

## Energy Efficiency Training Program – Case study



### Pacific Restaurant Group

## Energy efficiency on the menu

An energy efficient dining experience is now on the menu for patrons of the famous Kingsleys Steak & Crabhouse and Chophouse restaurants. Energy efficiency training has been an eye-opener for staff at the four restaurants located in Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra. This program, specific to the restaurant and catering industry, is the first of its kind in Australia and was developed by the Pacific Restaurant Group.

Belinda Clarke, Training and Development Manager Pacific Restaurant Group, said all participants were receptive to the training.

'Many staff already had the desire and the motivation to increase energy efficiency but the training gave them the knowledge they needed to make changes in their workplaces,' Mrs Clarke said.

'Some staff were interested in the environmental benefits of increased energy efficiency, others could see the economic benefit,' Mrs Clarke said.

The Pacific Restaurant Group partnered with Ecotraining Australia Pty Ltd in the Energy Efficiency Training Program, a joint initiative between the Office of Environment and Heritage and Department of Education and Communities in New South Wales.

Restaurants use a lot of energy, both electricity and gas so an energy efficiency assessment was undertaken in the kitchen

#### In brief

The Destination NSW – A Sustainable Tourism Industry for the Future course was developed by the Pacific Restaurant Group in partnership with Ecotraining Australia (now Untamed Group Services). Training was delivered to 35 managers, executive chefs, supervisors, bar and restaurant managers from the Sydney restaurants, Kingsleys Steak & Crabhouse and Chophouse.

The training was so successful because it was:

- integrated with an energy efficiency assessment of the restaurants, providing practical information to participants to show them how they could improve their energy use
- customised specifically for restaurant staff, making the training interesting and relevant
- delivered on site, making it easy to attend
- designed utilising expert energy information from the Food Service Technology Centre, California, USA (information not readily available in Australia) and customised for the Australian market.

Outcomes include:

- electricity and gas savings of up to 12 per cent
- the introduction of a start up and shut down schedule covering all kitchen appliances, lights and air-conditioning in each restaurant
- switching to low flow heads on the kitchen taps saving many litres of water a day.



- ▶ and front of house areas. Mrs Clarke, who also participated in the training program, said the assessment made the training directly relevant to their restaurants and their staff.

'Many of our staff thought their work environment was already as energy efficient as it could be, but the assessment opened their eyes to the ways they could improve,' Mrs Clarke said.

'When shown photos of fridge and oven doors left open and equipment turned on hours before it needed to be, they agreed there was room for improvement.'

One of the most important changes arising from the training program has been the start-up and shut-down schedule now in place for each restaurant. This schedule covers all kitchen appliances as well as lights and air-conditioning and indicates when staff should switch them on and off.

'Often equipment didn't need to be turned on as early as it was – turning it on a few hours later saved energy but didn't affect the quality of the food produced.'

'We also switched to low flow heads on the kitchen taps which save many litres of water a day but are still just as effective at washing dishes.'

Thirty-five staff from the Pacific Restaurant Group participated in the training, including chefs, restaurant managers, general managers and bar supervisors from the three Kingsleys Steak & Crabhouse and Chophouse restaurants. Staff from human resources, training and development, operations and the company's director also took part in the training.

Electricity and gas savings of up to 12 per cent are emerging from the restaurants that piloted the training. Pacific Restaurant Group will conduct a full analysis of their energy use and their goal is a 15 per cent reduction in energy costs at all their venues. Savings are reported to staff so they can see the benefits of changes in practices.

'We have measurable results which are shown to staff each month so they can see that the changes they've made are actually making a difference,' Mrs Clarke said.

Throughout the process it has been important to ensure that an increase in energy efficiency doesn't mean a decrease in the quality of customer service.

'We were able to work out a balance between energy efficiency and what our chefs needed to do to get their job done,' Mrs Clarke said.

Many changes have already been made as a result of the training program and energy efficiency is expected to become a hotly contested competition between individual restaurants in the Pacific Restaurant Group.



### Your next step

To find out more about the Energy Efficiency Training Program contact the team:

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