

03 business and human rights workshop

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

This interactive workshop will provide a basic introduction into human rights, international law, the United Nations system, relevant codes and examples of industry specific initiatives relating to human rights. Further, the workshop will provide relevant examples of business initiatives promoting human rights and discuss the challenges, lessons learned and some of the results achieved.

One of the foremost authorities on human rights, Prof. Brian Burdekin AO, will be one of the main speakers. He will be joined by panellists from leading corporations, government and civil society.

Numbers will be strictly limited to a maximum of 30 participants to ensure each participant has adequate time to interact with speakers and other participants.

The workshop will be held on 5 March 2008 from 10am to 4pm at the BHP Billiton Centre.

BHP Billiton Centre, 180 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000.



introduction

Why is the protection of human rights relevant for business and not simply the responsibility of Governments alone?

Expectations of shareholders and consumers, governments, local communities and influential media commentators have changed significantly concerning the role of business in human rights (Courts in some countries have recently held that the right to a clean environment is a fundamental human right).

International business leaders have deepened their involvement in talks about the role of business in protecting human rights, a topic that is central to civil society's criticism of globalization. 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 a major influence (positive or negative) on the way people live. There are many intersections between corporate activities and human rights – both generally and 'industry specific'. Examples include:

- the potential health impacts of products such as fast food, building materials, tobacco and mobile phones
- the price and availability of important pharmaceuticals (and issues related to the right to health and the right to life)

- the privatisation of water and access to clean drinking water
- the mining of so called conflict diamonds
- Indigenous land rights and privatisation and
- environmental degradation and the right to a clean environment

..to name just a few.

Some of these issues, such as conflict diamonds, have been brought to public attention through Hollywood movies and impact individuals as well as 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 or be actively involved in creating solutions.

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

Due to the difficulty of measuring indirect impacts and frustrated by the difficulty of evaluating the social (including the human rights) consequences of their operations, some businesses welcome the use of universally-agreed United Nations

standards on human rights as a framework. Others are reticent to see business assume responsibility for what they see as a fundamental government obligation. It is therefore important that we better understand business impacts on human rights. We need to develop and employ increasingly sophisticated strategies and activities that maximise positive impacts and minimise negative consequences.

Note In addition to participating in an interactive workshop, participants will receive a CD-Rom compilation of all relevant human rights treaties and the most recent guides and codes relevant to business and 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

10.00am

Registration
Coffee/tea on arrival

10.15am

Welcome and health and safety induction
**Ms Melinda Buckland, Manager Social
Responsibility, BHP Billiton**

10.20am

The relationship between corporate
responsibility and human rights –
theory and practice
**Ms Ulrike Schuermann,
Momentum International Partnership**

11.00am

Human rights and international standards –
an introduction to human rights, the United
Nations, Australia and international human rights
Prof. Brian Burdekin AO

12.30pm

Networking lunch

1.30pm

Panel debate – can business
effectively promote human rights?

**Mr Michael Butler, Director and VIC
Branch President, Amnesty International**

**Mr Alex Gossman, Director Govt & Corp Affairs,
GlaxoSmithKline, Australia**

**Ms Jill Moodie, Corporate Social
Responsibility Manager, Coles Myer Ltd**

Mr Graeme Wise, Chairman, Adidem Group

2.30pm

The Victorian Charter for human rights and
responsibilities and its implications for business
Ms Moira Rayner

3.15pm

Where to from here?
Group work and facilitated discussion

4.00pm

Summary and closing remarks



workshop presenters

Prof Brian Burdekin AO

Brian is currently Visiting Professor at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Sweden, teaches in the post-graduate program at Melbourne University Law School and is international adviser to a number of national human rights institutions in Africa, Asia and Central and Eastern Europe. From 1995 to 2003, as Special Adviser on National Institutions to the first three United Nations High Commissioners for Human Rights, he conducted over 200 missions to 55 countries in Africa, the Asia-Pacific, Europe and Latin America where governments or civil society had expressed a genuine interest in establishing an independent Human Rights Commission. Prior to his appointment with the United Nations, Professor Burdekin was, from 1986 to 1994, the first Federal Human Rights Commissioner of Australia. From 1978 to 1986 he was principal adviser to a former Australian Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Trade and Federal Attorney General. Prior to this he was a diplomat and lawyer. In June 1985, Professor Burdekin was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for his services to human rights both in Australia and other countries. He is generally considered to be the leading international expert on national human rights institutions.

Ms Ulrike Schuermann International Consultant and Director, Momentum International Partnership www.momentumpartnerships.com

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 Executive Director of the Australian Youth Foundation 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.

Ms Moira Rayner

Moira is an experienced lawyer specialising on the high-risk area of managing workplace behaviours. She teaches in the postgraduate discrimination law course as a Senior Fellow at Melbourne University's Law School and is best known in Victoria as its last Commissioner for Equal Opportunity. She has also been the Acting Deputy Director (Research) of the Australian Institute of Family Studies; a Hearings Commissioner of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, and a full-time consultant in the national law firm Dunhill Madden Butler (now Deacons) for more than six years, when she helped establish the firm's Discrimination Law Practice, and worked with major employers, universities and government departments. In 2000 she became the first Director of the Office of Children's Rights Commissioner for London, which modelled effective children's participation in government and is now an integral part of the Greater London Authority, London's new regional government. She has co-authored several books on governance, human rights, government policy and women and power.

Become a partner or sponsor

If your organisation would like to support the Momentum International Partnership Sustainability Series please contact Ulrike Schuermann on (02) 9699 7427 or ulrike@momentumpartnerships.com

target audience

This workshop is suitable for anybody wishing to develop a better understanding of the relationship between corporate responsibility and human rights and who would like to gain an understanding of the international human rights system. In particular, it is relevant to all corporate responsibility thinkers and practitioners including:

Corporate Social
Responsibility Directors

Corporate Responsibility Directors

Sustainability Directors

Corporate Social
Responsibility Managers

Corporate Responsibility Managers

Corporate Citizenship Executives

Independent auditors/verifiers

Health, Safety and
Environmental Professionals

Corporate strategy professionals

University and research bodies

Independent academics

Change management consultants

Think-tanks

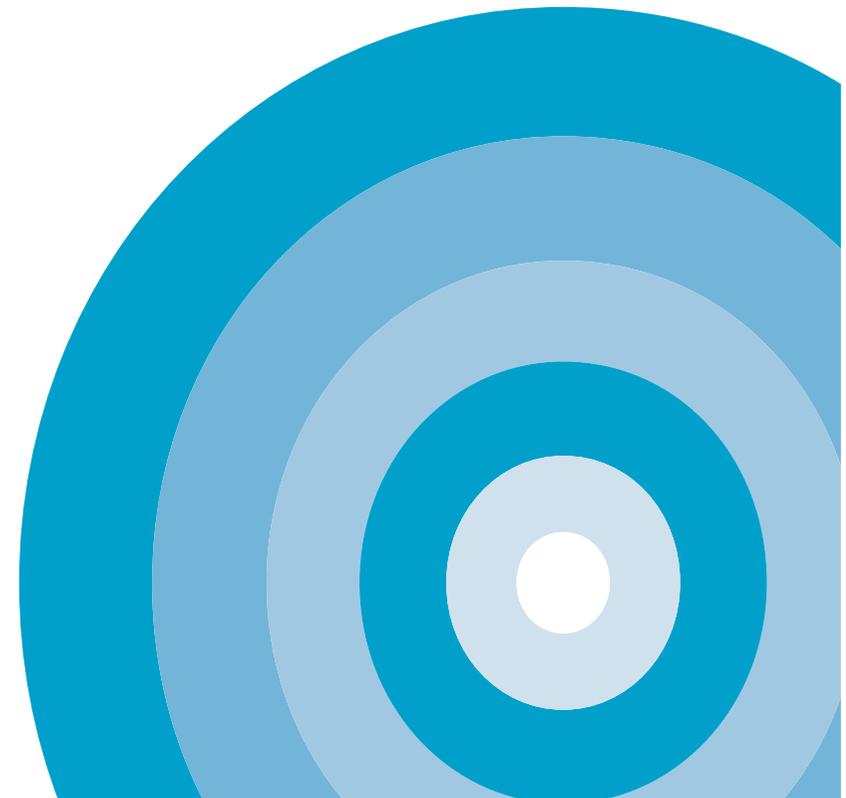
Quality improvement professionals

Public Affairs and
communication professionals

Fundraising or corporate
partnerships professionals

Management consultancies

Risk management



registration form & tax invoice

Momentum International Partnership Sustainability Series 2008 Workshop 03 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 08 February 2008 \$395 (+ \$39.50 GST)
Register and pay by 29 February 2008 \$495 (+ \$49.50 GST)

Includes morning and afternoon tea/coffee and lunch

Participant details

Name	Position
Organisation	
Postal address	
Postcode	
Business Phone	Mobile
Fax	Email
No of Registrations	
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Please note This document will be a tax invoice for GST purposes when you make payment.

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Note Registered participants unable to attend may send a substitute at no extra charge. Cancellation without a participant substitution, received in writing at least seven days prior to the event will be refunded, less a service fee of 30% of the registration fee. Payment for cancellation less than seven days prior to the event, or for delegates failing to attend unfortunately cannot be refunded.

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