

Umow Lai

3 May 2010

Umow Lai has committed to the journey of becoming a responsible and sustainable business by registering on the Good Business Register.

The Good Business Register has been created to assist businesses of all sizes to communicate their sustainability credentials in the supply chain and to key stakeholders including customers, investors, employees and the community.

Our business values responsible business practices. We care about: At Umow Lai, environmental sustainability is ingrained in everything we do. Forty-seven of our consultants are Green Star Accredited Professionals, including Directors of the firm. Our team includes two LEED Accredited Professionals, one Green Star Assessor and six NABERS Accredited Assessors.

The firm has been involved in a number of landmark building projects certified through the Green Star and NABERS rating schemes.

Through regular overseas study tours we learn about world's best practice and enhance our knowledge of emerging technologies and advanced design techniques, thus ensuring the most up-to-date design principles are implemented on our projects. Our engineers regularly present at forums and seminars and lecture for Engineering / Sustainability courses at a number of Universities.

About us

Umow Lai, a multi-disciplinary building services engineering and sustainability consultancy, provides high quality, innovative, sustainable and cost-effective design solutions to the Australian and international markets.

Founded in Melbourne in 1991 by George Umow and Dominic Lai, Umow Lai employs over 160 professional engineers and support staff in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

The firm provides planning, design and documentation and contract administration consulting services for building projects in the education, health, aged care and other social infrastructure sectors.

This includes over 200 projects with Telstra, with whom the firm has a long standing relationship with.

About my business

Awards & Recognition

At Umow Lai, we practice what we preach. Our tenancy in South Yarra was the first in Victoria, and amongst the first two in Australia, to achieve a 6 Star Green Star Office Interiors v1.1 Certified Rating, which represents World Leader in environmentally sustainable design and construction.

There are currently only three projects in Australia that have achieved the 6 Star interiors rating. Umow Lai has worked on two of the three, with the second project being Fujitsu Australia's tenancy at 825 Bourke Street, Docklands.

Umow Lai has worked on numerous award-winning projects including the multi-award winning Melbourne Recital Centre & MTC Theatre project, Hume City Council Offices, St John of God Hospital Berwick and the Automotive Centre of Excellence at Kangan Batman TAFE Docklands (Stage 1).

Principle 1: Financial sustainability

Risk Management

It is the objective of Umow Lai to provide an environment in which team members can feel safe and secure. A security policy and procedures have been developed to prevent disruption to the working environment as a result of theft of or malicious damage to facilities, equipment, information or data, and reduce the risk of injury or death resulting from attack, theft, or accidental misuse of equipment or material by unauthorised people.

Umow Lai takes the security of employees and buildings very seriously and will not hesitate to involve legal authorities where security is threatened or attempted to be threatened.

Principle 2: Workplace

Workplace Rights

Umow Lai is committed to equal opportunity programs and outcomes for women as part of our focus on building a more diverse and inclusive culture. This relates to recruitment, promotion and transfer, training and staff development and conditions of service.

Training & Development

To achieve excellence, it is Umow Lai's policy to encourage and support staff members to improve their capability through continuous professional training. In particular, all engineering staff are required to acquire professional training as an on-going requirement by Engineers Australia and The Victorian Building Commission. A minimum of 50 hours is required for each year. Recording of professional development activities is the responsibility of the individual.

Umow Lai maintains a Continuous Professional Development and Technology Research program that includes:

- * Further tertiary education
- * Specialised courses
- * Professional seminars
- * In-house training
- * Overseas study tours

Principle 4: Stakeholders and Community

Stakeholders Identification

Umow Lai's key stakeholders are our employees, clients, managers, government departments, local community and financial institutions that provide funding.

Being a consultancy we are highly reliant on the expertise and experience of our people, thus they are our largest stakeholder.

Stakeholder Engagement

Umow Lai regularly communicates with its stakeholders through face to face meetings, telephone, newsletters, email blasts, website, brochures and seminars.

Feedback is encouraged, with client satisfaction surveys sent at the completion of a project or at a major milestone. Additionally, surveys are sent to all guests that attend our educational breakfast seminars.

Principle 5: Environment

Environmental Impacts

Umow Lai's Melbourne office was the first in Victoria to achieve 6 Star Green Star - Office Interiors v1.1, which represents world leader in environmentally sustainable design and construction.

The tenancy, which has delivered a 13 per cent improvement in productivity, incorporates a number of innovative design features and cutting-edge building services technologies. These technologies include:

- * Bio-filtration walls
- * Phase change material
- * Efficient, low flush taps, showers, toilet pans, urinals to reduce water consumption
- * Energy Recovery Ventilators
- * Innovative lighting design and control systems
- * Openable windows
- * Access to large balconies
- * Metering system that continuously records and provides feedback
- * Careful selection of materials with low VOC and formaldehyde content
- * Reuse of existing workstations, storage cabinets, tables and chairs
- * Centrally located segregated waste bins on each floor for recyclables and general waste and paper recycling bins at each desk
- * 93% of waste materials recycled during construction
- * Secure bicycle storage facility, along with showers and change facilities for staff

Measure & Monitor

Umow Lai's tenancy has a metering system that continuously records and provides feedback.

In addition, the firm undertook post occupancy testing and evaluation, which included:

- *13% overall improvement in office productivity. The occupant productivity study was conducted by an

independent consultant comparing the old and new accommodation using actual performance data

- * Full pre and post occupancy staff surveys carried out demonstrates a strong increase in satisfaction for work space and indoor environmental quality for the new fitout
- * Detailed on site scientific testing performed to measure indoor air quality, thermal comfort, lighting quality and noise for the old and new fitouts, showing significant improvements

Environmental Training

Forty-seven of our consultants have successfully passed the Green Building Council of Australia Green Star Accredited Professionals exam, including directors of the firm.

The exam tests participants' comprehension and application of Green Star, as well their understanding of green building practices in Australia.

Contact details

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