

YARDSTICK NEWS

On-line Developments | 2014-15 Programme | Roads | Facilities

Parks Programme for 2014-15

Note these key dates:

Australia



August - Benchmarks questionnaire open with on site audits starting in September

September - PLA Perth Benchmarking Workshop

Oct - Nov - Visitor Survey underway

November - Yardstick Benchmarks Report available

Canada



February 2015 - Measurement tool open

March 2015 - On site audits

April 2015 - Report available



New Zealand

January 2015 - Visitor Surveys underway



South Africa

August - Measurement tool open. October - On site audits
December - Report available

Europe



Feb 2015 - Benchmarks Questionnaire open
April - May - on site audits

Yardstick online

We are continually working on enhancing the functionality of Yardstick online tools for information collection and reporting. A major milestone was reached in July, with the first on-line reports being made available for Yardstick Parks for Canada, New Zealand and Europe. Following on from this will be the reporting functionality for the Recreation and Aquatic Facilities project.

We have also developed the ability to view the guidelines directly within the online questionnaire. Those of you completing the Facilities and Roads benchmark questionnaires over the coming months, will be the first to enjoy the convenience of this feature (so no excuses for not reading them!).

Visitor survey development

The visitor survey project usually undertaken in summer is currently under redevelopment with a series of exciting enhancements. The major changes to the product are:

- will be usable both as a user intercept survey and also as a self completion survey via an electronic web link
- field based surveys can be undertaken using iPad/android technology or using the traditional hard copy approach
- survey periods are to be flexible to suit each individual member so no specific cut off date
- on-line easy to use flexible reporting enabling comparison with all organisations or just specifically selected organisations
- ability to report against previous years results as the data base of information grows

Facilities Programme for 2014-15

Australia and New Zealand

August - Benchmark questionnaire open

Sep-Oct - On site audits

November - Report available

January 2015 - Visitor surveys underway

Toolkit released - Dec

Survey period - Jan to Feb

Individual Report released - March

Canada

October - Workshop hosted at ARPA conference at Jasper

(Contact cliff@yardstickglobal.org to register your interest)

January 2015 - Benchmark questionnaire open

March 2015 - On site audits

April 2015 - Report available

Community Services Benchmark

The pilot phase of this project has been completed.

Christchurch City Council developed the questions in association with our Yardstick project manager. Participation in this project is open to all.

The enhancements will negate the need to double handle survey reports as if iPad/Android is used the survey will be logged immediately when the devices is reconnected to the internet.

Yardstick Facilities

Yardstick is delighted to announce that Auckland Council Facilities will be joining the project in 2014. Following several years of hard work following the amalgamation of six large municipalities into the super sized Auckland Council, they now have the systems in place to provide their data into the Yardstick project. The addition of 20 plus facilities into the data set will significantly enhance the robustness of the results and provide a greater range of facilities to select your peer group.

Not part of the Yardstick Facilities benchmark project? There may still be time to get on board for 2014 if you act fast! Contact brian@yardstickglobal.org for more information.

Roading Benchmarks

Morrison Low and Xyst established a pilot project in NSW, Australia, earlier in the year with seven councils participating. Focusing on the key result areas of provision, investment, operations, infrastructure management and environmental sustainability, the pilot was very successful with all of the pilot organisations committing to further involvement in the program. Supported by long time partner the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA), we are now delighted to announce that this project has become a part of the Yardstick suite of benchmarking tools, and is now available for subscription in Australia and New Zealand.

The benchmarking tool gathers and reports on all assets in the road corridor such as roads, kerb and gutter, drainage, streetlights and footpaths. Key outputs include depreciation rates, cost data and asset sustainability ratios.

Further information can be found at www.yardstickglobal.org/projects/road_benchmarks, or by contacting Dan Bonifant phone +61 427 111 884 email d.bonifant@morrisonlow.com or Stephen Bunting phone +61 418 124 437 email s.bunting@morrisonlow.com

Canada 2014

PARKS

Growth of membership in Canada is important to existing members to enable greater local comparison of results. Alberta Recreation Parks Association (ARPA) are looking to encourage the remaining mid size municipalities to join the project now to enable participation in the year ahead.

Contact Steve Allan, Alberta ARPA at sallan@arpaonline.ca

Ontario membership, managed by Ontario Parks Association (OPA), is modest however after extensive marketing and promotion in the past two years OPA is keen to see the interest turned into membership for 2014.

Contact Shelley May, Ontario Parks Association at shelley@ontarioparksassociation.ca

RECREATION CENTRES

Following several workshops and meetings with interested organisations, the benchmark questions have been modified and improved to collect information specific to Canadian recreation centres, such as the incorporation of ice facilities information.

Yardstick will be running in Canada from January 2015 and membership is now open. Early commitment to membership will help grow overall participation in this project and ensure that we establish a strong data set of information so that participating organisations gain as much benefit as possible.



Following requests from prospective members, a workshop will be held at the ARPA national conference in October to review the proposed recreation centre questions and demonstrate the project outputs. Chris Rutherford will lead this workshop and is likely to host additional workshops in British Columbia and Ontario (subject to confirmation).

For more information or to join the project for 2015, please contact cliff@yardstickglobal.org

Europe

The parks user surveys are currently underway. The results will be available to all members to view online with just the specific individual analysis directed to the member organisations. From 2015 the survey becomes more flexible and dynamic. Read the item on visitor survey development on page 1.

We are wishing to work with Ifpra and current members to grow the membership further in Finland, Norway, Ireland and Denmark. Chris will be discussing at the User Group on Tuesday 19 August in Malmo what approach users feel might assist in growing participation.