

News Release

BUSINESS VISITS AND EVENTS CAN HELP DELIVER RE-BALANCED ECONOMY SAYS BVEP

- Industry Welcomes Prime Ministers Positive Contribution -

13 August 2010: Michael Hirst, OBE, Chairman of the Business Visits & Events Partnership (BVEP) has said that the UK's Business Visits & Events Sector can stimulate growth and help deliver a re-balanced economy.

Hirst's comments follow a speech made by David Cameron on Thursday, where the Prime Minister referred to the challenges and opportunities that tourism presents for the UK and its fundamental role in the rebuilding and rebalancing of the economy.

"The Prime Ministers speech, which I was very pleased to be present at, was a huge endorsement of the entire tourism industry, and shows that government, at the most senior level, now understands the vital contribution we make, but more crucially the greater role we are able to play in the future in delivering the long term objectives of the country" commented Michael Hirst.

Hirst has already written to the Prime Minister, congratulating him on his speech and stating that all members of the BVEP are fully ready to play their role in ensuring that business visits and events continue to make a positive contribution to Britain's social, cultural and economic prosperity.

"Whilst major sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, all help in attracting international audiences and generate enormous media coverage, we see an equal opportunity for Britain in recognising and supporting the important area of business events, conferences, exhibitions and trade fairs. These not only attract international business visitors on a daily basis, but they also create a global showcase for Britain's expertise, its industrial and commercial capabilities and skills, boosting trade potential and communicating our excellence in research, education and development. All of which are key elements of the Prime Ministers overall objective," concludes Hirst.

The BVEP will also be holding its parliamentary reception at the House of Commons on 20th October, where a number of MP's, Ministers, senior government officials and industry leaders will be present."

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Notes for Editors

A copy of the letter to the Prime Minister, The Rt. Hon David Cameron MP, is attached for your information.

A full transcript of the Prime Ministers speech on tourism can be obtained by visiting <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/speeches-and-transcripts/2010/08/pms-speech-on-tourism-54479>

For further information please contact;
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About the Business Visits & Events Partnership

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 works 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. The organisation 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.

Members of the BVEP include;

- **Association of British Professional Conference Organisers**
- **Association for Conferences and Events**
- **Association for Events Management Education**
- **Conference Centres of Excellence**
- **Department for Culture, Media & Sport**
- **Eventia**
- **Events Industry Alliance**
- **Events Industry Forum**
- **Hotel Booking Agents Association**
- **International Congress & Convention Association**
- **International Special Events Society**
- **Meet England**
- **Meetings Industry Association**
- **Meeting Professionals International**
- **National Outdoors Events Association**
- **Northern Ireland Tourist Board**
- **Site Global**
- **UK Inbound**
- **UK Trade & Investment**
- **VisitBritain**

- **Visit London**
- **VisitScotland**
- **Visit Wales**

www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com



The Rt. Hon David Cameron MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

I was privileged to be amongst your audience this morning at the Serpentine Gallery for your speech on Tourism.

Your encouragement for the Industry is so much appreciated. You are right to focus on the substantial potential that Tourism offers to the UK economy as you move to rebuild and rebalance it.

I was pleased to hear your commitment to ensure that Britain optimises the benefits from the decade of sporting events that it is to host and your recognition too of the part festivals play in attracting visitors. Both these areas come within the remit of the Membership of the Partnership.

There is also another dynamic opportunity for Britain in recognising and supporting the important area of business events, conferences, exhibitions and trade fairs. These not only attract international business visitors who enrich the Tourism sector, but they also create a global showcase for Britain's expertise, its industrial and commercial capabilities and skills, boosting trade potential and communicating our excellence in research, education and development..

All the industries you highlighted – aerospace, pharmaceuticals, high value manufacturing, high tech engineering and low carbon technology - use conferences and exhibitions to heighten awareness of their products, create export opportunities and communicate new product developments.

I have discussed with John Penrose the support that can be given to the Sector by Ministers in bidding for more international business events to Britain so it truly becomes the natural destination choice and an international hub for all sectors of the Events Industry. I have also written to Vince Cable, David Willetts, Mark Prisk and Ed Vaizey to draw their attention to how business events can support their policy agendas too.

You have generously acknowledged the contents of our Meetings and Events Manifesto. Members of the Partnership are ready to play their full role in ensuring that leisure and business events make a positive contribution to Britain's social, cultural and economic prosperity.

Sincerely

Michael Hirst OBE
CHAIRMAN