



## Seeking answers?

SOME of the world's most inspirational



leaders are to talk at the 13th World Travel & Tourism Council Global Summit, taking place in Abu Dhabi 9-10 April.

The theme of the event 'A time for leadership' has attracted speakers such as President Bill Clinton, and more than forty other leading public figures, including Sir David Frost, British journalist, Daryl Hannah, American actress and activist, and Ian Goldin, University of Oxford Professor of Globalisation and Development.

The Summit is to be held in the luxurious new Jumeirah at Etihad Towers, with a gala dinner taking place at the Emirates Palace hotel - Jill.

## AITTC up to 25

THE AITTC (Australia India Travel and Tourism), established last year with the principal focus to facilitate growth of bilateral travel between Australia and India, report an eventful first year.

Starting with seven founder members, they currently have a membership of around 25 which includes four corporate members Taj Hotels, Insight Vacations, Grace Hotel & Blue Line Cruises.

A major task this year will be the preparing of a strategic plan and a launch function, to be held on 20 March in Sydney.

## Australia lags in global events

A soggy global economy and a strong Aussie dollar compounded by Australia's geographic disadvantage, are factors that confirm Australia is losing its share in the multi-billion dollar global business events and conferences market, according to a story in Friday's AFR.

With regional competitors like Hong Kong and Singapore investing heavily in tourism and business-focused infrastructure, Australia it points out is at the risk of being left behind.

Karen Bolinger ceo of the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau explained in the article, "When we compete for conferences, we compete often on a world scale and the competition around the world is heating up."

Without the ability to have the pulling power of Europe or the US, Australia she said has slipped down in world ranking with Melbourne down to 31 and Sydney to 34, "and it's not a healthy place to be."

According to research from Tourism Australia, expenditure from business event delegates in 2011 was worth \$10 billion to the Australian economy.

Now they have a target of increasing the economic contribution from events and conferences to \$16 billion.

Echo Entertainment Group's new boss, John O'Neill said three reports he presented to the past Labor government on events



Karen Bolinger

strategy, tourism development and conferences and exhibitions, went unloved or fell into the too hard basket.

Meanwhile, Melbourne is upping the ante, spending what is believed to be about \$300,000 to add 12,000sqm of exhibition space to their existing 30,000sqm.

The economic contribution to the city was estimated at \$361 million last year.

"The state can not afford to slip further down the global list in client's minds," said Bolinger.

With the redevelopment of Darling Harbour's conference and exhibition facilities, Lyn Lewis-Smith, chief executive of Business Events Sydney, said the next three years would be a challenge for Sydney to stay competitive within the region.

However, by December 2016, the city's offering would be the "world's best," she predicted.

## ScooTV takes off

LOW cost Singapore carrier Scoot has launched ScooTV, Asia's first inflight entertainment system that allows passengers to stream content to their own wi-fi devices and features a buffet of blockbuster movies and popular TV shows able to be watched on passenger's own laptop or tablets during the flight.

Campbell Wilson, ceo of Scoot said, "Scoot is excited to be the first airline in Asia to offer this innovative inflight entertainment option.

"Going wireless keeps our aircraft lighter, our costs down and our fares cheaper."

The system is refreshed every second month and guests in Economy pay S\$15 (pre-purchase) or S\$16 (onboard purchase) per flight, while ScootBiz guests get it for free.

For those without their own device, Scoot's Rent-a-Tablet service will still be available at S\$20 (pre-purchase) or S\$22 (onboard purchase).

In addition, new Premium food selections are available for S\$6.99 including Beef Sukiyaki on their Tokyo to Taipei flight or Beef Bourguignon Pie from Gold Coast to Singapore.

For more information see - [www.flyscoot.com](http://www.flyscoot.com).

## Today's BEN issue

BEN today has four pages of the latest industry news plus a full page for (click):

- Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau

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# business events news

4th February 2013

Come and visit us at  
AIME on stand 1322  
for your chance to win  
a stay at the Waldorf  
Astoria, New York



## Designs on Vivid

A design festival, featuring Australia's longest standing and most prestigious awards for design and innovation, is to take place during Vivid Sydney 2013 from 30 May to 10 June, the annual festival of light, music and ideas.



The inaugural Vivid Design Festival will feature an international design conference, a public design showcase, the prestigious Australian International Design Awards Presentation Ceremony and a series of celebrations.

Brandon Gien, managing director of Good Design Australia said, "We are looking forward to working with the NSW Government, through its tourism and major events agency Destination NSW, and Business Events Sydney to deliver a world class design event."

NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for Trade and Investment, Andrew Stoner MP said, "Business events like these spur valuable trade and investment opportunities, link our local industry to the world's leading thinkers and professional networks, and breed innovation and new ideas."

The Australian International Design Festival joins a number of other high-profile creative industries events at Vivid Sydney including Mumbrella 360, the 2013 International Symposium of Electronic Arts and CeBIT Australia.

"Last year Vivid Sydney's

Ideas program featured over 100 creative industries events with more than 7,500 people attending 14 days of free and ticketed talks, workshops and networking events.

"These events yielded many new relationships and investments between creative industry professionals, and I am delighted the Australian International Design Festival will continue to provide these opportunities to local, interstate and international design practitioners during Vivid Sydney," said Destination NSW ceo, Sandra Chipchase.

Further commenting on the event, Lyn Lewis-Smith, Business Events Sydney's ceo said, "Vivid Sydney is proving very attractive to international conferences as a platform for exchanging ideas and networking with the world's creative innovators and design gurus.

"We are Australia's global city and are committed to securing business events that drive knowledge, innovation and relationships."

More information about the festival at - [designawards.com.au](http://designawards.com.au).

## Waldorf's salad days

NEW York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel has long been in the limelight and when it comes to large gatherings, one historic conference in March 1949 was held at which 800 prominent literary and artistic figures congregated to stage a Stalinist peace conference.

It was an event that was attended by such luminaires as Lillian Hellman, Aaron Copland, Arthur Miller, Norman Mailer and Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich.

Today the Waldorf continues to host the world's most momentous gatherings, setting it apart from other New York hotels, especially when it comes to conferences and to hosting titans of industry, leaders of medicine and research.

The Waldorf stresses that the main difference they have to other New York hotels is the levels of service they offer and that guests are never treated as a number, even when in large groups and events.

As one of the first 'grand hotels' to combine elegance with luxurious amenities and services, they offer 600,000ft of restored meeting room space, in which they can host 10 to 1,500 guests while 40 world-class banquet rooms provide a unique variety of settings.

The Art Deco property occupies an entire city block of prime, mid-town Manhattan real estate.

Recent renovations have renewed the splendor that has long made The Waldorf Astoria an international icon.

**WIN AT AIME:** Come and meet the BEN team on stand 1322 and be in the draw to win two nights at the fabulous Waldorf Astoria.

## Host with the most

**AUDITED** figures released in the Queensland Business Events Survey for 2011-2012 show that the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region hosted the most international meetings of any region in Queensland.

"For that period we had 102 international meetings and 65% of those were from the lucrative incentives market," said director of Business Events Cairns & Great Barrier Reef, Rosie Douglas.

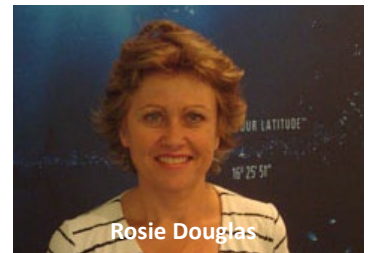
"The results are in line with our marketing approach over the past two years to focus on the incentive market internationally.

"They also reflect the international appeal of our dual World Heritage areas which have been attributed to boosting delegate numbers."

Recognising that good aviation access played a role in their ability to attract the business, Douglas said growth in that area bodes well for our region to continue to grow this highly competitive market.

"Our key international focus for the coming 12 months will be China, Japan, the USA and New Zealand with famils, attendance at tradeshow and public relations activity all underway to drive growth in those countries," she said.

Accessing the region through Cairns International Airport, Australia's gateway to the Asia Pacific, is another element in their favour.



Rosie Douglas

# AIME. FOR A FIVE STAR EVENT.

## 21st Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo

Let AIME introduce you to new business in the Asia-Pacific region. 26-27 February, 2013







# business events news

4th February 2013



## CITY of Light gets dark.

"In a determination to save energy and 'reduce the print of artificial lighting on the nocturnal environment'", all shops and offices in France, including the bright, imaginative shop windows of large department stores like Printemps and Galeries Lafayette in Paris, the 'City of Light,' will shut off their lights at night, from July, under a government decree.

The interior lights of non-residential buildings will have to be turned off an hour after the last worker leaves.

Major attractions like the Eiffel Tower on the Champs-Elysees will remain lit & local authorities can make exceptions for Christmas & other celebration lighting.

## Rent a Resort For Exclusive Events



**Club Med**  
GROUPS & INCENTIVES

## AIME update

AS part of an AIME 2013 prize giveaway, the team at Gold Coast Tourism is mixing the creature comforts of business travel with holiday pleasure.

It's an offer that gives delegates the chance to win a premium Gold Coast holiday including business class return airfares, luxury accommodation and a selection of VIP experiences.

To enter simply visit the Gold Coast stand #1922, enjoy a complimentary coffee and take a moment to share what you love about the Gold Coast.

For more info visit the Gold Coast Convention Bureau at - [www.GoldCoastConventions.com](http://www.GoldCoastConventions.com).

**MEANWHILE** Visitors to AIME can catch up with Destination Asia at the MyCEB stand #3714 and learn about their specialist MICE services and the research conducted over the past 12 months that has gone into developing a number of incentive programs and ideas that positively take advantage of changing market trends.

The past year they say has seen a substantial growth in the volume of tailor-made group itineraries and the opening of new offices in Jakarta, Indonesia; Guilin, China and Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia.

Destination Asia executives attending AIME include: Alvin Materi, group director of sales; Paul Levrier, md Destination Asia Vietnam; Wanchai Wanichupatumkul, incentive and convention director Destination Asia Thailand and Anthony Ang, director of sales Destination Asia Singapore.

See - [news.destination-asia.com](http://news.destination-asia.com).

## A Regal Hotel offer

**REGAL** Hotels is offering event organisers a reward program that entitles them to a HKD/RMB1,000 dining voucher for every HKD/RMB50,000 spent on MICE events from 19 January – 31 March.

Available for a minimum 10 rooms and one full day meeting package or catering event.

# Starwood's meetings deals

**STARWOOD** has a number of regional MICE deals, which include properties such as the Sheraton Huzhou Hot Spring Resort, Le Méridien Bali Jimbaran, Sheraton Mirage Port Douglas and The Naka



Sheraton Huzhou Hot Spring Resort

Island, A Luxury Collection Resort and Spa, Phuket.

Offers like half-day and full day meeting packages at the Sheraton Huzhou Hot Spring Resort at RMB530+ and RMB580+ pp, with a minimum of 20 persons and valid until 31 December 2013.

Le Méridien Bali Jimbaran's meeting package includes a deluxe room from US\$190++ per room per night and triple Starpoints.

Full-day meeting packages from US\$55++ and half-day at US\$50++ when booked by 15 March and meeting between 1 April and 30 September.

The Sheraton Mirage Port Douglas is offering 15% off food & beverage and complimentary high-speed internet access in the meeting room for bookings made and held by 30 June.

Planners who confirm their meetings by 15 February will receive double Starpoints.

The Naka Island has a full-day meeting priced at THB 12,000 for the tropical pool villa and THB 15,000 for the seaview pool villa.

A minimum booking of two room nights is required and bookings must be made by 31 March for events to be held by 30 June.

For more info go to [www.starwoodmeetings.com/offers](http://www.starwoodmeetings.com/offers).



Le Meridien Bali Jimbaran

## Edgewater refurbishes

**THE** Edgewater Resort & Spa in Rarotonga has undergone a refurbishment to 32 of its Manuae, Suwarrow & Mauke garden rooms.

All the rooms have new bathroom vanities, toilets and light fittings, while more changes and updates are expected this year.

These updates join Edgewater's newly refurbished restaurant, restrooms, games room and guest lounge.

## Magni back to Hilton

**CRISTINA** Magni has been appointed by Hilton Auckland and Hilton Lake Taupo as marketing and communications manager.

Magni, who previously covered the position re-joins the team after eight months working in the luxury travel industry.

She brings back to the Hilton brand a greater experience and understanding of the travel industry and a richer international network for travel and luxury brands.

## Looking for a new challenge with an exciting new company?

Spencer Conferences & Events are looking for a dynamic, enthusiastic and well-connected sales person to join their team.

We want someone that has experience in the MICE industry, specifically sales and someone that can open doors to the right opportunities.

Don't delay, send your resume with a cover letter attention to Kahlia Ericson, [Kahlia@SpencerCE.com.au](mailto:Kahlia@SpencerCE.com.au).





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investigation of the matters canvassed.

## Kooindah seals its place

**AFTER** a massive 2012, which saw the Mercure Kooindah Waters win a swag of awards and post record increases in both rate and occupancy, they have now started 2013 off with a bang, according to gm Jessie Sheehan.

The resort, she said, increased January conference room nights by 57% on the previous year and confirmed February conference bookings up by 244 room nights.

“Since joining Accor we have had bumper increases in our occupancy and rate levels, with our December average rate increasing by \$21 per room and our Christmas Day bookings up more than 11%,” Sheehan said.

“The resort has really sealed its place as one of the best conference and event venues in the Central Coast/Hunter region and we are hoping for more award wins in 2013.”

# GC hosts global surf conference

**THE** findings of a Southern Cross University (SCU) Business School study conducted last year, has revealed that the value of the global surf industry could be as high as US\$131 billion annually.



The results are set to inspire delegates to a major surf industry conference on the Gold Coast who will fly in from around the world to attend the inaugural Global Cities Surf Conference at Kirra from 27 February to 1 March.

SCU’s Professor Ian Eddie said, “An estimate of the total size of the global surf industry is within the range from US\$47 to US\$131 billion annually based on a current estimate of the total population of 35 million surfers and estimates of surfer expenditure.”

The Global Cities Surf Conference will be held at the Kirra Hill Community and Cultural

Centre and coincides with the running of the 2013 Quiksilver and Roxy Pro world tour surfing events.

The two major aims of the conference are to establish a platform for networking among surf cities to develop globally sustainable surf industries, and to develop frameworks for international collaboration in surf industry education, employment and global career mobility.

The conference will also play host to the World Surf Cities Network Annual General Meeting - an initiative that commenced in San Sebastian, Spain in 2011.

Info at - [www.cvent.com/d/kcqddh](http://www.cvent.com/d/kcqddh).



## Getting to Know: Shanghai, China

by: *Barry Matheson*

**BEN** recently spent a week in Shanghai, courtesy of China Eastern Airlines and found that not a day went by without being totally knocked out by the multitude of things to see and do in this visually dynamic city. First of all, you’ll be pleased to know that practically everything’s really cheap in Shanghai - the taxis, the restaurants, the shopping – it’s all amazingly affordable.

The taxis are said to be the cheapest in Asia. **BEN** used them often and for only 20 RMB, roughly AU\$3.50, you can go almost anywhere in the city, but make sure you bring a card with the name of your hotel in Chinese to show to the driver, as few speak English.

Foodies – make sure you dine at least one night at Lost Heaven which specialises in the tribal cuisine of China’s Yunnan Province. It was recommended by the Waldorf Astoria’s executive chef, and she was right. Try the Dali-style chicken with chives, the Yunnan mushrooms and the steamed Bass with black-bean sauce. Cost: \$50 for two. If you’re holding a private event, you can book the entire restaurant, terrace or lounge and it’s right near The Bund. Email: [contact@lostheaven.com](mailto:contact@lostheaven.com).

Another must is CHAR Bar & Grill, located on the top floors of Hotel Indigo. This is a real culinary delight and you get panoramic views of the Huangpu River and the bright lights of Pudong’s glittering skyscrapers. Both the Indigo and Waldorf Astoria are right on the celebrated Bund, a boulevard that runs alongside the river lined with many historic buildings and different architectural styles. The Waldorf is well set up for incentive groups, conferences and meetings and is keen to expand its market share from Australia. It has a four-day package that offers cooking and culinary classes, and can even organize a motor cycle and side-car tour through the colourful French Concession.

For shopping and a fun day to boot, head to the Underground Markets at the Science & Technology Museum. You can get there easily by train and once you alight at the Metro Stop, you’ll walk straight into a maze of shops selling everything from bags, shoes, silk scarves, watches, DVDs, polo shirts – you name it. All fake of course, but pretty good fakes and you can haggle for the lowest price.

A modern city of 22 million, you can still find old neighbourhoods such as Yu Garden, resplendent with historical structures right out of the Ming Dynasty. Established in 1559, it’s one of the most lavish and finest Chinese gardens here. China Eastern Airlines flies 21 times a week direct to Shanghai from Sydney, Melbourne and Cairns. It recently introduced lie-flat beds in Business Class on A330 aircraft ex-Sydney.

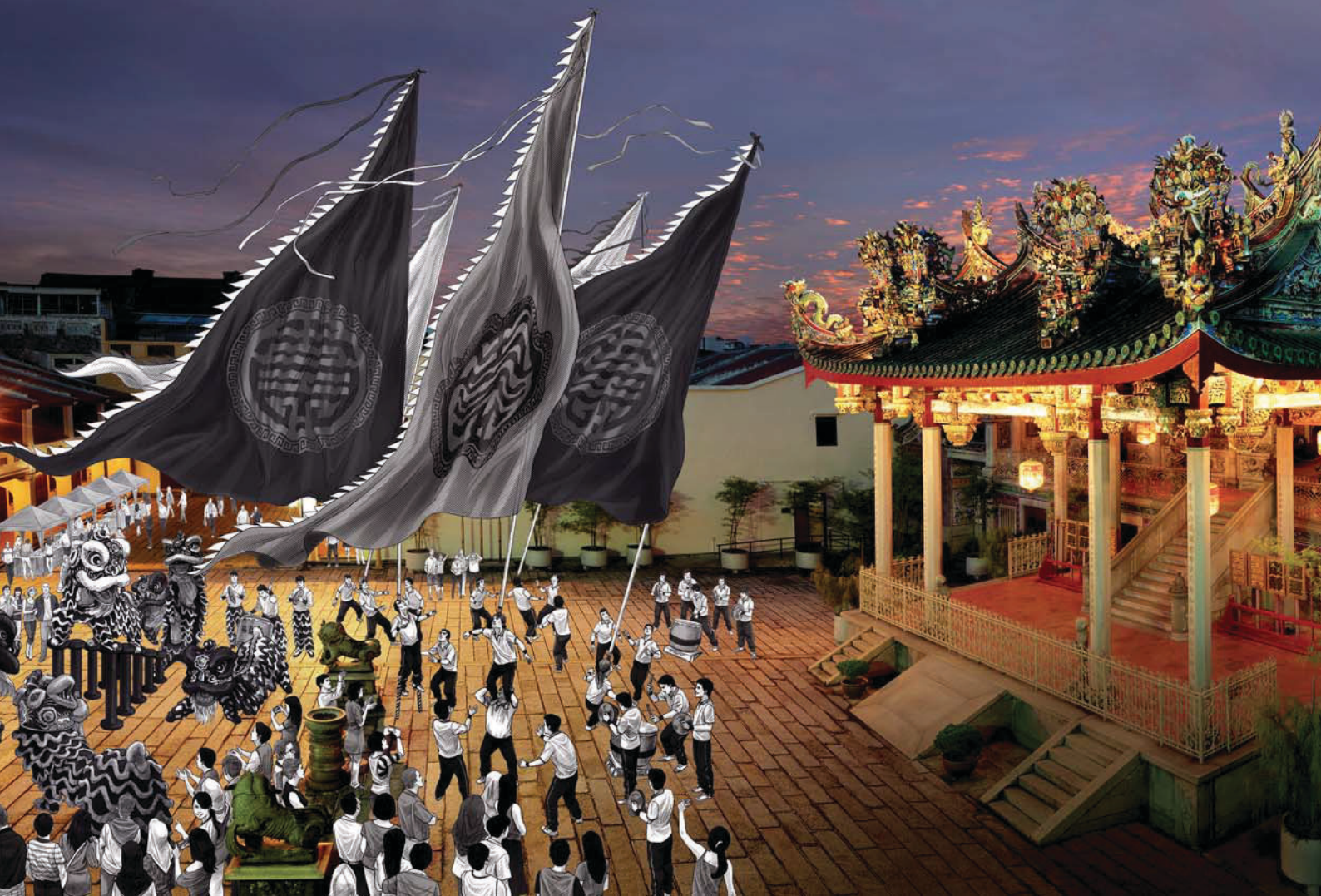




# Malaysia

## Asia like never before

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