



Accor milestone

ACCORHOTELS has reached a historic milestone, this week confirming a total of 400 Indigenous Australians are employed by the hotel operator.

Currently, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 4% of its 10,000 employees, with Accor saying it hopes to reach the goal of 7% by 2018.

The Aussie hotel operator will this year implement 27 Indigenous job-ready employment programs across Darwin, Kakadu, Mackay & Broome.

In depth look at NZICC

NEW Zealand International

Convention Centre general manager, Simon Jamieson, presented an in-depth look into Auckland's newest conference venue at the Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME)

held in Melbourne yesterday.

Slated to open from mid 2019, Jamieson told **BEN** that discussions on forward bookings have already commenced, remarking the "benefit the NZICC will deliver for the economy not only in job creation and delegate spend, but in the sharing of knowledge is going to deliver real returns for New Zealand".

Jamieson gave a snapshot of the new venue, which offers 32,000sqm of floor space, 24 meeting rooms, 1,327 car parks, retail food & beverage options.

Once completed, the NZ\$471 million convention centre will be capable of hosting conferences of around 3,000 people and one-off

events of around 4,000 guests.

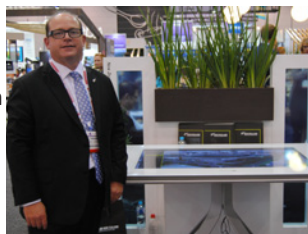
Also presenting at AIME was Auckland Tourism Events and Economic Development (ATEED) general manager, Vivien Bridgewater,

who commented that the new development will "further position Auckland as world-class business events destination...to give [them] the opportunity to attract internationally influential guests to Auckland, helping showcase the wider city offering with the objective to them returning to study, invest or play".

"We welcome the smart NZICC convention centre that will support the future growth of the business events sector for Auckland," she said.

To experience a virtual tour of the NZICC, **CLICK HERE**.

Pictured above is Simon Jamieson, gm, at the NZICC AIME stand, yesterday.



Parkroyal day-use

PARKROYAL Melbourne Airport is offering business travellers and leisure guests use of a day room from just \$85 for three hours.

Positioned within walking distance of both the domestic and international airport, the new offering will give business and leisure travellers the option for rest in between long-haul flights or continuing back home.

Pricing for five-hours commences at \$105 and eight-hours at \$130, and includes use of all the hotel's facilities.

Visit parkroyalhotels.com.

Shangri-La Doha

THE brand-new Shangri-La Hotel, Doha opened this week.

The five-star 50-storey property offers a mix of 272 guest rooms & serviced apartments and a range of retail and dining offerings.

LUX diamond partner

LUXURY travel exhibition, Luxperience, has announced Tourism New Zealand as its 'Diamond Partner' this year.

Tourism NZ director trade, PR & major events, Rene de Monchy, said the group is "excited to attend Luxperience 2016."

"Luxperience is a key event on the luxury travel trade calendar that we have supported since its inception five years ago," commented Monchy.

"Returning this year as Diamond Sponsors will see us continue to maximise the opportunities the event presents for the premium market - connecting us with the right global luxury travel sellers and media to increase high-value visitors to New Zealand."

Luxperience will take place at the Australian Technology Park from 18 - 21 Sep this year.

Visit luxperience.com.au.

Star Syd \$1b stake

THE Star Sydney yesterday unveiled proposed plans to invest \$1 billion over the next five years to transform its harbour-side property.

Five hundred million dollars has already been committed to phase 1 expansion plans, with a further \$500 million proposed to erect a new hotel tower and a connected ribbon development, featuring food and beverage outlets and additional meeting & conference spaces.

If realised, Star Sydney general manager John Autelitano revealed the new development would boost its current accommodation offerings to beyond 1,000 rooms.

Autelitano said for Sydney to "remain at the forefront of the tourism boom, more accommodation, facilities and event spaces are required".

"The proposed \$1 billion in development works would meet growing business and leisure market demands, ensuring Sydney's reputation for quality and luxury."

"This growth in Australia's offering and strong international interest has the potential to boost overnight expenditure in Australia to up to \$140 billion annually by 2020," he said.

IHG MICE uptick

THE InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) reported a 7.5% increase in conference revenue and a 10.4% increase in confirmed business year on year.

The group's director of commercial Australasia, Jenny Morrell, attributed the uptick to continued strong partnerships with PCOs and meeting planners; the new IHG Business Rewards program and the first full year of trading of the InterContinental Double Bay.

Morrell confirmed to guests at the annual IHG AIME dinner that the group will continue to forge successful relationships with the MICE community.



PARIS has the Eiffel Tower, New York gets the Statue of Liberty and Sydney proudly displays the Opera House - and it'd be safe to assume those famous landmarks are safe from thieves.

However Kiwi capital Wellington has had its iconic landmark stolen, well...part of it anyway.

A big yellow bucket was stolen from the kinetic Bucket Fountain sculpture late Sunday evening, leaving locals puzzled by where it could have possibly went.

Wellington City Council spokesman Richard MacLean told **Stuff** "it is safe to say, we want our bucket back. It's large and yellow and made of fibre glass".

Security footage is now being reviewed to try and identify the culprit.



P&O events surge

VALUE for money, having everything under one roof and the "wow factor" of cruising is driving bookings for P&O Cruises' corporate product, director of sales Ryan Taibel said at AIME.

P&O has seen a surge in interest which intensified with the launch of the new ships in Nov and has "really strong" forward bookings.



business events news

25th February 2016

AIME 2016 comes to a close



THE 2016 Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo came to a close yesterday, having this year brought together 4,776 meeting industry professionals, 3,067 visitors and 488 hosted buyers over the two-day expo.

A particular highlight this year was the back-by-popular-demand AIME Welcome Event, which saw delegates experience "One Year in Melbourne in One Night" by sampling tasty themed delicacies from the region.

Keeping up with the theme, models adorned in Melbourne Cup attire strutted their stuff on stage, before an assemblage of fire breathers and contemporary dancers performed an interpretive rendition of all the Victorian Capital had to offer.

On the show floor, buyers and visitors were given the chance to experience new disruptive technologies making their way into the MICE industry, such as virtual reality headsets (by Scann3d and EMG) and Cave Automatic Virtual Environments debuted at the AIME hub and Singapore Tourism hub, respectively.

AIME will take place 21-22 Feb next year.

Pictured (above) are ladies from the Northern Territory Convention Bureau on the AIME showfloor (from left) Louise Kitchingham, business development executive; Raelene Ohlson, business development and Georgia Galton.

Below we have Japan specialists Yume Ishibashi and Melissa Ong from the Japan Meetings & Events stand.



The ladies **below** from Townsville North Queensland were rearing for a busy day of meetings ahead.



MCEC presents MADE



BUSINESS Events News was spoiled silly yesterday at an exclusive media lunch held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibitions Centre during the Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo.

Hosting the lunch was MCEC's new executive chef, Peter Haycroft along with his team of chefs, who gave attendees the chance to experience a feast created entirely of locally sourced and sustainable ingredients, inspired by the centre's philosophy "MADE fresh, in house, by hand".

The four-course lunch demonstrated the centre's ability to provide restaurant quality dining to delegates attending conferences at the MCEC, placing a strong emphasis on fresh foods

that are both delicious and healthy.

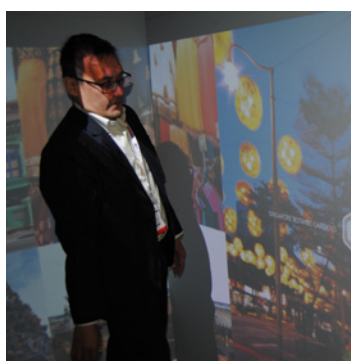
The meals were paired with a series of red and white wines expertly selected by MCEC's own sommelier, Fraser Townshend.

Pictured above (from left) is Italian pastry chef, Alessandro Bartesaghi and executive chef Peter Haycroft of the MCEC.

Enjoying the food **below** (middle) is Melbourne Convention Bureau chief executive, Karen Bollinger, with media guests.



Left: Singapore Tourism Board regional director of Oceania John Conceicao gives **BEN** a taste of Singapore using new CAVE technology.



Right: Minister for Tourism John Eren and MCB chief executive Karen Bollinger tries out virtual reality at the AIME Hub created by the EMG team.



Business Events News is Australia's newest online publication dedicated to the vibrant meetings, incentives, conferences and events sector.

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