

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
- Eventia
- Events Industry Alliance
- Events Industry Forum
- 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
- Venue Masters
- VisitBritain
- Visit London
- VisitScotland
- Visit Wales

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PRESS RELEASE

EVENTS NOT INCLUDED IN NEW TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINISTER URGED TO SET UP SEPARATE ADVISORY GROUP FOR EVENTS SECTOR

The Business Visits & Events Partnership has expressed its disappointment to Barbara Follett, Minister for Culture, Creative Industries and Tourism, that no representative from the Events sector has been appointed to her new Tourism Advisory Council.

The Council, which will consist of 21 tourism industry leaders, drawn from the hotel, attractions, rail and air transport, pubs, holiday centres and heritage sectors, is being established in response to the British Tourism Framework Review. Its purpose is to provide cross-government and cross-National understanding of the needs of the tourism industry and provide expert advice to enable Ministers to develop appropriate strategy.

Despite having no direct representation from the Events Industry, The Advisory Group's Terms of Reference refer to business tourism as a priority. Similarly the work of the Group is to be aligned to the Government's wider tourism approach highlighted in the tourism strategy, "Winning – A tourism Strategy for 2012 and Beyond" and the recommendations of the British Tourism Framework Review.

Both these reports emphasise business visits and events as being the major beneficiary of the 2012 Olympics and the Cultural Olympiad, as well as being the main driver of visitor traffic to Britain's destinations.

Michael Hirst, Chairman of The Partnership said, "I recognise how difficult it is to select a truly representative group of people for Tourism given its diversity, but several sectors are represented by more than one member"

"The omission of anyone from the business and leisure events sector is puzzling, given the importance of Events stressed at the Liverpool National Tourism Summit and the example of the Liverpool City of Culture Festival, which was cited by the Prime Minister, Secretary of State and the Minister as a clear example of how Events could be used to re-vitalise the visitor economy".

"I hope the Minister will be able to re-consider her decision. However what might be of greater benefit is for the Minister to convene a meeting of representatives of the conference, exhibitions, business, cultural, sporting events and festival sectors as a separate Advisory Group to explore how the Events Sector could provide an extra economic and social stimulus for Britain's recovery. The Partnership will be more than pleased to work with the Minister on such an initiative".

ENDS

For further information, please contact Michael Hirst, Chairman, Business Visits and Events Partnership

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Note to editors:

- **The Business Visits and Events Partnership's** aim is 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, trade and creative enterprise from business visits and events.
- The **Business Visits and Events Partnership** has the support of the leading trade organisations and government agencies with an interest in conferences, meetings, exhibitions, trade fairs, incentive travel, corporate hospitality, and business, sporting, cultural and festival events.
- Business travel is worth **over £22 billion** in terms of its wider economic impact through associated visitor 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.
- The 2008 provisional IPS figures for inbound business visits and spend indicated at over **8 million visitors spending £4.5 billion**.
- Business visits in 2008 generated 109% more spending in real terms than in 1979 (leisure increase 18%).
- **The sector generates 25% of all overseas visitors and 28% of inbound tourism earnings.**
- Business visits and events 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 meetings annually.
- **Business visitors spend on average £126 per day** – nearly 78% more than the daily rate of that spent by the leisure traveller, with attendees at exhibitions spending 150% more than the leisure traveller.
- **450 major Events take place in the UK annually contributing more than £1 billion**
- For further information on Business Visits and Events, please refer to the website: www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com