

## **MEDIA COVERAGE**

### **Financial Times, 19/ 11/ 2007 by Roger Blitz**

GOVERNMENT CUTS THREAT TO TOURISM, pg 4, National News

Tourism leaders are expected to launch a national campaign this week to highlight what it calls the government's misunderstanding and mismanagement of the tourism sector.

The Tourism Alliance, representing 50 trade associations, says it has lost patience with the Government, after a meeting last week with Tourism Minister Margaret Hodge. Cuts to VisitBritain, the national tourism agency, threaten the UK's ranking as a world holiday destination as well as the forecast £2.1Bn tourism from the 2012 Olympics, says the Alliance.

### **Reuters: TOURISM CHIEF ATTACKS GOVERNMENT BUDGET CUTS**

Hotel chiefs from groups including Intercontinental, Travelodge and Whitbread will write to Gordon Brown on Monday to criticise the decision to cut the tourism budget by 18 percent. They say that underinvestment in the sector over the next decade could see the opportunity represented by the 2012 Olympics wasted, as well as costing the UK 110,000 jobs and up to 5 billion pounds in revenue. The hotel bosses have joined a campaign orchestrated by the Tourism Alliance, which has previously held meetings with tourism minister Margaret Hodge and is now turning to the Prime Minister.

### **The Daily Telegraph: LEISURE Tourism chiefs attack government budget cuts**

By Jonathan Sibun

UK hotel and leisure bosses have launched a scathing attack on the Government's cut in the tourism budget amid warnings that up to 110,000 jobs and pounds 5bn in revenues could be lost.

Hotel bosses, including Intercontinental's Andy Cosslett, Travelodge's Grant Hearn and Whitbread's Alan Parker, are among industry leaders who will today write to Gordon Brown to express their anger about the 18pc cut in the tourism budget.

The leisure bosses will throw their weight behind a "Take Tourism Seriously" campaign which is to be launched by the Tourism Alliance, a body representing the 50 leading trade associations in the sector.

The group claims the UK could forego 110,000 jobs and up to pounds 5bn in revenues during the next 10 years if the Olympics opportunity is squandered and forecasts of Britain's underperformance in global tourism continue.

The Tourism Alliance has already held meetings with tourism minister Margaret Hodge at which it accused the Government of "grossly misunderstanding and mismanaging" the sector. However, it will now focus its attentions on the Prime Minister.

They will press him to conduct a review of tourism policy, reverse budget cuts and separate Olympics funding. The Tourism Alliance will also hold talks with opposition parties and compile a dossier of missed growth opportunities as a result of what it calls "wrong policy decisions".

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has cut spending on tourism via tourist board VisitBritain by 50pc since 1997. That approach, the letter from the leisure bosses will claim, threatens the UK's position as the world's sixth most popular tourist destination as well as the pounds 2.1bn in revenues forecast from the Olympics.

Ros Pritchard, chairman of the Tourism Alliance, said: "Funding is always a clear indicator of the importance that government departments place on specific sectors. DCMS will not now have increased VisitBritain's funding for 10 years. Obviously they do not take the industry seriously."