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EDITOR: BONNIE TAI



## MCB OPENS TENDER FOR AIME FUTURE

**THE** Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) is inviting exhibition and event organisations to submit an expression of interest to undertake the management and operation of the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) from 2019-2021.

“MCB is committed to pursuing excellence in the business events industry through promoting Melbourne as a world-class destination, thus securing vital business for the state,” the bureau said in a statement today.

“Essential to meeting this commitment is the promotion of best business practice in tendering and contract



management, together with the establishment of the highest ethical principles”.

The tender process will close 30 Jan at 5pm, with Reed Exhibitions - the current contract holder - invited back to submit an EoI.

**CLICK HERE** for more

information.

**MEANWHILE**, tickets for this year’s AIME Welcome Event are now on sale.

Taking place at Carousel by food&desire, the soiree will “showcase the breadth and depth of the state’s thriving creative industries”.

“This year’s event will enable attendees to revel in the imaginative creative scene spanning arts, culture, screen and design, that our city is so renowned for,” said Karen Bolinger, chief executive officer, Melbourne Convention Bureau.

Following a competitive tender process, boutique events agency Solution Entertainment was chosen to produce the Welcome Event.

“With fresh eyes and contemporary approach we anticipate the event will exceed expectations,” commented Solution Entertainment’s director Brad Hampel.

For more details or to buy tickets, **CLICK HERE**.

### Vegas bumper year

**LAS** Vegas experienced “record breaking” convention visitors in 2016, welcoming more than 6.3m business travellers during the year.

Overall visitation growth was also at an all-time high, with 42.9 million people arriving at the entertainment capital in 2016 - smashing 2015’s record of 42.3 million.

“We look forward to aggressively marketing the destination around the world to continue attracting more visitors and break the record again this year,” said Rossi Ralenkotter, ceo, Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority.

### Hyatt sets eyes on Hobart, Tas

**HYATT** Hotels & Resorts has penned a management deal with Elizabeth Tasmania to open a Hyatt Centric hotel in Hobart, Tasmania.

The 221-key property will be the first Hyatt Centric-branded hotel in the country and will offer a restaurant, bar and flexible meeting facilities.

Construction for the newbuild is expected to start mid this year, with the property to welcome its first guests by 2019.

The latest hotel will join Hyatt Australia’s existing portfolio which includes Park Hyatt Sydney, Park



Hyatt Melbourne, Hyatt Hotel Canberra, Grand Hyatt Melbourne, Hyatt Regency Sydney, Hyatt Regency Perth and Hyatt Place Melbourne.

### Sofitel’s room81 awarded two hats



**SOFITEL** Gold Coast’s room81 has been awarded Two Chef Hats for the second year running.

“I feel extremely fortunate to have twice received such recognition for the work we have done,” said chef de cuisine Sam Moore.

“This accolade confirms that we are continuing to deliver not only quality food but also a memorable experience which is the overall goal for any restaurant,” he said.



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### STAR Wars creator

George Lucas has picked Los Angeles as the home for his newly announced \$1 billion Museum of Narrative Art.

More than 10,000 paintings and illustrations from Lucas' personal collection will fill the futuristically designed halls, as well as items from his Star Wars franchise.

The museum will be located in Exposition Park.



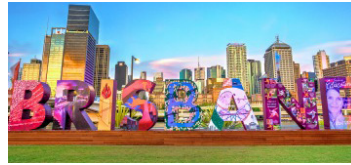
## DREAMTIME TO QLD

**THE** country's largest business events showcase, Dreamtime, is set to be held in Brisbane for the first time ever this year.

"Taking the event to Brisbane is an exciting development for a city that is continuing to raise its profile internationally as an ideal incentive destination," said Tourism Australia's managing director John O'Sullivan.

Federal Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Steven Ciobo said the event provided a perfect gateway for Australia's key international buyers to sample an array of experiences and destinations on offer in Australia.

"It will also give Brisbane and Queensland the opportunity to highlight its infrastructure, business event facilities and



experiences to buyers and media on the global stage," said Ciobo.

This year's program will see qualified buyers from key markets including Greater China, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, NZ, USA and the UK take part in a series of business sessions, a destination showcase and various networking events.

Dreamtime 2017 will be held from 03 - 06 Dec, with international buyers and media then continuing on education visits to other destinations.

### Dubai MICE success

**DUBAI** Business Events has announced its most successful year to date, last year winning 129 bids and proposals for upcoming meetings, incentive trips and conferences.

Future business events secured also climbed a whopping 79% last year, with the economic impact of the events estimated at close to AU\$150m.

Notable wins included the Asia Pacific League of Associations for Rheumatology Annual Congress 2017, World Congress of Cardiology 2018 and World Down Syndrome Congress 2020.

## A SNAPPING GOOD TIME IN QLD

**THE** popping sound as the jaws of a five metre saltwater crocodile snap together is a sound which is hard to forget, writes *Jasmine O'Donoghue*.

Hartley's Crocodile Adventures is roughly 40km up the coast from Cairns and offers an exhilarating insight into one of Australia's most dangerous animals.

The park runs boat tours on the croc-infested Hartley's Lagoon throughout the day where over 20 "salties" lie in wait for their dinner to sail by.

Quick witted and downright hilarious guides maneuver the vessel around the enclosure, pointing out the salties by name, including Eileen the three-legged croc, and Boris, the 40-year old who stands at 5m long.



The cruises put the reptiles through their paces, dangling chunks of meat from a (very long) stick, tempting them to thrust themselves into the air and crash back into the water, merely metres from

### incentives spotlight

the sides of the boat.

Hartley's runs a different presentation or wildlife interaction every half an hour and groups of 100 or more can explore the park exclusively.

"It's just so uniquely different, it's a very nice open venue, very endemic of what Tropical North Queensland is," Yvonne Bekkers, Groups & Events Reservations Coordinator told *Business Events News*.

Breakfasts through to dinners can be organised for groups, including the popular options of the three- to four-hour Hartley's Night Zoo and three-hour Hartley's Night Adventures.

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