



10 March 2008

A NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR BUSINESS VISITS AND EVENTS

In a move designed to broaden the scope of industry representation for the increasingly important UK Events industry, the Business Tourism Partnership announced its name change today during British Tourism Week, at the Meetings Industry Association Annual Conference, to the **Business Visits and Events Partnership**.

The Partnership is also targeting for more membership of trade associations and government agencies that represent cultural, sporting and leisure events, in addition to its solid base of present members from the conference and meetings, exhibitions and trade fairs, outdoor events, incentive travel, and corporate hospitality sectors.

The key objective of the Business Visits and Events Partnership will be to lead the way in supporting a competitive, high quality and more profitable business visits and events sector in Britain. The Partnership seeks to provide a cohesive industry voice and will work with VisitBritain and other government departments and agencies to influence and develop policies and practices favourable to the growth of tourism and trade from business visits and events.

The Partnership will continue to provide a forum for Members to agree key issues and to act as a central focus for lobbying and ensuring that policymakers and key influencers are better informed of the benefits of the sector.

Current priorities include the recently announced Ministerial bid support programme; changes to business visas and the introduction of special event visas; ensuring the potential from the 2012 London Olympics is realised; seeking adequate government support for VisitBritain; the development of sector quality, skills and qualifications; a reduction in the burden of taxation and regulation, including better co-ordinated National guidelines for health and safety

Michael Hirst, Chairman of the Business Visits and Events Partnership said "The proposed changes to the Partnership reflect the widening of interests already prevalent amongst the leading industry bodies". He added "There is growing recognition the role Events play in generating big business for Britain, both as a world class destination and as an ideal medium for showcasing the best of Britain's creative talent, products

Members

Association of British Professional Conference Organisers
Association for Conferences and Events
Association for Events Management Education
British Association of Conference Destinations
British Hospitality Association
Conference Centres of Excellence

Department for Culture, Media & Sport
Events Industry Alliance
Events Industry Forum
Eventia
Hotel Booking Agents Association
International Congress & Convention Association
Meetings Industry Association
Meetings Professionals International

National Outdoors Events Association
Northern Ireland Tourist Board
UK Trade & Investment
VenueMasters
VisitBritain
Visit London
VisitScotland
Visit Wales



and new ideas. Events also generate substantial economic and social benefits for local communities and their economies. The new Partnership will ensure these benefits are fully exploited and acknowledged.”

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For further information, please contact:

Michael Hirst, Chairman, Business Visits and Events Partnership

Tel: 020 8950 8071 e-mail: mbhirst@lineone.net

Joss Croft, VisitBritain

Tel: 020 8563 3033 e-mail: joss.Croft@visitbritain.org

Note to editors:

- The **Business Visits and Events Partnership** consists of 21 members representing the leading trade organisations and government agencies with an interest in conferences and meetings, exhibitions and trade fairs, outdoor events, business event, incentive travel, corporate hospitality and individual business travel.
- The 2006 IPS figures for inbound business visits and spend indicated a record over **9 million visitors spending £4.75 billion**. This is an increase of 10% and 17% respectively on 2005, at a growth rate that exceeds overall tourism growth
- Business tourism is worth **over £22 billion** in terms of its wider economic impact through associated delegate expenditure on travel, entertainment, shopping, pre and post conference tours etc.) In addition the value of business transacted at trade events is estimated to generate in excess of **£100 billion** a year.
- Over the past ten years there has been a **53% growth** in all business trips exceeding the overall tourism growth rate. **Over 9 million visits** are made to the UK each year for business purposes **contributing £4.753 billion** to the British economy.
- The sector generates 28% of all overseas visitors and 31% of inbound tourism earnings.

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Business Visits & Events Partnership

LEADING THE WAY FOR BRITAIN'S EVENTS

- Business tourism activities create high quality, year round employment opportunities accounting for some **530,000 jobs** directly and indirectly.
- **Around 80 million people attend 1.5 million** conferences and meeting annually.
- **Business visitors spend on average £527 per visit** – nearly twice the daily rate of that spent by the leisure traveller.
- For further information on Business Tourism and the **Business Visits and Events Partnership**, please refer to the website: www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com

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