

Workshop Series 2007

01 business and human rights

Why is the protection of human rights relevant to business and not simply the responsibility of governments alone?

This interactive workshop will provide an introduction into business issues relating to human rights, the international human rights system and its relevance to Australian business operations. Further, the workshop will provide relevant examples of business and NGO co-operation and discuss the challenges, lessons learned and some of the results achieved. It will be of benefit to all Corporate Responsibility thinkers and practitioners.

This workshop will be led by Ulrike Schuermann, Momentum International Partnership and Bill Barker, Human Rights International.

To be held on 18 July 2007 from 1.00pm to 5.30pm at the AGSM, 1 O'Connell Street, Sydney CBD.



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introduction

Why is the protection of human rights relevant for business and not simply the responsibility of Governments alone? Expectations of local communities, governments, observers, consumers and shareholders have changed significantly in regard to the role of business in realising human rights. International business leaders have deepened their involvement in talks about the role of business in protecting human rights, a topic that is at the centre of civil society's criticism of globalization, and these developments are affecting Australian trans-national and national businesses alike.

Business operations bring about major changes to societies and communities and these changes can have major influence (positive and negative) on the way people live. There are many intersections between corporate activities and human rights, generally and industry specific, including:

- the potential health impacts of products such as fast food, building materials and tobacco
- the price and availability of important pharmaceuticals
- the continuing debates about the potential health impact of mobile phones
- issues surrounding genetically modified food,

privatisation of water and conflict diamonds to name just a few

Some of these issues, such as conflict diamonds, have been brought to public attention through recent Hollywood movies and impact individuals as well as the society at large. The current worldwide debate about climate change and its potential impact on our quality of life illustrates the interdependence of human rights and environmental issues and the critical need for business leadership to create solutions.

Corporations can lift human rights standards where these are insufficient and not in line with international expectations or corporations can abuse them, often as an unintentional side effect of operations, sometimes through negligence and in the worst case scenarios, intentionally to obtain unfair advantage.

The difficulty of measuring indirect impacts – frustrated by the difficulty of evaluating the social, including the human rights consequences of their operations, some firms welcome the possible starting point of universally-agreed-upon UN standards on human rights. Others are reticent to see business assume responsibility for what they see as a fundamental government duty.

It is therefore important that we better understand business impacts on human rights, negatively as well as positively and develop and employ increasingly sophisticated strategies and activities that maximise positive impacts and minimise negative impacts of business on human rights.

‘The importance of the private sector in protecting human rights has almost invariably been underestimated and, frequently, overlooked entirely. In an increasingly interdependent and ‘privatised’ world this situation cannot continue without very serious consequences – not only for individuals affected by human rights violations, but also for the corporate sector and the governments responsible for regulating it.

Achieving an appropriate regulatory balance will only be possible with a more informed and engaged contribution from business people – as well as civil society and bureaucratic advisors.’

Professor Brian Burdekin AO
Federal Human Rights Commissioner
(former)

workshop program

1.00pm

Registration

Coffee/tea on arrival

1.25pm

Welcome and introduction to workshop

Ulrike Schuermann, Momentum International
Partnership

1.30pm

Opening remarks and questions

Prof Brian Burdekin AO

2.00pm

The Relationship between Corporate

Responsibility and human rights – theory and
practice

Ulrike Schuermann,

Momentum International Partnership

2.45pm

Human Rights and International Standards

Bill Barker, Human Rights International

This part of the workshop will cover the
basics of human rights, the UN, Australia and
International Human Rights, as well as an
overview of norms and activities relevant
to business.

3.15pm

Coffee/tea break

3.35pm

Case studies and instructions for tasks:

Scenario 1 Workers Rights – Unfair dismissal

Scenario 2 Workers Rights – Health

Break-out groups will be formed and groups
will report back after 45 minutes.

5.00pm

Discussion

5.25pm

Summary and closing remarks



workshop presenters

Mr Bill Barker
International Human Rights Consultant

Bill has extensive experience as a human rights trainer as well as on human rights institution building. He has presented numerous training courses to audiences in many Asia-Pacific countries, with a special focus over recent years as principal trainer in a series of human rights and conflict resolution training workshops in Indonesia. His writing includes three substantial guide books on international human rights issues and the United Nations, including *Getting Government to Listen*, A guide to the International human rights system for Indigenous Australians, as well as analyses of UN developments and of human rights situations in particular countries. He developed the concept of 'national human rights action plans', which are now in place in many countries around the world. Bill served for many years as an Australian diplomat, specialising in human rights and Indigenous issues. He spent four years in Geneva, Switzerland (1988-1992) as an Australian Government representative to the UN and served for two years as Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Human Rights and Indigenous Issues section (1994-96). Bill has attended numerous United Nations human rights meetings both as a government and as an NGO representative.

Ulrike Schuermann
International Consultant and Director,
Momentum International Partnership

Ulrike provides independent advice to the corporate, government and civil society sectors about sustainable development with an emphasis on corporate social responsibility. She designs and implements seminars and projects that bring together the public, private and community sectors to increase awareness of the interdependence between economic, environmental, social and personal issues as well as to create solutions to long-term social problems. Ulrike was the Special Project Consultant for Philanthropy and Social Investment at Swinburne University's Centre for Philanthropy and Social Investment, Melbourne for three years until January 2005. She designed and delivered the Centre's first corporate social investment course as part of its postgraduate courses. As Executive Director of the Australian Youth Foundation (now Foundation for Young Australians (www.youngaustralians.org)) for eight years, she was a leader in the development of socially entrepreneurial programs of national significance, which received international recognition. She is a non-executive director on a number of non-profit boards and committees including the Big Issue NSW committee (www.bigissue.org.au), the NAPCAN Income Development Committee and the Renewable

Energy Foundation, affiliated with the World Council for Renewable Energy (www.wcre.org). Ulrike has a first class honours and masters degree in social science from the University of Duesseldorf, Germany.

target audience

‘Momentum seminars are always stimulating, challenging and relevant. As the private sector increasingly navigates the complex issues of climate change, poverty and our insatiable appetite for growth, the role of human rights has become a central theme. This seminar will engage participants in robust conversation and encourage deeper insights into the leadership qualities required to tackle this vital issue.’

Sam Mostyn
Group Executive, Culture & Reputation,
Insurance Australia Group (IAG)

This workshop will be of benefit to Corporate Responsibility thinkers and practitioners including:

Corporate Social Responsibility
Managers and Directors

Corporate Responsibility
Managers and Directors

Sustainability Managers and Directors

Corporate Citizenship Executives

Independent Auditors/Verifiers

Health, Safety and
Environmental Professionals

Corporate Strategy Professionals

University and Research
Bodies Professionals

Independent Academics

Change Management Consultants

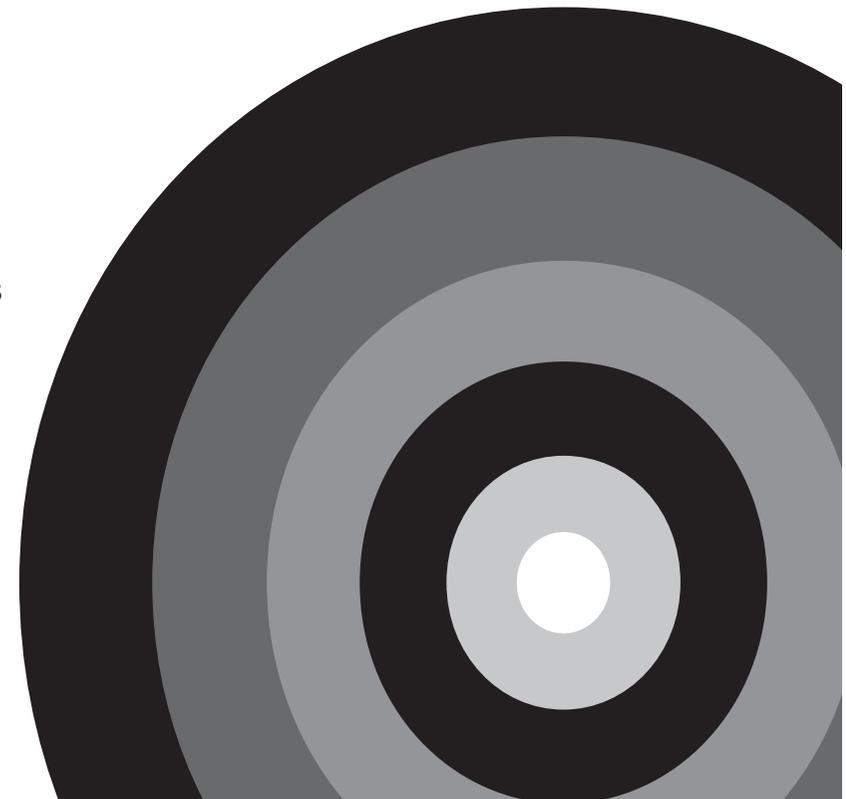
Quality Improvement Professionals

Thought Leaders

Public Affairs and
Communication Professionals

Fundraising or Corporate
Partnerships Professionals

Anybody concerned with the
relationship between business,
Corporate Responsibility
and human rights



registration form & tax invoice

Momentum International Partnership Workshop Series 2007
Workshop 01 Business and Human Rights

Four easy ways to register

1. **Tel** 02 9699 7427
2. **Fax** 02 9331 3701
3. **Email** darlinghurst@secretariesext.com.au
4. **Post to** Momentum International Partnership PO Box 286, Surry Hills NSW 2010.

Register and pay by 30 June 2007	\$350 (+ 35.00 GST)
Register and pay by 15 July 2007	\$450 (+ 45.00 GST)

Participant details

Name	Position
Organisation	
Postal address	
Postcode	
Business Phone	Mobile
Fax	Email
No of Registrations	
Total amount payable incl GST	\$

Please note This document will be a tax invoice for GST purposes when you make payment.

Payment details (please tick box)

- Cheque (enclosed) made payable to**
Momentum International Partnership
ABN No 99 106 541 896
- Direct bank deposit**
Account Name
Momentum International Partnership
Bank ANZ
BSB 012 140
Account No 4981 79123
ABN No 99 106 541 896

Note Cancellations received more than seven days in advance will receive a refund (less \$20 handling fee). Cancellations made after this date can unfortunately not be accepted. However, registrations are transferable. All payments need to be received prior to the event.

For inquiries contact Ulrike Schuermann

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For registration and payment contact
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