



Standard Specification for Evaluation and Selection of Venues for Environmentally Sustainable Meetings, Events, Trade Shows, and Conferences¹

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INTRODUCTION

This specification offers a way to address environmental sustainability in the meeting and event industry. It is a tool for event planners and suppliers to understand the attributes of an environmentally sustainable event. The goal in developing this specification is to establish common benchmarks for environmental performance in events for both planner and supplier sectors. This specification considers the creation of an environmentally sustainable event to be a partnership between planners and their suppliers. Each plays a critical role in the effort.

In this specification, options are addressed for minimizing the environmental impact of face-to-face events. The approach of this specification is to focus on measurable outcomes and policies for planners and suppliers. This maximizes the ability of businesses to select the methods best tailored to their needs to achieve benchmarks and measurable outcomes.

1. Scope

1.1 This specification delineates procedural requirements for venue selection for meetings, events, trade shows, or conferences (hereafter, referred to as *events*). Venue selection is the practice of researching, evaluating and choosing the facility for an event. Site selection is a core activity to plan an event and bring it to fruition.

1.2 This specification has two categories: planner and supplier:

1.2.1 In the planner category, criteria are identified related to sustainability that are considered in venue selection by planners.

1.2.2 In the supplier category, criteria are listed for venue professionals.

1.3 There are nine specifications covering the following areas of event planning: destination selection, accommodations, food and beverage, audio visual, onsite offices, communication and marketing materials, transportation, exhibits, and venues. Within each specification

are eight categories' criteria: staff management policy, communications, waste management, energy, air quality, water, procurement, and community partners. Each category is further split into four progressive levels of achievement. Information within each specification is divided as follows: Main Body—Scope, Referenced Documents, Terminology, Planner Requirements for Level 1, Supplier Requirements for Level 1, and Keywords; Annexes—Planner Requirements for Levels 2 – 4 and Supplier Requirements for Levels 2 – 4.

1.4 All areas of performance specified under this specification may not be relevant for each event, or for each facility or provider of event services. In some cases, an event planner would use this specification in conjunction with other specifications (for example, Specifications E2741, E2741) or this specification may be used individually. In other words, elements of an event may be separated out and considered solely, or added together and considered as a unit (for example, venues used individually versus transportation, accommodations, and destination selection used in conjunction). Furthermore, the specification applies separately to each supplier for an event. This means if multiple suppliers are used within the context of a single specification, each supplier must individually meet the supplier requirements. To be considered an environmentally sustainable event at Level 1, all areas applicable to that event shall be achieved.

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1.5 If higher levels are achieved in some sections, the event can only be considered environmentally sustainable at the lowest level achieved.

1.6 The use of levels within this specification recognizes the path to environmentally sustainable events is a multi-stage effort. The idea behind the levels is to provide a coherent baseline for measuring environmental performance, while being flexible enough to adapt to the needs of more advanced planners and establish a performance path that encourages further environmental performance improvement. In addition, the evolution of products and services to support events is expected allowing additional advancements and underscoring the dynamic nature of environmental sustainability. This specification primarily focuses on environmental sustainability, while some aspects of economic and social sustainability are included recognizing the complete path toward overall sustainability.

1.7 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.8 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D3960 Practice for Determining Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Content of Paints and Related Coatings

E2114 Terminology for Sustainability Relative to the Performance of Buildings

E2741 Specification for Evaluation and Selection of Destinations for Environmentally Sustainable Meetings, Events, Trade Shows, and Conferences

E2741 Specification for Evaluation and Selection of Destinations for Environmentally Sustainable Meetings, Events, Trade Shows, and Conferences

2.2 ASHRAE Documents:³

ASHRAE Guideline 0 The Commissioning Process

2.3 ISO Standards:⁴

ISO 14040 Environmental Management—Life Cycle Assessment—Principles and Framework

2.4 Federal Statutes:⁵

Federal Hazardous Substances Act Labeling and Banning Requirements for Chemicals and Other Hazardous

Substances, 15 U.S.C. § 1261 and 16 C.F.R. Part 1500
U.S. Clean Air Act

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *alternative fuel, n*—a fuel that is substantially nonpetroleum based conventional liquids (for example, non-gasoline or non-diesel), yields substantial energy security benefits, and offers substantial environmental benefits.

3.1.1.1 *Discussion*—These fuels can include: pure methanol, ethanol, and other alcohols; blends of 68 % or more of alcohols with gasoline; natural gas and liquid fuels domestically produced from natural gas; liquefied petroleum gas (propane); hydrogen; electricity; biodiesel; fuels, other than alcohol, derived from biological materials; and P-Series fuels.

3.1.2 *biodegradable, adj*—capable of decomposing under natural conditions into elements found in nature. **E2114**

3.1.3 *commissioning, n*—a quality-oriented process for achieving, verifying, and documenting that the performance of facilities, systems, and assemblies meets defined objectives and criteria. **ASHRAE Guideline 0**

3.1.3.1 *Discussion*—Commissioning is an "umbrella" process for all the planning, delivery, verification, and managing risks to critical functions performed in, or by, facilities. Commissioning uncovers deficiencies in design or installation using peer review and field verification. Commissioning also accomplishes higher energy efficiency, environmental health, and occupant safety and improves indoor air quality. Commissioning is a quality assurance-based process that delivers preventive and predictive maintenance plans, tailored operating manuals, and training procedures. Essentially, the commissioning process formalizes review and integration of all project expectations during planning, design, construction, and occupancy phases by inspection and functional performance testing, and oversight of operator training and record documentation.

3.1.4 *compostable, adj*—capable of undergoing biological decomposition in a compost site as part of an available program where facilities exist, such that the material breaks down into carbon dioxide, water, inorganic compounds, and biomass, at a rate appropriate for such program.

3.1.5 *convention and visitors' bureau (CVB), n*—convention and visitor bureaus are not-for-profit organizations charged with representing a specific destination and helping the long-term development of communities through a travel and tourism strategy.

3.1.5.1 *Discussion*—Convention and visitor bureaus are usually membership organizations bringing together businesses that rely on tourism and events for revenue.

3.1.6 *corporate social responsibility (CSR), n*—a policy that functions as self-regulating mechanism whereby the organization monitors and ensures its support of legal and ethical standards, and international norms addressing activities affecting the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders, and all other members of the public sphere.

3.1.6.1 *Discussion*—CSR is the deliberate inclusion of public interest into corporate decision-making and the honoring of the 'triple bottom line:' People Planet, **Documents**

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ Available from American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers, Inc. (ASHRAE), 1791 Tullie Circle, NE, Atlanta, GA 30329, <http://www.ashrae.org>.

⁴ Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 1, ch. de la Voie-Creuse, CP 56, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, <http://www.iso.org>.

⁵ Available from U.S. Government Printing Office Superintendent of Documents, 732 N. Capitol St., NW, Mail Stop: SDE, Washington, DC 20401, <http://www.access.gpo.gov>.

as corporate responsibility, corporate citizenship, responsible business, sustainable responsible business (SRB), or corporate social performance, is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model.

3.1.7 *diversion rate, n*—the rate or percentage of waste materials diverted from traditional disposal such as landfills or incineration to be recycled, composted, or reused.

3.1.8 *environmental management system, n*—a set of processes and practices that enables an organization to reduce its environmental impacts and increase its operating efficiency.

3.1.9 *environmentally preferable products, n*—products or services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose.

3.1.9.1 *Discussion*—This comparison applies to raw materials, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, use, reuse, operation, maintenance, and disposal. These products may possess biodegradable, organic, reusable, recycled, or recyclable attributes.

3.1.10 *environmentally sustainable, adj*—environmental focus on components, functions and systems that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.1.11 *exhibitor, n*—an exhibitor is someone who organizes an exhibit for others to see.

3.1.12 *exhibitor appointed contractor (EAC), n*—a contractor hired by an exhibitor to perform trade show services independently of show management appointed contractors. (Also called *independent contractor*.)

3.1.13 *hazardous air pollutants (HAPs), n*—toxic air pollutants as identified in Title III of the Clean Air Act.

U.S. Clean Air Act

3.1.14 *hazardous materials, n*—any material or combination of materials that because of their quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics poses an unreasonable risk to the health and safety of persons or the environment, or both.

3.1.14.1 *Discussion*—Hazardous materials may require special handling during storage, manufacture, processing, packaging, use, disposal, or transportation due to one or more of the following characteristics: poisonous, explosive, chemically active, corrosive, toxic, or radioactive.

3.1.15 *high-efficiency fixtures, n*—plumbing fixtures (faucets, toilets, urinals and showerheads) that meet the following minimum performance characteristics:

3.1.15.1 *Lavatory Faucet*—The maximum flow rate shall not exceed 1.5 gal (5.6 L) per minute (gpm).

3.1.15.2 *Single Flush Toilets*—The effective flush volume shall not exceed 1.28 gal (4.8 L).

3.1.15.3 *Dual Flush Toilets*—The effective flush volume shall not exceed 1.28 gal (4.8 L). The effective flush volume is defined as the composite, average flush volume of two reduced flushes and one full flush.

3.1.15.4 *Urinal*—Flushing urinals shall use no more than 0.5 gal (1.8 L) per flush (gpf) and comply with existing standards for flushing urinals.

3.1.15.5 *Showerheads*—The maximum flow rate shall not use more than 2.0 gal (7.5 L) per minute (gpm).

3.1.16 *hybrid vehicle, n or adj*—vehicles which use a mixture of more than one power source, such as electric and petroleum.

3.1.16.1 *Discussion*—Hybrid-electric vehicles (HEVs) combine the benefits of internal combustion engines and electric motors and can be configured to obtain different objectives, such as improved fuel economy, increased power, or additional auxiliary power for electronic devices and power tools.

3.1.17 *late-model vehicle, n*—a model year 2007 heavy truck or later.

3.1.18 *life-cycle assessment (LCA), n*—a method of evaluating a product by reviewing the ecological impact over the life of the product.

3.1.18.1 *Discussion*—At each stage, the product and its components are evaluated based upon materials and energy consumed, and the pollution and waste produced. Life stages include extraction of raw materials, processing and fabrication, transportation, installation, use and maintenance, and reuse/recycling/disposal. ISO 14040 defines LCA as the compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout its life cycle.

E2114

3.1.19 *local, adj*—relating to or applicable to a city or town or district rather than a larger area.

3.1.19.1 *Discussion*—The exact distance for purposes of sourcing goods (including food and beverage), services, and personnel will be determined by the planner or supplier, or both, and be based upon the event location adjusting for location size and season. No standard definition exists to define local, inherent in this practice is the philosophy to use sources geographically proximate to the event and be practical given wide dispersion of services and products across geographic areas.

3.1.20 *no-idling policy, n*—a written statement that sets limits on the maximum idling time for engines or motors of all vehicles.

3.1.21 *natural fiber, n*—naturally-occurring materials from plants and animals.

3.1.22 *planner, n*—person whose job it is to oversee and arrange every aspect of an event; an employee or hired ad hoc by large companies, professional associations, or trade associations to plan, organize, implement, and control events, conventions, and other events.

3.1.22.1 *Discussion*—Planners may include professionals who work for government, association, corporate, or independent agencies. The planner is the buyer of event services.

3.1.23 *post-consumer, adj*—refers to materials that are reclaimed from products that have already served their intended end-use as consumer items.

3.1.23.1 *Discussion*—Waste from industrial processes are not considered post-consumer. Post-consumer materials are a subset of recovered materials.



Documents

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3.1.24 *pre-consumer material*, *adj*—refers to material that are reclaimed from manufacturing and other industrial processes and products which have not served their intended end-use as a consumer item. **E2114**

3.1.24.1 *Discussion*—Pre-consumer materials include: culls, trimmed materials, print overruns, overissue publications, and obsolete inventories.

3.1.25 *recovered materials*, *n*—waste material and by-products which have been recovered or diverted from the waste stream, but such term does not include those materials and by-products generated from, and commonly used within, an original manufacturer process. **E2114**

3.1.26 *recycle*, *v*—recovering or reprocessing materials for use in the form of raw materials in the manufacture of new products other than fuel for producing heat or power by combustion. **E2114**

3.1.26.1 *Discussion*—The use of the word recycle used in this specification applies to planners and their suppliers which provide event products and services. Recycling, as defined, does not extend to the activities of the suppliers' vendors or suppliers.

3.1.27 *recycled content products*, *n*—products that contain pre-consumer or post-consumer materials as all or part of their feedstock. **E2114**

3.1.27.1 *Discussion*—Recycled-content products may contain some pre-consumer waste, some post-consumer waste or both. A product does not have to contain 100 % recovered materials to be considered "recycled," but clearly the higher the percentage of recycled content, the greater the amount of waste that is diverted from disposal.

3.1.28 *reduced toxic materials*, *n*—products or services that have lesser or reduced toxicity levels when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose.

3.1.28.1 *Discussion*—This comparison applies to raw materials, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, use, reuse, operation, maintenance, and disposal. Environmentally preferred products will have non-toxic, biodegradable, organic, reusable, recycled, or recyclable attributes.

3.1.29 *request for proposal (RFP)*, *n*—an invitation for suppliers, often through a bidding process, to submit a proposal on a specific commodity or service.

3.1.30 *renewable energy*, *n*—energy obtained from renewable or perpetual resources, including wind, solar, ocean

(including tidal, wave, current, and thermal), geothermal, biomass, and hydroelectric energy resources. **E2114**

3.1.30.1 *Discussion*—Also called renewable power. Green power is a subset of renewable energy (see Fig. 1) and represents those renewable energy resources and technologies that provide the highest environmental benefit. EPA defines green power as electricity produced from solar, wind, geothermal, biogas, biomass, and low-impact small hydroelectric sources. Customers often buy green power for avoided environmental impacts and its greenhouse gas reduction benefits. Green power sources produce electricity with an environmental profile superior to conventional power technologies and produce no anthropogenic (human caused) greenhouse gas emissions.

3.1.31 *renewable materials*, *n*—substances derived from a living tree, plant, animal, or ecosystem that has the ability to regenerate itself.

3.1.32 *stakeholder*, *n*—individuals, organizations or other entities that directly affect or are directly affected by the planning and execution of a specific event.

3.1.32.1 *Discussion*—Stakeholders in the event industry include but are not limited to: event organizer, event planner, surrounding community, convention and visitors bureau, labor unions, news media, government, attendees, hotels, airlines, maintenance personnel, material handlers, local transportation companies and warehouses, florists, photographers, security companies, medical facilities, registration companies, restaurants, gas stations, recycling facilities, utility companies, caterers, audio visual providers, printers, ad specialty brokers, laundries, grocery stores, farmers, fisheries, fisherman, pharmacies, and bakeries.

3.1.33 *sustainable development*, *n*—development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. **E2114**

3.1.34 *sustainable products*, *n*—products, which in addition to environmental attributes, take into account social and economic impacts of the product.

3.1.35 *sustainability*, *n*—the maintenance of environmental, economic, and social components, functions, and systems for future generations. **E2114**

3.1.36 *toxic*, *adj*—any substance that is likely to produce personal injury or illness to humans when it is inhaled,

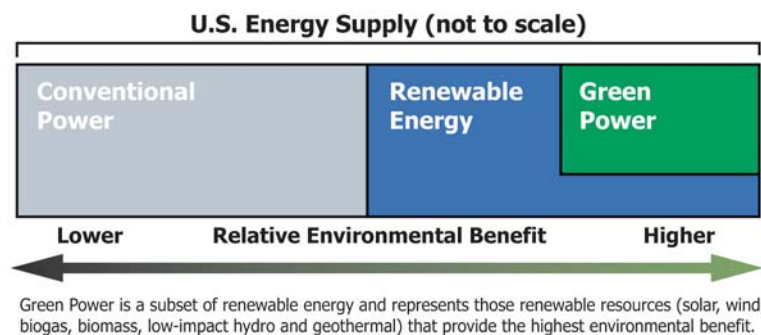


FIG. 1 Graph 1