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CBRE commits to Earth Hour

Sydney, NSW (28 March 2008)

CB Richard Ellis has thrown its weight behind this year's expanded Earth Hour campaign.

More than 150 CBRE-managed buildings Australia and New Zealand will participate in this weekend's World Wildlife Fund initiative to help combat climate change.

At 8 pm on Saturday, March 29, CBRE-managed buildings in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra, Perth, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Christchurch will plunge into darkness. This year, CBRE alone will save approximately 12.5 tonnes of CO₂, the equivalent of taking 24,000 cars off the road.

Earth Hour was launched in Sydney last year, when an estimated 2 million Sydneysiders and 2,200 business turned off their power for an hour to send an international message to take action against global warming.

For that hour, the city's energy consumption dropped by 10.2% - an emissions reduction equivalent to taking 48,000 cars off the road for one year. CBRE had 59 buildings involved in Sydney, North Sydney and Parramatta.

This year the campaign has been expanded to more than 20 cities around the world, including Chicago, Dublin, Tel Aviv and Copenhagen.

In Australia and New Zealand, the campaign will involve CBRE-managed landmark towers such as 140 William Street in Melbourne; Times Square in Canberra; 363 George Street, 1 O'Connell Street and the Australian Stock Exchange's Bridge Street headquarters in Sydney; 1 King William Street in Adelaide; the Riparian and 127 Creek Street in Brisbane and virtually all of Perth's landmark buildings, including BankWest Tower, QV1, Central Park and Westralia Square.

CBRE Regional Director Sam Cuccurullo said the firm's support for Earth Hour was in line with its global initiative to become carbon neutral by 2010 and to actively work with energy efficiency programs at the 158 million square metres of space the group manages around the world (7.6 million square metres of that in Australia.)

While 151 CBRE-managed buildings had committed to turn off the power on March 29, the participating rate was likely to be significantly higher.

"Of the 1750 properties CBRE manage in Australia and New Zealand, many will have their lights off on March 29 but may not have registered for the cause - mainly office, retail and industrial properties," Mr Cuccurullo said.

CBRE environmental advisor, John Goddard said the savings from lighting alone from the 151 CBRE buildings participating translated into a power saving for the hour of about 10 mW, or almost 10 tonnes of CO₂ going into the atmosphere.

"Buildings are a major cause of carbon emissions and the potential for energy savings within them is huge and relatively easy as we will see during Earth Hour," Mr Goddard said.

Energy use in older buildings has not been very efficient until now, but we are starting to take huge strides.

Mr Goddard said the likelihood of huge energy cost increases and a carbon tax had increased the focus on energy saving initiatives among building owners and managers.

"To achieve deep cuts in carbon emissions, the property industry will also need encouragement from government by way of incentives to make the investment in energy saving programs more financially attractive and happen faster," Mr Goddard said.

About CB Richard Ellis

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