



# Corporate Social Responsibility Report

# 2012

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## 1. Strategy

### 1.1 CEO introduction

This is the fifth annual edition of ICCA's CSR report, to be read in conjunction with the 2012 Annual Report and detailed financial results for the most recent calendar year.

ICCA has signed up to the Global Reporting Initiative, the UN standard for sustainability reporting, and this report is therefore structured according to GRI guidelines.

There are three key areas of relevance to ICCA's CSR policy: the policies, activities and impact of the association itself; the scope for ICCA to influence the activities and impact of its members around the world; and advocacy and global standards issues relating to the overall impact of international meetings, which will primarily be addressed in partnership with other leading meetings industry organizations.

ICCA has consulted with the Green Meetings Industry Council to obtain advice on the future development and enhancement of the association's sustainability reporting processes, and is a Gold Partner of GMIC.

Martin Sirk  
CEO  
ICCA

### 1.2 Key impacts, risks and opportunities

As a relatively small organization employing approximately 40 employees, turning over EURO 4 million annually, and delivering most of its services electronically, the direct environmental and societal impact of ICCA's activities is not of great significance. However, in terms of ICCA's potential to influence the activities and awareness of ICCA members and other key players in the international meetings industry, ICCA's impact is far greater. It is therefore of great importance for ICCA to act as an example of good practice in all areas relating to sustainability.

Risks – the greatest strategic danger is that meetings become perceived purely as a negative contributor to carbon emissions rather than as a force for progress, and ICCA should ensure that a balanced understanding of the impact meetings is communicated. In doing so ICCA should always ensure that it acts and is seen to act as a responsible corporate citizen.

Opportunities – partnering and obtaining consultancy advice from GMIC offers ICCA significant opportunities to support members' sustainability objectives and education on these issues.

Sustainability is more than environmental impact; it relates to the total societal impact of an organization or an industry. The role of meetings in knowledge transfer, education, capacity building, problem solving, etc, has never been calculated but is clearly significant.

## 2. Organisational profile

### 2.1 ICCA, the International Congress & Convention Association

**2.2** Global leader in research, sales and marketing services relating to the international association meetings sector. Global leading trade association offering members educational and networking opportunities.

**2.3** Majority of services delivered by Head Office divisions: Membership; Research; Marketing & Sales; Events. Additional services delivered by Regional Offices for Asia-Pacific, Latin America, North America. New representative offices were opened in Africa and Middle East during 2012.

**2.4** Head Office in Amsterdam: 28 staff members from 13 different nationalities. Regional Offices in Malaysia (7 staff members); Uruguay (3 staff members); USA (2 staff members); Africa (1 representative); Middle East (1 representative).

- 2.5** Members in 89 countries; activities in all regions of the world.
- 2.6** Membership owned, not-for-profit global trade association registered in The Netherlands.
- 2.7** Specialist in international association market, assisting members in research, sales and marketing to this sector; this services delivered throughout all countries where ICCA has members, given the global nature of the market.
- 2.8** Scale of operations (end of 2012):  
42 staff.  
EURO 4.0 million turnover in 2012.  
917 members at beginning of 2012; 943 members at end of 2012.  
Approximately 11,000 regularly occurring international association meetings were identified as taking place in previous year.
- 2.9** New Regional Offices opened in September 2012 in Dubai, covering Middle East, and Johannesburg, covering Africa.

### 3. Report parameters

- 3.1** The report covers calendar year 2012.
- 3.2** This is the fifth report of this nature produced by ICCA.
- 3.3** CSR report will be produced annually.
- 3.4** Questions regarding the report should be addressed to ICCA CEO Martin Sirk, m.sirk@icca.nl.
- 3.5** Process: structure and contents originally based on ICCA Board of Directors Working Group analysis of scale of operations, significance of impact, and key issues for ICCA members.
- 3.6** The report covers the activities and policies of ICCA itself, the potential for ICCA to influence ICCA members, and advocacy potential within the wider international meetings industry.
- 3.7** The report makes no attempt to measure the full sustainability impact of the meetings industry, both positive and negative; a great deal of further research is needed to create a recognised quantitative base-line from which to measure progress.
- 3.8** The report covers all ICCA activities in all regions of the world. Offsetting and/or minimizing the carbon impact of ICCA members participating in ICCA activities is regarded as the responsibility of the members themselves rather than simply that of ICCA, and members are encouraged to take on increased personal responsibility.
- 3.9** ICCA has based the carbon offset costs of staff and Board official flights on the highest estimates calculated by major airlines for short-haul and long-haul flights.
- 3.10** ICCA has a standard Annual Report format which includes best-practice advice on how to report financial data. This information will not be repeated in the CSR report, but will be referred to wherever relevant. ICCA members have full access to both documents.
- 3.11** ICCA will report future changes to reporting processes in all future editions of the CSR report.
- 3.12** The report and all relevant supporting material can be found in the ICCA website, [www.iccaworld.com](http://www.iccaworld.com).
- 3.13** ICCA plans is signed up to the Global Reporting Initiative, and will update the format of future reports based on advice received from GRI on best practices for an operation of ICCA's size and scope.

## 4. Governance, commitments, engagement

**4.1** ICCA is governed by a Board of Directors which is made up of elected volunteer leaders drawn from each geographical region and from each industry sector. The Board advises the CEO and management team in strategy and policy, and oversees the senior management performance. All member organizations have equal governance rights, able to elect President, and their geographical and sector Board representatives. ICCA members exercise additional governance rights at the annual General Assembly, including the membership fees they pay for the forthcoming year.

**4.2** The President is a non-executive volunteer leader, elected for a two year term, and able to serve two terms. The senior executive staff member is the CEO, whose employment is on a continuous basis.

**4.3** There is no requirement for independent (ie non-member) Board members since all branches of ICCA membership are represented, with all members able to influence these representatives.

**4.4** Members can influence the direction of ICCA in a number of ways: through electing Board representatives; through voting at the General Assembly; through direct approaches to Board or senior management. ICCA is a sufficiently small organization to be able to provide direct channels to senior management for members wishing to raise important issues.

**4.5** All ICCA staff participate in a standard employee incentive programme, linked to both overall financial performance and to a range of important strategic business objectives. As a not-for-profit organization whose members fees are the primary source of revenue, ICCA believes it is essential to prioritise member benefits whilst maintaining financial discipline, rather than aiming to maximize financial surpluses. CEO remuneration and performance are scrutinized and decided by the organisation's Management & Finance Committee.

**4.6** Conflicts of interest are avoided by requiring as policy that all Board of Directors declare such potential conflicts whenever they arise during Board discussions on particular issues. All formal Board meetings have this item as the first point on the agenda.

**4.7** Board members are appointed through an open voting system rather than through selection based on any identification of technical qualifications. Additional technical expertise is brought in by ICCA to assist in strategic issues requiring specific skills.

**4.8** Statements of values, codes of conduct, sustainability principles: please see section 9.3 in the current edition of the ICCA Strategic Plan (adopted October 2008), which sets out ICCA's principles for acting as an ethical association. This includes the need to be transparent, open, non-corrupt, and to deal in a fair, equal way with staff and members, with no discrimination on the basis of gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, religion. Member companies and organisations are regarded as equal "shareholders" in ICCA.

**4.9** The Board of Directors will adopt each annual CSR report, as this body is responsible for primary oversight of the association's sustainability performance.

**4.10** The Board of Directors has the power to appoint an Advisory Group on sustainability issues to evaluate the association's and Board's sustainability performance.

**4.11** Precautionary principles: In 2012 ICCA had no process of examining whether future plans were analysed for their sustainability impacts. Current plans are not regarded as significantly changing the potential impact of ICCA on environmental or other sustainability factors.

**4.12** ICCA joined the Green Meetings Industry Council in 2007, began to become more engaged with this organization in 2008, and obtained "Gold Partner" status in 2011 in recognition of ICCA's role in communicating sustainability issues to members in regions of the world that GMIC itself is less well established. GRI sign-up took place in 2009.

**4.13** ICCA engages with a number of globally important "umbrella organizations", including CIC; JMIC; UNWTO; GMIC. These are conduits for agreeing and communicating global standards with regard to meetings industry sustainability issues.

**4.14** Stakeholders: ICCA's primary stakeholders are its members, whose competitive position is the first priority for the association. Also important are the international association meetings community, whose meetings make up the centrally important ICCA database, and with whom ICCA builds a continuous long-term relationship on behalf of its members. Finally, ICCA engages with the broader international meetings industry community, and is trusted as a key leader of the industry.

**4.15** Stakeholders are identified through the regular strategic planning process.

**4.16** ICCA engages with its members in multiple ways: formally through the governance process (eg General Assembly); more regularly and less formally through surveys; participation in activities and events; direct communication. International association meeting planners through database and educational resources. Wider meetings industry through JMIC and CIC, and through high-profile PR positioning.

**4.17** Members have indicated increasing concerns relating to sustainability issues, which have so far been addressed by providing educational and discussion forum opportunities to discuss these issues at ICCA events. Senior representatives from GMIC led sustainability educational sessions at ICCA Congresses in Leipzig 2011 and Puerto Rico 2012. Members are particularly concerned with ensuring that the positive impacts of meetings are balanced against negative impacts, whilst at the same time striving to reduce the carbon impact across our industry.

## 5. Performance issues

### 5.1 General

ICCA is a relatively small organization with minimal environmental impact through its primary activities, but as a meetings industry leader all efforts are made to follow best practices, to influence members and other meetings industry players.

### 5.2 Office practices

**Location** – new Head Office deliberately chosen in 2007 to be close to major public transport intersection; incentives in place to encourage staff to use public transport; but car parking still supplied to those who do not live close to public transport or who are supplied with company cars (4 executives).

**Lighting** – motion sensors are located in all departments so that only occupied areas are lit.

**Heating** – building-wide system but with area thermostats to ensure minimal wastage of heat or cooling.

**Recycling** – all waste paper and glass is recycled; the office building has no provision for recycling plastic, but only minimal amounts of plastic are used by ICCA. Amsterdam has a policy of central separation of plastic from other waste, rather than requiring separation by businesses or residents.

**Postage** – only materials regarded as essential, such as the membership directory, are physically posted; policy is that materials should be provided electronically unless there is a clear business case for printing.

When printing brochures and other materials, sustainable forest sourced paper or recycled paper is selected, along with non-toxic inks, using printers and suppliers who have signed up to sustainable practices.

Letterhead and envelopes use paper from sustainable forest sources.

ICCA has allocated a total of EURO 1,448 in the 2012 budget towards offsetting the carbon impact of day-to-day operations.

### 5.3 ICCA events

ICCA now includes CSR/Environment as one of its decision-making criteria for where major events take place. Members bidding to host one of these events need to provide information on their policies, initiatives, and plans, and should also highlight challenges that ICCA can help to address were the congress to take place in that location.

ICCA has reduced the amount of printed material that is distributed at the Congress and other events, but continues to print material which it regards as essential to the effective organization or communication of the event – so for example the 2012 Congress still had a printed final programme (reduced size, incorporating note paper), but previously printed materials have been replaced by online systems, and sponsors are not allowed to distribute brochures to delegates. It is now standard policy that no bags are provided to delegates.

ICCA introduces new environmental initiatives each year, including the meetings App Spotme to replace numerous paper processes including evaluation forms; online educational content instead of handouts; recyclable and/or biodegradable materials such as badges, bags and lanyards. "Green" issues are routinely included in educational programmes, enabling members to exchange information and ideas. Each year the Congress supports a local charity, donating money to, for example, an orphanage or children's hospital.

In 2012, delegates and ICCA donated just over US\$13,000 to support poor and disadvantaged children to attend the Puerto Rico music school, and the school's outreach programme into disadvantaged regions of the community.

#### **5.4 ICCA travel offsets**

Staff air travel and travel by Board members attending ICCA events in 2012 have been offset at a cost of EURO 1,552. This is based on paying slightly more than the most expensive offset-calculations by major airlines for long-haul and short-haul flights (eg Amsterdam to North America West Coast or Asia ranged between EURO 10.00 and 16.00 and Amsterdam to European destinations ranged from below EURO 1.00 to EURO 1.80). Delegates attending ICCA events are encouraged to take personal responsibility for offsetting their own carbon travel impacts.

75 long-haul flights @ EURO 18.00 = EURO 1,350.00

101 short-haul flights @ EURO 2.00 = EURO 202.00

#### **5.5 Carbon offsets – CSR charity donation**

The total EURO 3,000 cost of carbon offset-equivalents for 2012 activities have been set aside for a suitable CSR project. The ICCA Board agreed to donate via Meetings Industry Meeting Needs (a UK based charity involving a number of ICCA members) towards a sustainability related project in Africa. The donation will support a Food Gardens for AIDS orphans project being implemented by Starfish Greathearts Foundation, details of which are set out below:

The donation would go towards the implementation of a project which will aim to promote sustainable food production in the rural community of KwaNgcolosi, situated in the KwaZulu-Natal province, the province with the highest rate of HIV/AIDS and the highest prevalence of orphans. The project will see the installation of 15 food gardens over the allotted time of 3 years, aiming to establish 5 gardens each year, and the grant will make a significant contribution towards funding the project. The cost for the implementation of one food garden is approximately EURO 2,500, including all tools, materials and training community champions and the vegetable garden will provide the equivalent of 10,980 meals for the children and community. Therefore, the donation would be a vital support for this project. This garden project can only be sustainable if its beneficiaries are able to care for it, eat from it and re-plant it without relying on additional guidance and funding.

This form of gardening is a simple, cost effective and convenient means to grow vegetables, herbs, and flowers from seed and aimed at individuals and groups who might not have the ability to successfully carry out the often complicated task of sowing seeds. The seed strips are pre-fertilised and planting instructions are printed on each strip in seven official languages and this approach focuses on skills transfer and sustainable development. This community garden will be the first of its kind for the communities we support, and through their community champions, both pre and post implementation training will be done at the site. This sustainable and simple seed strip provides quick and long-lasting food growth to the most needy of communities. Starfish Greathearts Foundation takes a holistic approach to developing nutrition and education, by involving children in the building of the garden, making it sustainable, and empowering the whole community. This ground breaking project will be closely monitored by Starfish and it takes place in five consecutive phases: Planning, Training and Pre-Implementation Site Preparation, Implementation, Support Revisits and Monitoring, Evaluation and Reports.

#### **5.6 ICCA member initiatives and issues**

Member initiatives were showcased at a session during 2012 Congress in Puerto Rico; the major "Green Transport" project from the 2011 Congress in Leipzig was extensively promoted at meetings industry events throughout 2012.

#### **5.7 Meetings industry-wide issues**

ICCA maintained Board of Director level contact with GMIC to ensure that any new initiatives were promoted to ICCA members.