

Industry view

AIPC
50 YEARS

This column is contributed by Kuala Lumpur International Convention Centre, a member of the International Association of Congress Centres (AIPC). AIPC is an international association of more than 155 of the world's leading convention and exhibition centres. Its mission is to support, encourage and recognise excellence in convention centre operation and management. It is based in Brussels, Belgium. www.aipc.org.



A fact we must stomach

Certification for safe and hygienic food production and delivery is necessary for peace of mind of clients, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre general manager, **Peter Brokenshire**, says

A meal in Malaysia does not just offer a chance to refuel the body; it is a social event and a means of communication. In fact, the universal question to a visitor in Malaysia, as in much of Asia, is: "have you eaten?"

Unfortunately, the bacteria and pathogens that cause food poisoning multiply rapidly in high ambient temperatures and in tropical climates. A poorly ventilated kitchen can easily approach these temperatures, providing ideal conditions for bacteria growth. Malaysia is not alone in facing this kind of problem in the kitchen, but significant steps are now being formally taken to address the safety of food production, preparation and delivery.

The Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC) recognised from the start that formal food safety certification would be necessary in order to reassure foreign and domestic clients their health and well-being was being taken seriously. To achieve this, the centre initially elected to adopt the US-based Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) method of managing food safety while awaiting publication of the newer International Standards Organisation (ISO) 22000 Food Safety Management System standard.

The most important aspect of HACCP is that it

is a preventative, rather than an inspection-based, system of controlling food safety hazards. Since preventing hazards cannot be accomplished by end product inspection, controlling processes during production offers the most effective approach.

HACCP focuses on three types of hazards: physical, chemical and biological.

Physical hazards may include plastic, metal, glass and clothing material that can get into a product during production.

Biological hazards typically receive the most scrutiny in an effective HACCP programme in a tropical environment because they present the greatest risk in terms of the likelihood of occurrence.

The implementation of HACCP is preceded by a "prerequisite programme" for food handlers that includes basic standards of cleanliness. However, a clean facility does not necessarily mean a sanitary one as the term "clean" typically implies visible cleanliness, while sanitation addresses levels of invisible cleanliness. Food-borne illnesses can be caused by micro-organisms invisible to the naked eye and it is therefore vital for all food handling departments to be involved in such a programme.

Implementing HACCP involves a seven-step

process, which must be continuously updated to ensure an organisation has a preventive system of hazard control in place.

The steps involve:

- identifying hazards in the workplace
- determining the controls necessary at each critical control point to prevent the hazards becoming a risk to food safety
- setting critical limits for each control point
- monitoring and recording the limits and
- taking corrective action where these are not met and continually verifying processes and procedures.

KLCC went on to upgrade and became certified with the ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management System standard of which HACCP forms a core component.

Both programmes required the chefs to review their methods of food preparation to ensure the processes were correct and that their staff understood why these processes were necessary.

Menus and recipe cards were produced to ensure safe food products of high and consistent quality; the Asset Department worked tirelessly to ensure that the building and equipment met the required standards and maintenance; the Purchasing Department trained their receivers to be vigilant, and food suppliers were inspected to



Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre: staff had to understand why the processes required by ISO were necessary.

ensure that their raw materials and products were produced under controlled conditions.

When KLCC started the journey towards assuring food safety, people did not always understand the value of having a structured management system within which to work; however, its value became evident at all levels within the organisation and even the most skeptical became converts. Along with our staff, a number of our suppliers are now working towards certification in order to demonstrate the professionalism with which they supply their products and services to the centre. ■

What's clean?
A clean facility does not necessarily mean a sanitary one as the term "clean" typically implies visible cleanliness, while sanitation addresses levels of invisible cleanliness.

Share your experiences on safe and hygienic food production with TTGmice, email: ttgnewsdesk@ttgasia.com

Calendar

August

- 16-19 ASAE and The Center for Association Leadership Annual Meeting & Exposition
San Diego, California, the US
- 19 Pacific Area Incentives & Conferences Expo
Auckland, New Zealand

September

- 7-9 The Trade Show Travel Retailing and Destination Expo
Orlando, Florida, the US
- 15-16 BIT Peru 2008
Lima, Peru
- 16-19 Top Resa
Paris, France
- 16-19 PATA Travel Mart
Hyderabad, India
- 20-23 Kerala Travel Mart
Kochi, India
- 23-25 MIBEXPO Russia
Moscow, Russia
- 24-25 Business Travel Show
Düsseldorf, Germany

October

- 9-11 IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific
Bangkok, Thailand

- 20-21 Business Travel Show
Dubai, UAE

- 22-24 ITB Asia
Singapore

- 29-31 Travel Trade Workshop
Montreux, Switzerland

- 31-
Nov 2 ITF Taipei

November

- 1-5 47th ICCA Congress & Exhibition
Victoria, Canada
- 10-13 World Travel Market
London, the UK
- 17-20 International Golf Travel Market
Marbella, Andalusia, Spain
- 20-23 CITM (China International Travel Mart)
Shanghai, China
- 23-24 13th MITM (Meetings & Incentive Trade Market) Americas
Cartagena de Indias, Colombia

December

- 2-4 EIBTM (European Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings) Exhibition
Barcelona, Spain

- 5-8 Society of Incentive & Travel Executives International Conference
Montreux, Switzerland

- 8-11 International Luxury Travel Market
Cannes, France

2009

January

- 5-12 ATF (ASEAN Tourism Forum)
Hanoi, Vietnam
- 17-22 35th IAPCO Seminar on Professional Congress Organization
Wolfsberg, Switzerland
- 28-
Feb 1 FITUR
Madrid, Spain

February

- 10-12 Business Travel Show
London, the UK
- 17-18 AIME (AsiaPacific Incentives & Meetings Expo)
Melbourne, Australia
- 19-22 BIT 2009 - International Tourism Exchange
Milan, Italy
- 24-26 International Confex
London, the UK