

Does Australia need a Minister for Cities?

ASBEC says bold leadership is required to steer Australia's urban management policy.

To ensure Australia meets its urban challenges the nation needs both a federal minister and department for cities and urban development.

So says the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC), which made the call at the recent Green Cities conference.

ASBEC is a collective of leading industry organisations, including AIRAH, committed to a sustainable built environment in Australia.

"We have developed this call to action to highlight the urgent need for bold leadership and a streamlined, coordinated approach to urban management policy," says ASBEC president Tom Roper.

"An integrated and collaborative approach is mandatory if we are to foster a culture of innovation and excellence, and ensure our cities are liveable, affordable and sustainable."

Among ASBEC's list of urgent actions are a call for a Cities and Urban Development NGO Roundtable to ensure business and community groups have a direct voice to government on issues involving our cities. ■



Shane Carmichael, M.AIRAH, is the New South Wales and ACT state manager for Air Change. He's also the 2010 winner of the AIRAH Future Leader Award and a member of AIRAH's New South Wales state division committee.

Specialty

As New South Wales and ACT state manager, it's my responsibility to manage and increase sales in these regions.

Passions

I have been kite boarding for over a year now, and I can't get enough of it.

Challenges

Finding spare time to do the things I'm passionate about.

Professional development

I'm currently studying an MBA at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Inspiring words

Frank Herbert's "Litany Against Fear".

Favourite destination

Hinundayan, a tiny beachside village in the Philippines where my mum is from. Crystal clear water, white sandy beaches and 50 cents a beer - it's like paradise.

What are you reading?

I read anything I can get my hands on. At the moment I'm up to the fifth book out of seven of a painfully bad sci-fi series I bought on special. It seems a waste not to finish it now.

Favourite website

www.seabreeze.com.au

Future plans

I'd like to build on the profile of Air Change technology in the market. We are a fast-expanding company, and I look forward to being part of that growth. ■

New initiative for US AC

A design specification for commercial air conditioners jointly developed by government and industry partners aims to reduce costs to American businesses and to improve economic competitiveness.

The US Department of Energy (DOE) is joining with industry partners to release a new design specification for 10-tonne capacity commercial air conditioners, also known as rooftop units (RTUs).

The new specification is a result of the DOE's efforts, working with the private sector, to develop energy-saving products.

The program is one of a number of energy efficiency initiatives to have taken place under the direction of US Secretary Of Energy Dr Steven Chu.

"When built according to the criteria of the new specifications, the high-efficiency rooftop units are expected to reduce energy use by as much as 50 to 60 per cent compared to the current ASHRAE 90.1-2010 standard, depending on location and facility type," the DOE says.

To encourage deployment of the best-in-class RTUs, DOE national laboratories will provide technical assistance to manufacturers to design, construct, measure and test new units produced to the specification.



Steven Chu

"Nationwide, if all the 10-tonne commercial units sold in a given year were built to this specification, businesses could save about US\$50 million each year in energy costs," the DOE says. "These units are a prime candidate for specifications because packaged unit air conditioners - including RTUs - account for more than 50 per cent of the energy used for cooling conditioned commercial floor space."

The design was developed in conjunction with the Commercial Building Energy Alliances (CBEAs), a group of US companies with vast commercial real estate holdings that includes several major retailers.

For more information, go to www.commercialbuildings.energy.gov/alliances ■