



PEB Exchange, Programme on Educational Building 2003/02

New South Wales School
Design Projects

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should also prepare students for this by teaching some basic reflexes such as not behaving erratically, and controlling panic by avoiding two mistakes: overreacting and underreacting. As part of the work of its major hazards commission, and in partnership with senior officials in the ministries of Education and the Environment, the *Observatoire* does more than just draw up documentation. It identifies and promotes local experiments that merit the attention of the educational community. Finally, much of its work focuses on training or awareness campaigns for all those with an interest in safety.

Safety is possibly the issue that most requires efficient co-operation from every section of the educational community. Arrangements for emergencies, including major hazards, must involve the supervisory authority, the mayor and the educational community as a whole, under the responsibility of the principal; and they cannot be improvised. The *Observatoire's* ongoing role is to provide back-up in the form of diagnoses, proposals and methodological tools. It is by involving stakeholders in an approach based on joint observation and active risk prevention that all those concerned can join forces in the drive to promote safety.

To find out more, contact:

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NEW SOUTH WALES SCHOOL DESIGN PROJECTS

Australia's New South Wales Education Facilities Research Group, a joint initiative between the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Public Works and Services, provides action research into issues which impact on school design. These issues include curriculum development, changes in teaching strategies and new directions in school management and organisation. The research group has a programme of work which includes the development of guidelines and training manuals for teachers, parents and students as well as

architects, engineers, planners and administrators. Four examples of recent projects are outlined below.

Video to illustrate ways to use new school buildings

New secondary schools currently being built in New South Wales (NSW) not only look different but are conceptually different from those with which many parents and teachers are familiar. These new facilities have been designed with the latest understandings of effective pedagogy and student engagement. For many adults their very concept of a classroom or a staff room may well be challenged by the new designs.

For some teachers the new facilities shift them out of their comfort zone. They require them to change the way in which they teach, from the teacher-centred approach to the role of "facilitator of learning/coach/mentor" which recognises and caters for the different learning styles of students.

To encourage taking up new ways and to ensure that best use is made of new facilities, the NSW Department of Education and Training has created a video to inform the school community about the new designs. The video, "Built to Teach: Designed to Learn", highlights school organisational issues which need to be addressed, allays the fears of staff, encourages and promotes cross curricula dialogue and supports teachers in maximising the learning experiences of all students.

Energy management

In New South Wales the government has set goals in energy reduction for all government agencies at 15% of the 1995 level by 2001 and 25% of the 1995 level by 2005. As part of the government's energy management policy each agency has to formulate an energy management strategy.

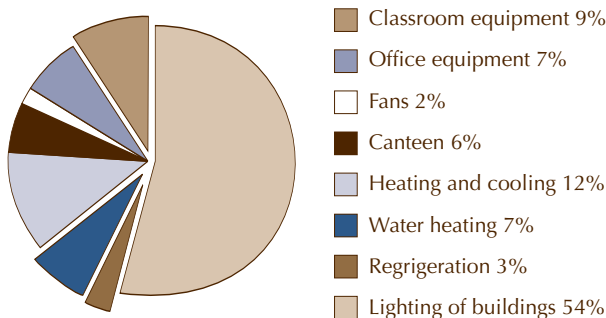
Camden High School, with "solar chimneys"



To assist the NSW Department of Education and Training to achieve these targets, a manual with energy management strategies to reduce operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions has been developed. Schools are provided with details of the areas in which energy is used and data about the energy consumption of specific items of equipment. With this information schools can undertake an energy audit to identify areas where energy may be saved.

The Energy Management Manual is complemented by continual improvements in school design and by ongoing research into thermal comfort and strategies for managing energy usage.

Average electricity usage in high schools



Typical energy consumption of schools

Landscaping design guide

To complement the school design and energy management programmes, a landscaping design guide has been developed to detail planning and performance requirements for specific areas of the school landscape. Guidelines are provided for planners, landscape architects and school management to illustrate the basic principles of good landscape design and suggest actions which will create appropriate passive, active and learning areas, reduce accidents, minimise maintenance and ensure that funds are spent on the areas of greatest benefit to the students.

Asset.gov

An important part of school planning is the involvement of the school and local community in the design and keeping the key stakeholders informed of the ongoing development and progress.

Chifley College, Senior Campus



The NSW Department of Public Works and Services has developed asset.gov as an online collaboration tool for capital and non-capital projects. This new electronic system which lets all stakeholders collaborate online, regardless of their location, is easily accessible and secure and facilitates the flow of project information. A centrally stored set of online documents reduces the risk of errors arising from outdated plans and also saves time and money while improving opportunities for community consultation.

Asset.gov allows people to access up-to-date information on the progress of the design and construction of their school. Local residents can become actively involved in the project by providing information on local issues and feedback on the design through Internet-based forums. This is especially important in Australia where distance can be overcome through the use of enabling technologies. For further information see <http://www.asset.gov.com.au>.

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