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Dear Michael

You will see from our announcements today that we are proposing a restructuring of the organisation to enable us to focus our marketing activity on the delivery of the four-year marketing programme and to take account of the 34% cut to our budget as announced in October 2010. These changes will involve reducing functions, activity and the numbers of markets in which we have a presence to ensure the maximum funds are allocated to the marketing pot.

With regret this is to inform you that we are proposing to reduce our level of business tourism activity. While we recognise that the business visits and events sector is an important part of the visitor economy, the vast majority of this travel is individual corporate travel, and non-discretionary and therefore we believe that VisitBritain has less influence on the choice of destination of these travellers.

It is also the case that our strategic partners (the national tourist boards) are very active in this area and there has been an element of duplication that we cannot afford to continue. We will be leaving them to lead in business tourism and MICE activity.

We will still continue to offer a bid support service to attract international conferences, conventions and major sporting events and we will, through our overseas network, provide an export platform for the UK industry in those overseas markets, where business and leisure operators are one and the same, such as China and Russia. Business extenders will be provided for with comprehensive information on our websites. We will also continue to have a MICE module on our Britagent programme.

I am sure that business tourism will continue to be well supported by the national boards, with VisitBritain playing its part.

Once the dust has settled on the announcement I would welcome a meeting to discuss the implications with you. In the meantime, if you have any queries do not hesitate to call me on 020 7578 1020.

Yours sincerely

Sandie Dawe MBE
Chief Executive, VisitBritain