



EDITOR: BONNIE TAI



GROUP MEETINGS AT SEA SURGE

P&O CRUISES' corporate group meetings at sea have seen an increase of 54% this year, with enquiries and bookings for its five ship fleet continuing to grow.

"There is no doubt that meetings at sea are appealing to organisers and delegates alike," said P&O's corporate group sales manager Rebecca Mutanen.

The hike in numbers of meetings at sea also translated into "fantastic growth" in overall delegate numbers, with the cruise line carrying 64% more corporate passengers in 2016



fantastic to see."

While 50% of bookings were for short break conferences, P&O also reported an increase in conference, incentive and meeting bookings on cruises of seven nights or more, with longer cruises now

than in 2015, said Mutanen.

"Not only have we attracted far more corporate guests onboard our ships this year, our forward bookings are very strong and we have a number of 2016 corporate groups booked to return next year which is

accounting for about a quarter of total group numbers.

Mutanen anticipates further growth in the MICE segment following the Jun addition of the 77,000 tonne *Pacific Explorer*, which offers two large venues and modern AV equipment.

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

Grand Hyatt p'ship with 50 Best



GRAND Hyatt Melbourne has been named as the supporting hotel partner for The World's 50 Best Restaurants in 2017.

The hotel will host visiting academy chairs for the week long program which is due to commence next Apr (**BEN** 17 Oct).

Luxperience pop-up event

ZURICH, Switzerland has been announced as Luxperience's 2017 pop-up destination.

The two-day event will be held on the 24-25 Apr at the Atlantis by Giardino, and will be attended by international buyers from around Europe, Asia, The Americas and Australia.

For more info contact beinspired@luxperience.com.au.

Luxperience will be held at Sydney's carriageworks between the 17-20 Sep.

Royal ICC's knock out event

BRISBANE'S Royal International Convention Centre will play host to Aftershock 27: Gods of War, a mixed martial arts fight card.

Almost 1,000 people are expected to attend the punch-out on 17 Dec, which is between Kaela 'Tiger' Banney and Ibu Takamori.

The venue will combine two of its halls to fit a 6.1 metre hexagon cage arena, while its meeting rooms will serve as warm up rooms for fighters.



Through the eyes of Middle Earth



TOURISM New Zealand has introduced a new quiz for PCOs to plan their pre and post conference experiences through the eyes of a Middle Earth character.

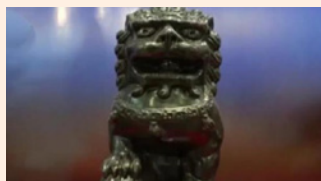
The quiz determines whether the PCO travels like a wizard, hobbit, elf or dwarf and offers travel recommendations around the country based on their personality types.

Find out your spirit character by **CLICKING HERE**.



■ **FRENCH** artist Nikolay Popov, who specialises in chocolate works of art, has brought his latest collection of tasty sculptures and paintings to an exhibition in northeast China.

On display are over 700 different chocolate depictions, including pieces modelled after the Eiffel Tower, the Terracotta Army, musical instruments & more.



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Explore the new ICC Sydney in the December issue of *travelBulletin*.

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Events Calendar

WELCOME to the **BEN** events calendar.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@businesseventsnews.com.au

21-22 FEB

AIME 2017; Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre; for more info visit www.aime.com.au

6 MAR

DMS Connect; Ivy Ballroom, Sydney; for details see www.destinationmarketing.com.au

7 MAR

DMS Connect; Park Hyatt Melbourne; for details see www.destinationmarketing.com.au

8-12 MAR

ITB 2017; Messe Berlin ExpoCenter City; for more info visit: www.itb-berlin.de

9 MAR

DMS Connect; The Maritime Room, Auckland; for details see www.destinationmarketing.com.au

30 APR - 2 MAY

MEA Conference; International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC); for more info see: www.meetingsevents.com.au

14-18 MAY

ATE 2017; International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC); details at: www.tradeevents.australia.com

28 JUL

Get Global – Where the World Meets; International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC); read more: www.getglobal.com.au

QLD GOVT APPROVES NEXT JUPITERS TOWER

The Star Entertainment Group will add 700 rooms to its Jupiters Gold Coast property after gaining approval from the Queensland Government for a new 200m tower (**BEN** 29 Sep).

Work on the hotel and apartment development will begin next year and is expected to be completed by 2020.

It will follow the addition of a 17-storey hotel at the property which is due to open ahead of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games.

"Our vision is to continue to



transform Jupiters into a truly integrated resort on the Gold Coast, and help position the tourism industry as an economic driver in Queensland," said Star md and ceo Matt Bekier.

Aussie PCOs set sight on Oman



A GROUP of Australian PCOs headed out to Oman recently on a famil hosted by Etihad Airways and Oman Tourism.

Departing Sydney and Melbourne on Etihad's A380 service, the delegates arrived at Al Husn Hotel at Shangri-La's Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa, which is nestled among rugged mountains.

During their stay, they took in Muscat's cultural sites such as the Grand Mosque, the Mutrah Souk and experienced the country's marine life on a dolphin watching cruise.

The MICE group is **pictured** above at Birkat Al Mawz.

PCO

Update

with Barry Neame



THE meetings and events industry has had a golden run, this year, says Barry Neame, the President of the Professional Conference Organisers Association.

He says the fall in the value of the Australian dollar has made domestic meetings managers adopt a 'stay at home' approach.

Mr Neame says there is an air of confidence within the Australian meetings and events industry that has not been seen for some time.

"The PCO conference recently held in Brisbane drew a record attendance and our association's membership numbers are well over the 400 mark.

"The conference showed an unsatisfied appetite from members for professional development and education. "All training workshops were booked out -- we had up to 100 people registering for one of the sessions."

Mr Neame said the PCO association would this year step up its efforts to embolden the skills of its members.

"Our webinar offerings will continue to be a key part of our service to members.

"In 2016 we offered 17 webinar sessions to our members, business partners and broader audience.



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