emission reductions you can achieve by applying your problem solving skills to this aspect of the event, not to mention the cost savings.



Check out the following suggestions for lightening your event's travel related footprint:

- Where possible, source home grown artists for your festival. If you have to engage acts from overseas, see if you can schedule them on the back of other tours or festivals so as to reduce their total kilometres travelled;
- See if you can influence the size of the artists' crew that will travel with them and where possible reduce the number of people travelling;
- If artists and crew are travelling by road, arrange for the least vehicles (buses and/or cars) to be used;
- Where feasible, hire and use hybrid and/or low emission vehicles for travel;
- Source festival crew locally;
- Provide some form of mass transit for artists and crew to get to and from their accommodation to the festival;
- When organising artist transfers, try to have various different size vehicles available, so as to avoid giving individual artists lifts to and from accommodation in minivans or buses;
- Where crew are required from further afield, try to coordinate travel so that staff can car pool from the airport or undertake a bus road trip en masse;
- Limit the number of interstate flights crew undertake by doing business over the phone, via email or teleconferencing;
- If your festival is close to public transport, offer to pay for your crew's transport costs to encourage them to use these services;
- If your festival is not close to public transport, consider providing a crew bus that runs staff to and from the site to the nearest town or city;
- Organise a car pooling system for crew;
- Source production and site equipment (i.e. fencing, toilets, barriers, tents, flooring, etc) from local businesses where possible;
- Where equipment has to be sourced remotely, ask that suppliers minimise the number of truck movements required. This may take some planning and adjustments on your part to ensure full loads (by the way this exercise should reduce your overall transportation costs);
- Plan ahead regarding equipment and stock required from afar. Carbon emissions can be greatly reduced by transporting stuff via back loading on trucks in advance rather than flying it in at the last minute;
- Consider the weight of equipment and stock required to be transported. Look for opportunities to substitute with lighter materials (i.e. aluminium crowd barriers instead of steel barriers, etc);



- Where possible minimise the festival area, which will save on the amount of fencing, perimeter lighting and other equipment which has to be transported to site (and where applicable, powered up);
- Communicate with caterers, food vendors, markets and other stall holders and tell them how important reducing environmental impacts is for the festival. Discuss their transportation plans and encourage them to limit vehicle movements to and from the site. You may have to set specific rules regarding acceptable vehicle movements, etc;
- Work with your utility providers to reduce their travel. Ask them to source their requirements as close as possible to the festival site (i.e. landfills, potable water supplies and sewerage treatment plants, etc);
- Work out the number of utility truck movements needed to service the event and investigate ways to reduce these (i.e. use larger capacity water trucks, use bigger skip bins which require less frequent emptying, etc).

### Fan Related Travel

Without a doubt, fans travelling to and from a festival are far and away the largest overall emissions source. These emissions can be 10 times those created by producing the festival and are an extraordinary opportunity for festival producers to really make a difference in this space.

Sure, it is up to an individual to decide how he or she will get to and from a festival. However, offering traditional and innovative alternatives to fans rocking up by private transport such as the old fossil fuel guzzling car are a much more energy efficient way to run your festival.

Here some opportunities worth exploring:

- First things first, shout out loud and often to your fans that your festival is serious about tackling environmental impacts including those generated by **their** travel activities. Communication is critical here to garnering support and buy-in. A lot of noise and encouragement by you will go a very long way;
- Reduce the number of car parking spaces available for private vehicles;
- Where you have to provide a certain amount of car parking, price it so that cars with fewer passengers are charged substantially more to park than cars carrying several people;
- Work with local and regional transport authorities to encourage punters to travel by public transport and avoid the use of privately owned vehicles (i.e. discuss scheduling issues to ensure adequate services during peak times);
- Where public transport is thin on the ground, consider providing bus services through private contractors (this is a great service for less mobile fans to get to the event);



- If public transport nodes are not close to your festival, consider organising buses to collect fans from train stations, airports and public bus stops (usually for a small fee to cover the cost of the bus service);
- Allocate more of your dedicated car parking to buses rather than cars;
- Offer fans a combined event and public transport ticket;
- Listing information on car pooling - this might involve a dedicated car pooling page on your website or directing fans to a local car pooling organisation;
- Encourage bicycle travel by offering dedicated and secure bike parking.

### Waste and Recycling

Festivals are like mini cities that operate for a day or two and, just like a city, they can generate significant quantities of waste in the form of food, paper, drink containers, etc.

In fact, for every tonne of solid waste produced, about 1.7 tonnes of carbon are emitted to atmosphere so there is a very real environmental incentive for reducing your waste.

Waste is a by-product of inefficiency. If festivals commit to implementing smart recycling and composting systems rather than providing masses of garbage bins which encourage waste, the results are twofold; firstly there is little if any waste to dispose of to landfill; and secondly the festival site looks and feels so much better with far less litter.

Reducing your waste makes for a better festival experience. Here's how:

- Communicate with all your suppliers and instruct them they are responsible for taking all materials they bring on-site with them back offsite once the festival is over;
- Instruct suppliers that non-recyclable and non-biodegradable materials are prohibited on-site (particularly food and beverage packaging);
- Only deal with suppliers that meet the above requirements;
- Consider banning single use plastic drink bottles from sale on site, and make sure you provide plenty of refilling stations for reusable bottles and promote the fact that punters need to bring their own;
- Set up waste sorting stations staffed by volunteers to assist fans to separate their stuff into the right bins (i.e. food scraps, paper, cardboard, PET plastic, aluminium, etc);
- Run a container recycling system that involves a deposit on all drink containers sold at the event. Fans get their deposit back when they return their container to a dedicated recycling centre (by the way this system can achieve recycling rates up to 95% which is pretty impressive) – and Green Music Australia can help you set up and run such programs;



- Provide caterers and food vendors with appropriate organic (food, etc), cardboard and commingled recycling bins;
- Communicate in advance and at the event with your fans telling them about the systems you have put in place and how they work;
- If your festival involves camping make sure you provide recycling stations around the camp grounds so fans can do the right thing;
- Seek out environmental science undergraduates from the local university and offer them entry to the event and a loud outfit so they can interact with the fans and advise how the recycling systems work, etc.