



On tour

NOTHING could dampen the first day of MEETINGS 2014 that the Auckland Convention Bureau had lined up for those on the Auckland famil.



It began with the merry funsters from the Con Artists on each of the coaches that made their way around some of the city's venues.

Starting with the Victory Convention Centre, a bespoke venue seating 220, followed by fush n' chips at Seafood Central, with tier seating and plenty of space, the group made its way to Orakei Bay, an elegant waterside venue with multiple spaces and finally Hauraki Blue Cruises' Ipipiri, the largest cruise ship based in NZ with event spaces.

The evening saw Conventions and Incentives NZ ceo Sue Sullivan welcome hosted buyers from all over to the event in the ballroom of the Pullman Hotel. Today, the work begins! *Jill*

Bid to boost Oz events to NZ

TOURISM New Zealand (TNZ) and the Australasian Society of Association Executives (AuSAE) have formed a marketing agreement in a bid to boost the number of Australian business events held in New Zealand.

Announced at MEETINGS 2014 in Auckland today, the two year agreement was a commitment from AuSAE to promote the country as a business events destination to its members and improve the capability of New Zealand associations to host an international conference, TNZ said.

TNZ director of trade, PR and major events Justin Watson said the partnership was a great step toward growing the value of business events out of Australia.

He told **BEN** Australia was NZ's largest source market for business events and NZ's proximity and cost comparability meant there was a lot of untapped business in Australia, he said.

According to the Tourism 2025 framework, in 2010 the economic contribution of convention and incentive visitors to NZ was worth NZ\$207m.

The agreement included a program of activity with NZ workshops and events in Australia and educational visits for Australian AuSAE members, TNZ said.

Watson said the agreement was mutually beneficial, allowing TNZ to reach AuSAE's 10,000 members and with a funding commitment made to AuSAE which was commercially confidential.

A conference bidding program would also be held in NZ to improve the quality of bids for international events, TNZ said.

"This is a unique opportunity to reach a large number of senior executives from a range of associations who may be considering holding a business event," Watson said.

Air NZ conf support

AIR New Zealand has launched a conference support program in a bid to attract more international conferences to the country.

The program will involve Air NZ supporting travel to New Zealand for pre-event site inspections and offering discounted travel rates to the country for delegates and their companions.

Preference would be given to applications to the program for events taking place outside of the peak tourist months, the airline said.

Air NZ chief commercial and sales officer Cam Wallace said the meetings and conferences sector was an important one and the airline was keen to work with industry to stimulate growth.

Applications open from 01 Jul and eligibility criteria includes that at least 150 international participants are expected to attend.

For more information, **CLICK HERE**.

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business events news

18th June 2014

MEETINGS off and running

MORE than 600 business event and conference organisers have converged on Auckland for MEETINGS 2014 with more than 6,000 meetings scheduled for today and tomorrow.

Some 185 exhibitors representing every region of New Zealand will be on show at Auckland's ASB Showgrounds where it will be staged for the first time across two pavilions.

Organised by Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ), the event is convened with the support of Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) and Air New Zealand.

CINZ ceo Sue Sullivan said the organisation had been taking hosted buyers and media out into all regions to meet the exhibitors and to discover first hand everything NZ had to offer.

Six regions including Rotorua, Taupo and Christchurch have just hosted 56 Australian buyers on familiarisation tours this weekend while TNZ is taking its



contingent of international buyers and media on post-MEETINGS familiarisation tours around the country.

MEETINGS will be staged for the first time across two pavilions.

Event manager Jeanette Stanton said increasing interest from



buyers in New Zealand's luxury or boutique offerings had led to creation of a new dedicated luxury exhibition space, The Luxury Collection.

Pictured above enjoying the Auckland famil from left is Romina Izzo, Travel with a Twist; Roger Buckley, SSSI; Tegan Edwards, 212F; and Julie Burton, Southern Cross Conferences & Events.

Pictured left are the Con Artists who entertained the Auckland famil group (see **Jill's Column** for more).

NCC meetings offer

CANBERRA'S National Convention Centre (NCC) has a new winter conferencing offer.

From \$69 per person per day, the package includes complimentary WiFi for email and browsing, room hire and buffet lunch - **CLICK HERE** for more info.

MEANWHILE the NCC received an award recognising its contribution to the Canberra business events community and for 25 years of membership at the ACT & Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry Awards dinner.

Conference funding

THE 2014-15 NSW budget allocated \$500,00 over two years to develop a Western Sydney tourism, events and conference strategy in partnership with the industry.

MEANWHILE Destination NSW is to receive \$124.8m in government funding, up slightly from \$124.2m in 2013-14, which Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF) ceo Ken Morrison said would allow the organisation to continue marketing the state at home and abroad and continue to develop its events calendar.

TTF said Destination NSW total revenue would be \$130.8m.

CLICK HERE for the budget.

Magnificent meetings

137 Pillars House, a 30 suite boutique hotel in Thailand's Chiang Mai, has a 'Magnificent Meeting Package' priced at about A\$586 per person and valid to 31 Oct.

The package includes two nights in a Rajah Brooke Suite for one and complimentary use of meeting room for a half day, as well as complimentary high speed WiFi access.

Additionally, one room on a complimentary basis is offered with every seven paid rooms, with a maximum of two rooms.

For more information or to book, email:

sales@137pillarshouse.com.

Gray's Say

Peter Gray, an independent Motivation Consultant, presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the Conference and Incentive industries.



IT'S MORE FUN IN THE PHILIPPINES

I WAS delighted to accept an invitation recently to speak at MICECON 2014 held in Clark, Pampagna, just outside Manila. It has been some 11 years since I was last in the Philippines and the country's business events industries have taken a beating because of a number of factors, not the least of these being terrorism in the south and earthquakes in the north. However, these are now well under control and the Philippines Department of Tourism (DOT) is determined not just to regain its previous high position as a preferred destination within the ASEAN Economic Community but to exceed it. And I really think they'll do it.

Filipinos don't do things by halves and the conference opening and closing ceremonies and the social events were testimony to their dedication to the cause. The conference was attended by some 400 people from all over Asia and a small group from Australia. Speakers were mainly from the USA and covered a range of subjects including a fascinating insight into how demanding it can be to satisfy the increasing number and types of dietary requirements demanded by meeting attendees.

Manila is within the range of most incentive travel reward

requirements, just eight hours flying time from Melbourne or Sydney, and the standard of hotels is good. There are many familiar international hotel group properties to choose from including Shangri-La and IHG and Filipinos are amongst the world's most hospitable. Manila is still suffering from earthquake damage which doesn't help the traffic situation if you need to get across town. Once you've been to Manila you'll



never complain about traffic in any Australian city again! But it's certainly entertaining to see the antics of those travelling in Jeepneys - the overcrowded but kitsch mode of transport that was the inheritance left by the Americans after WWII.

With both international and domestic airports now situated in one place, changing flights is quick and easy and other Philippine destinations such as Cebu are only a short flight away. If you haven't considered the Philippines for a conference or as an incentive travel reward you should do so; the country has a lot to offer.

Peter Gray can be contacted at peter.gray@motivatingpeople.net.

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ICC Sydney hotel ticked

THE International Convention Centre Sydney at Darling Harbour (ICC Sydney) Hotel has been approved as part of the NSW government's \$2.5b project to transform Darling Harbour.

The luxury hotel is set to have 35 storeys and up to 616 rooms as well as a ballroom and meeting or function centre.

Set at the northern end of the ICC Sydney and western side of Cockle Bay, construction is expected to start at the end of this year, with about 7,700 jobs created in total.

The approval was announced by Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner and Minister for Planning Pru Goward, with Stoner saying the hotel would be a spectacular addition to the precinct.

Goward said the world class convention centre would have a world class hotel to match.

Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF) ceo Ken Morrison said the hotel would allow Sydney to fully capitalise on the new precinct.

"The hotel will not only provide visitors with a convenient and comfortable accommodation option it will also provide immediate and ongoing employment opportunities.

"This development will also help support the visitor economy which already directly employs 158,000 people across New South Wales and supports a further 109,000 jobs, contributing a total of \$28.4 billion to gross state product."

Accommodation Association of



Australia ceo Richard Munro said the new hotel would enhance Australia's business tourism offering.

"The new hotel is set to be a symbolic exclamation point in the critical redevelopment of what is a major piece of tourism infrastructure.

"While leisure tourism is important, visitors travelling for business purposes - notably to attend meetings and conventions - are a mainstay for accommodation businesses."

Credit: HASSELL + Populous and Darling Harbour Live

Awarding event

Time for event organisers, industry suppliers and organisations to start planning entries and submitting events for the Australian Event awards for achievements from 01 Jul 2013 to 30 Jun 2014.

Entry fees need be paid by 14 Jul to receive the Early Starters discount before entries close on 11 Aug.

The awards will be announced on 11 Nov at Doltone House Pymont.

To find out more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Dockside Pavilion



WORK has begun on the Dockside Pavilion Darling Harbour, the majority of which is taking place on Glebe Island.

Starting with the assembly of the floating pontoon on which the Pavilion will sit, this process is expected to take about six weeks before being towed to Cockle Bay to be assembled.

The venue is slated to be open for business in late July.

Vivid lights up Sydney



THE Vivid festival had a record number of attendees and boosted Accor hotel's occupancy rates.

The festival, which ran from 23 May to 09 Jun, saw 1.43m attendees which was 79% more attendees than in 2013, NSW deputy premier Andrew Stoner said.

Of these, 19,500 were international visitors on Vivid travel packages and 9,700 were visitors from China.

Accor said average occupancy rate across the 13 hotels of 87.1% over the Vivid Festival, up 6.6% year on year.

The Pullman Quay Grand Sydney Harbour had an occupancy rate growth of 6.5% year on year to 91.3% as well as a 21% growth year on year in food and beverages.

Harbour Rocks Hotel had an 8.4% growth in occupancy rate.



THOSE venturing into Los Angeles' Koreatown might be surprised to find that they are being encouraged to try pot.

Available at The Line Hotel, it's not the stuff that is smoked or made into hash brownies, but a cheekily-named restaurant, 'POT', from Korean native chef, Roy Choi, a man responsible for the city's Kogi Korean taco trucks.

At the Line Hotel, he's doing Korean food "through the eyes of an American with Korean blood."

Hotel Chatter reported while it was not the most traditional Korean food it was "crazy tasty" and the entire experience of POT, which had a vibe that was both laid-back and turned up, was apparently not to be missed.

What's more, it's entirely legal!



Cairns celebrates

CAIRNS Convention Centre is celebrating May as its biggest month since opening in 1996.

The Centre hosted the Australia Papua New Guinea Business Forum, the Danks National Trade Conference and Exhibition and the 16th International Symposium on Fish Nutrition and Feeding, among other events, which combined brought 3,400 delegates to Cairns, pumping more than \$18.5m for the month into the region.

Tourism and Events Queensland ceo Leanne Coddington said the feedback from her team was that Cairns Convention Centre over delivered on every aspect of the organisation's event.

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