

Navigating the Bump-In: TWO DECADES OF EXHIBITION EXCELLENCE

Metcash Food Expo
13 - 15 July 2025





Innovation on a Grand Scale

For more than two decades, the Metcash Food Expo has been a highlight of the independent retail calendar. Since 2004, the event has returned year after year to the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC), highlighting both its significance to the retail sector and the venue's capability to deliver large-scale, complex exhibitions.

The 2025 exhibition, held from 13-15 July, brought together 350 exhibitors and 1000 delegates from across Australia. The exhibition floor became a dynamic hub of innovation, showcasing the latest food products, retail technologies, and business insights. Beyond business, it was also a chance to strengthen networks and celebrate the power of shopping local.



1,000
DELEGATES



350
EXHIBITORS



22
YEARS AT
GCCEC



100+
CUSTOM STANDS



3 DAYS
OF EXPO



24/7
SECURITY FOR
FOOD SAFETY





Why GCCEC? A Venue That Delivers on Every Level

The enduring partnership between Metcash and GCCEC is built on consistency, service, and location. Nick Jeffrey, GCCEC General Manager, explains:

“Metcash is really important to the Gold Coast as a city and I think they return for a number of reasons, one of them being the service, from the planning and development, right through to the delivery of the event. It’s been 22 years Metcash has been here, and the service has been a key factor, it ticks all the boxes for a large exhibition,” he says.



Also, the fabulous thing about the location of the centre is the close proximity to accommodation venues, the restaurants, the public transport - it’s all there, right here on the doorstep.

Nick Jeffrey, General Manager - GCCEC



Managing Scale and Complexity with Precision

Behind the scenes, staging an exhibition of this magnitude requires meticulous planning, coordination, and a sharp focus on safety. The event’s bump-in and bump-out process is a feat in itself, involving hundreds of contractors.

Matthew Barton, GCCEC Risk and Compliance Manager, oversees the health, safety, and wellbeing of all visitors entering the venue during these critical stages.

“Metcash is one of our largest events of the year, bringing in hundreds of contractors onsite, extensive truck movement and forklifts, as well as deliveries bringing pallet upon pallet of goods into the Centre. We successfully manage it by implementing rigorous procedures and practices to ensure a safe environment for everyone,” he says.

Every participant - whether an exhibitor, contractor, delegate, or visitor is required to complete an induction and provide insurances prior to arrival.

“Our contractors are fully compliant and known to our safety and security teams. Once onsite, they present themselves to security to receive a wristband, having already been inducted in advance. It doesn’t matter the size of the event; we manage it in the same way. The bigger the event just means more resources, but the approach remains consistent to ensure success.”

This structured, scalable approach is a key reason organisers and suppliers alike value GCCEC as a partner.



A Supplier's Perspective: Logistics on a Grand Scale

For suppliers like Exponet, who are responsible for much of the event build, the scale of Metcash demands months of preparation and precision execution.

According to Matthieu Desprez, State Manager (NSW) of Exponet, “There is a lot of logistics and preparation that goes into it- hundreds of trucks, more than 1,000 power points, and countless custom builds. Everything needs to work seamlessly to create the experience that exhibitors and delegates expect.”

Dean Fenwick, Director of stand builders Visible Projex, says collaboration with the venue is essential.

“When it comes to designing an event like this that has so many perishable products, the number of people involved- plumbers, electricians, build staff, installation staff - is significant. From six months out we start to communicate with the venue, working through emergency evacuations, aisle distances, and logistics. By three months out, we are full-time building. The client speaks highly of the venue - GCCEC is a fantastic facility for us, which is why we keep coming back.”

He also emphasises the importance of venue support once the event is underway.

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Once the event is fully operational, we need venue security 24 hours, particularly overnight, to check temperatures and monitor the condition of the food, which is all sent to charity at the end of this event.

Dean Fenwick, Director - Visible Projex

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The Exhibitor and Retailer Experience

For retailers and exhibitors, GCCEC's location and facilities enhance the overall event experience.

Ben Ryan, Group General Manager at Ryan's IGA, shared onsite, "I love the expo. I catch up with people I haven't seen for 12 months, we do some great deals, and we see some fantastic new product. GCCEC is great, I can walk to wherever I need to."

The convenience of the venue's location is echoed by exhibitor Monique St Pierre, Head of Grocery at Unilever who says, "There are restaurants and hotels right across the street so it's easy to come and go. You really couldn't ask for a better area and the weather is great. I've even asked myself, 'Why don't I live up here?'"

For Metcash itself, exhibitor satisfaction is a crucial measure of success. Madeleine Fitzpatrick, General Manager Retail, Metcash, highlights, "The exhibitors love coming here and bumping-in, bumping-out couldn't be easier for them. They love coming back and their stands just get bigger and better every year."

She also points to GCCEC's infrastructure as a drawcard, "It's easy to access, it has very high ceilings, so from a rigging perspective that means we can have really spectacular stands as well."





Economic and Community Impact

For event organisers seeking a proven venue that combines scale, professionalism, and destination appeal, GCCEC continues to set the benchmark.

The 2025 Metcash Food Expo once again featured GCCEC's strengths as a venue to deliver large, complex exhibitions with precision, safety, and style. With more than two decades of partnership, Metcash's ongoing commitment to the venue is a testament to GCCEC's service, infrastructure, and destination appeal.



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