



## EMG debuts new hub

EMG Events will unveil a brand new interactive Community Hub at the Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) this week.

Fashioned as a central meeting place for attendees to meet, greet and connect, the new hub will showcase tech innovations such as 360 degree virtual reality which will showcase some of Melbourne's most iconic spots when worn.

EMG director, Peter Jack says that "VR technology is the next frontier in the MICE industry.

"By adopting this technology, venues, destinations, hospitality and events professionals will be able to deliver completely immersive user experiences like never before," he added.

To learn more about EMG and their offerings, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Fusion acquisition

ADELAIDE Expo Hire have successfully acquired Fusion Exhibition and Hire Services Darwin effective early this month.

Under the deal, both businesses will continue to operate as two separate entities, with Fusion based in Darwin and other in Adelaide.

Fusion is the NT's largest supplier of exhibition equipment, operating since 2004.

## Accor Mindful Meetings

ACCORHOTELS has unveiled a brand new MICE offering, dubbed Mindful Meetings by Mercure.

Designed around delivering meetings with "mindfulness" at its core, the new product will see that meetings rooms are appropriately themed, menu options are curated to boost concentration levels, and activities such as meditation are introduced to delegates throughout the event.

Director of sales, meetings and events for AccorHotels Australia, Charlotte Gutte, said "maintaining a healthy, balanced lifestyle when travelling on business or attending events can be a challenge, which is why we're really excited to launch the new mindful meetings concept at Mercure Hotels.

Nutrition and health writer Michele Chevalley Hedge has been enlisted to design a menu

for Mindful Meeting, utilising clean, whole food ingredients using only natural sugar or low sugar choices to keep delegates satisfied and alert.

Mindful Meetings was piloted at Mercure Sydney, fuelling positive feedback from clients and delegates.

MEANWHILE, AccorHotels will present its expanded MICE offerings at the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) in Melbourne this week, showcasing venues from across its network of 200 properties.

Promoted venues include Novotel Melbourne on Collins recently reopened conference spaces; the refurbished Mercure Geelong and the Mercure Grosvenor Hotel Adelaide, among others.

Visit AccorHotels' at the Melbourne Convention Centre at AIME from 23-24 Feb for more.

## BeSydney \$62m score

BUSINESS Events Sydney (BeSydney) has secured more than \$62 million worth of MICE wins since Jan this year, including 18 major international business events that are estimated to bring in over 14,400 delegates to the state capital.

"This is a phenomenal achievement," remarked BeSydney ceo, Lyn Lewis-Smith.

Lewis-Smith describes the strong start as "proof of the global confidence in Sydney as a premier MICE destination.

Four major association events have already been locked in, including the IEEE Panel of Conference Organisers POCO 2017 and the International Congress of Insurance: Mathematics and Economics '18.

So far this year 14 Asian incentive events are also on the cards, which will bring in more than 8,150 people to the city and deliver a direct expenditure to the local economy.

## AIME bus crash

THIS morning 15 AIME attendees on their way to a Showcase Tour were rescued from a bus after it crashed into Montague Street bridge.

BEN understands 11 passengers were sent to the hospital, but there are no critical injuries.

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**Edwina Fitzsimon,**  
 Business Development Manager  
 – Australia  
 P +61 455 045 656  
 E edwina.fitzsimon@aucklandnz.com

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# business events news

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## GCCEC grant program

**APPLICATIONS** close on Fri, 26 Feb for the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre's (GCCEC) Linkage Grant program.

The annual program awards five \$5,000 grants to individuals within South-East Queensland's academic and professional sector who will work with a bid team to secure conferences for the venue.

The grants can be used to fund travel, accommodation and registration expenses to the maximum value of the award. Winners will be announced in May, for more information, head to [www.gccec.com.au](http://www.gccec.com.au).

## LMC repping Meliá

LMC Marketing is now representing Meliá Hotels International in the Australian market, to drive sales and manage PR and marketing activities.

"LMC Marketing is well positioned to represent Meliá Hotels International in Australia with the team's understanding of the marketplace, key relationships and their proven ability to drive revenue," said John Casas, Meliá director of sales and marketing.

## AIME warm welcome



**THE** hosted buyers and media welcome event dazzled attendees last night at The Vista, in Margaret Court Arena at Melbourne Olympic Park.

Guests were first led through the revamped Margaret Court Arena, which can be transformed into an open air event in less than four minutes by opening the roof, before heading outside to an event overlooking the Yarra River.

Karen Bolinger, Melbourne Convention Bureau ceo filled in guests on what makes the city "the events capital of Australia, and we think of Asia-Pacific."

"It's not only about major events, for us it's also about business events and we feel that we're the complete destination to host them. We have many unique venues in this city."

The key to Melbourne "setting the pace" in the events space is not just the infrastructure, but the "team Melbourne" approach.

"We pride ourselves in being able to tailor an event and make it for you a once in a lifetime experience," Bolinger said.

**Pictured** above are: Michelle Crowley and Sherriff Karamat from the Professional Convention Management Association.

## Sebel Kirkton Park

**HUNTER** Valley's Sebel Kirkton Park has undergone a \$2.5 million refresh, set to be unveiled in Apr.

All 70 of its rooms have received a makeover, and a new restaurant, wine lounge, bar and lobby added.

Conference delegates will also be given the opportunity to experience its new 'Farm. Forage. Graze' initiative and learn about how their food is sourced and prepared on-site.

**CLICK HERE**, to learn more.

## CCCB unveils new vid

**THE** Christchurch and Canterbury Convention Bureau has launched a brand new promotional video - **CLICK HERE** to view the video.



Today's issue of **BEN** is coming to you courtesy of AIME.

**THE** Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) kicked off for media and hosted buyers last night with a cocktail event at The Vista, Olympic Park.

Today media will embark on a tour of The Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity and a hard hat tour of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre before it opens in Jul and Hosted Buyers will settle in for AIME Knowledge Sessions.

Tonight marks the return of the AIME Welcome Event, which promises to create a "memorable and uniquely 'Melbourne' experience in one night".

The expo will take over the MCEC floor tomorrow.

## Hawaii biz events up

**HAWAII** saw an additional 44% Aussies flock to the state for business events in 2015.

Hawaii Tourism Oceania (HTO) country manager Australia, Kerri Anderson attributed the growth to a combination of Hawai'i's business event facilities, additional airlift and upgrading of aircraft on the route.

This facilitated "competitively priced" airfares in 2015.

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**Postal address:** PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Australia

**Street address:** 4/41 Rawson St, Epping NSW 2121 Australia

**P:** 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) **F:** 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

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**Editor:** Bruce Piper [info@busesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:info@busesseventsnews.com.au)

**Contributors:** Guy Dundas, Nathalie Craig, Jasmine O'Donoghue, Bonnie Tai

**Advertising and Marketing:** Sean Harrigan and Magda Herdzik [advertising@busesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:advertising@busesseventsnews.com.au)

**Business Manager:** Jenny Piper [accounts@busesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:accounts@busesseventsnews.com.au)

