



## Good morning Vietnam!

THERE has been plenty of interest in



Austrade's search for an event management company to organise its Australian Export Awards (**BEN** 07 May).

You have until 02 Jun at 3pm to register - check out today's **BEN** for a bit more info.

If you are the winner, we'd love to hear a bit about your company - whether you are large or small and what it took to win.

MEANWHILE **BEN** is accompanying a PCO family to Vietnam, departing this weekend and hosted by InterContinental Hotels & Resorts, Vietnam Airlines and Destination Asia.

It promises to be an intriguing 10 days of discovering this amazing country from Ho Chi Min City to Danang and all points in between, including Cu Chi Tunnels and an overnight on Halong Bay.

There'll also be plenty of interesting cultural interaction with the local people, as well as a look at all the reasons why Vietnam, in concert with some of InterContinental's resort hotels, is such an exciting proposition as a meeting and incentive destination.

I'll be posting back as I go along.  
 xxx Jill

## The final countdown

IT'S just two days to go before the MEA 2014 conference being held in Kuala Lumpur swings into action from 14 to 17 May.

More than 300 delegates will be packing their bags and 30 speakers are jetting in from Australia, Asia and Europe, 57 awards finalists are crossing their fingers and there will be 21 thought provoking, interactive and amazing sessions from which to choose.

Download the app and send a message using the hashtag #MEAKL2014

Chocks away!

## Dubai events interest up

AUSTRALIAN incentive groups are increasingly placing Dubai at top of mind as a destination of choice but conversion is still a work in progress.

Speaking with **Business Events News** in Dubai, director for Dubai Tourism in Australia Julie King said business events visitors were believed to account for about 20% of Australian arrivals.

King dismissed opinions Dubai was beyond the reach of Aussie business and incentive markets due to its location; more than 13 hours from Australia's east coast.

"There are a lot of incentives that go out to Europe, so we are finding that a lot of business that we are targeting goes long-haul," she told **BEN** at Arabian Travel Market last week.

"Dubai is still very much at the top of their interest level with many incentive organisers and event companies, and I do believe we can attract it but we need to put a more targeted focus on it now."

King added there has been a "big shift" from the local events market now mulling the emirate.

"At AIME (Asia Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo) this year, there was a lot of interest in Dubai for incentive visitors, and it is sitting there at the top again as a desired destination."

She told **BEN** conversions from 'looking to booking' were in the "early stages."

King lauded Dubai-based carrier Emirates and its int'l alliance with Qantas, saying the pact appeals to business events organisers who are able to take advantage of ample air capacity between Australia and Dubai (currently up to 98 weekly services).

Further, she flagged plans to add a dedicated team member to handle the business events market from Australia "in the longer term."

MEANWHILE, convention & business tourism director for Dubai Convention Bureau, an arm

of the Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing, Steen Jakobsen admitted the emirate needs additional events space.

Jakobsen said Dubai was a "strong believer in the incentive business" and expects bigger groups to visit following the success of the recent Nu Skin incentive from China (**BEN** Wed).



However, Jakobsen said looking at Dubai in the long run, it would need more capacity for meetings and conferences and exhibitions.

"We do need more space."

Separately, His Excellency Helal Saeed Al Marri, ceo of Dubai World Trade Centre, told **BEN** the emirate's current exhibition centre is set for an expansion which will see 22,000 sqm of net exhibition space added by 2016.

Jakobsen and King are pictured at ATM at Dubai's Dept of Tourism Commerce Marketing stand.

## Marriott's global app

MARRIOTT Rewards members in nearly 500 hotels can now check-in and out using a smartphone app.

First introduced last year in select hotels, the app allows guests to check-in the day before their arrival with a notification when the room is ready.

On arrival they walk up to the expedited mobile check-in desk where their pre-programmed key card will be waiting for them.

At the end of their stay a push notification alerts the guest that mobile checkout is available with the bill sent to their email.

The Marriott Mobile app can be downloaded from the iTunes Store and Google Play.

## More Austrade info

WE heard you and your interest in the Austrade event management tender for the Australian Export Awards, and apparently so did Austrade - the organisation has published further information in response to questions submitted.

Austrade said the location details would be released to tenderers in mid-May - so this week, presumably.

The previous company who worked on the event was Fourth Wall Events Pty Ltd.

For the extra info or the original tender, **CLICK HERE**, but be aware you'll need to register (for free) for the tenders website to access current tender documents.



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# business events news

12th May 2014

## Hilton Darwin's \$5m look



**THE** Hilton Darwin has completed its \$5m renovation project including the redesign of its executive rooms, touching up of guest bathrooms and a new fitness centre.

The refurbishment was a vote of confidence in the Northern Territory's tourism industry, Minister for Tourism Matt Conlan said, which the Government was committed to growing.

"The \$5 million refurbishment project by the Hilton Darwin is a great boost for our economy and will enhance the range of accommodation choices available in the Territory to visitors and

business travellers alike."

The hotel has 236 rooms, five meeting rooms and is in the CBD.

Hilton Northern Territory area general manager Martin Kendall said the refurbishment would be a boost to the hotel's existing offering.

The suites, rooms and bathrooms had been refurbished with the corporate and high end traveler in mind, visiting Darwin for conventions and events, a spokesperson for the hotel said.

The hotel features 700 sqm of events floor, a grand ballroom with seating for up to 300 and a 24 hour business centre.



**Assistant Manager/Manager, Oceania (Based in Sydney)**  
Singapore Tourism Board

Singapore Tourism Board – the NTO promoting Singapore as a leisure and business destination – is seeking a motivated and dynamic individual to join our team!

Reporting to the Area Director (Oceania), you will drive visitorship to Singapore as a business/leisure destination through identifying/ converting Business Event leads; maintaining/building relationships with strategic partners (corporates, airlines, wholesale and retail) and travel trade on campaigns, educationals/product updates.

You should be an Australian resident with strong communication and negotiation skills and relevant tertiary qualifications with 3-5 years of relevant experience. A self-starter who's results-oriented, a good network of industry contacts and knowledge of Singapore would be useful.

A competitive remuneration package and training/personal development opportunities await, so submit your detailed resume and expected salary by 30 May 2014 to [stb-infosingapore@stb.gov.sg](mailto:stb-infosingapore@stb.gov.sg)



## Eat for a good cause!

Spice up your team building day or work social with a delicious suburban Taste Food Tour!

Call **02 9707 0800** or [CLICK HERE](#)  
[www.tastefoodtours.org.au](http://www.tastefoodtours.org.au)

# TASTE

Taste is a social enterprise, our profits are invested into community initiatives.

## Taking aim at Melb



**A GROUP** of Melbourne based meeting and event planners were hosted by the Flinders Hotel last Tuesday evening at a 'Bringing the Flinders Hotel to you' showcase.

Held at the Blackman Art Series Hotel in St Kilda Rd, the showcase featured executive chef Pierre Khodja from Terminus Restaurant at Flinders Hotel, who impressed the guests with his 'Master of Spice' skills.

The Flinders Hotel underwent a massive renovation and refurbishment that has transformed it into a culinary destination with a function/ conference space for up to 180 delegates, theatre-style.

'Quarters', the hotel's accommodation, has 40 boutique rooms with an additional 26 overflow motel rooms available.

**Pictured** from left are Liberty Events' Alana Fitzpatrick, Venues Galore's Robyn Zingler, Liberty Events' Elisa Mariani and Flinders Hotel owner/proprietor Karen Inge.



## A Vivid offer

**IN** preparation for the visitors who will shortly converge on Sydney to enjoy Vivid from 23 May to 09 Jun, Metro Apartments Darling Harbour has a special deal - \$199 per night stay (Sunday to Friday) in a loft-style apartment (minimum two night stay), with \$100 extra for Saturday night and complimentary glow bracelets.

To book online, visit [www.metroapartmentssydney.com](http://www.metroapartmentssydney.com).

## Tourism Fiji ceo gone

**TOURISM** Fiji has removed Rick Hamilton as ceo following his signing with a tourism office of a competing travel destination.

The organisation said when Hamilton took on the Fiji role, it was understood his family would relocate but as this had not been possible, he no longer wanted to be separated from his family.

The board expected to announce a replacement soon, and acknowledged his role in establishing the team that coordinated the inaugural Fijian Tourism Expo, which attorney general and Minister for Tourism Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum said had been an "unprecedented success" and the largest-ever congregation of tourism buyers and businesses in Fiji's history.

A measure of this success was the quality of collaboration between participants, he said.

## WIN A STAY AT THE HOLIDAY INN



This week **BEN** is offering one lucky reader the chance to win 1 Night's Accommodation in a Superior Room including breakfast for 2 at the Holiday Inn Darling Harbour, courtesy of Holiday Inn Darling Harbour and JC Travel Professionals.

The prize includes:  
- 1 Night's accommodation for 2 in a Superior room  
- Full buffet breakfast for 2 at Shipley's Restaurant

For your chance to win, email your answer to the question below by Fri 16th May to: [comp@businesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:comp@businesseventsnews.com.au).

**To win tell us in 25 words or less why you deserve this package prize?**

Click here for Terms and Conditions





# business events news

12th May 2014

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## GCEC razzle dazzles



**WHEN** the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre (GCEC) hosted a familiarisation for a group of NSW conference and event organisers, it started at Coolangatta Airport in the true 'Razzle, Dazzle' theme of the famil, burning up the highway on an Harley Davidson ride.

This was followed by a VIP tour of the convention centre before taking part in a tapas master class, hosted by GCEC executive

chef Garry Kindred and chef de partie Todd Hyde.

That evening the group was treated to a bird's eye view of the 1950s show, Shake, Rattle 'n' Roll, dressed for the part in neckscarves, white tees and jeans.

The final day they toured nearby Broadbeach accommodation properties Sofitel, Meriton and Peppers before some fun and games on the beach, as well as local culinary gems and hot spots.



**CAN'T** bear to leave your best friend in a kennel when you head off travelling? Fear not, help is at hand.

Metro Hotels has teamed up with [FindADogMinder.com.au](http://FindADogMinder.com.au)

to offer guests who book at a Metro property in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane the opportunity to connect with a pet-sitter who can mind their dog in a home environment.

Metro Hotels has taken the pooch friendly theme a step further and, following an online promotion last month to name their new canine mascot, Metro Max has been selected as the winning name.

You'll see Metro Max being used in future advertising.



## Getting to Know: Manly

by: Jill Varley

Think of a beach destination for a conference or event where they have the facilities and expertise to handle groups, and chances are you'll be looking at somewhere beachy along the NSW or Queensland coastline.

Yet, in close proximity to the Sydney CBD, there is somewhere that is infinitely more cost effective and geared to the market both in the professionalism of its hotels and in the choice of its remarkable leisure activities – Manly.

Just 11 km from the Sydney CBD, it is a 15 minute jet boat or 30 minute scenic ferry ride from Circular Quay; as the original slogan so aptly states 'Seven miles from Sydney - 100 miles from care.'

Depending on the size of the group, there are three notable hotels - the Novotel Sydney Manly Pacific, Sebel Manly Beach and the Q Station – all Accor properties.

The Novotel has 213 guest rooms, 72 of which are newly refurbished ocean view rooms with 10 two-bedroom suites. There are nine function rooms with a capacity for up to 550 people, two restaurants and three bars.

Tucked into the southern corner of Manly beach is the Sebel with 83 rooms and apartments, with six flexible function and meetings rooms, catering for up to 180 delegates. Located within the hotel is the privately owned Manly Wine restaurant – a fun venue for groups, while their funky Zebra Cage can be hired for up to 20 people.

Both the Novotel and the Sebel are so close to the beach, it makes them perfect for all sorts of beach activities.

Then there's the very historic Quarantine Station, now known as the Q-Station, in one of Sydney Harbour National Parks most scenic locations. Established in 1832 and used up until 1984 to quarantine immigrants, its numerous historic rooms and settings make it unique for an event or meeting.

Helping businesses reach their full potential, local company BeChallenged with a national reputation runs programs and workshops in a fun and collaborative way.

