



ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIAN
CONVENTION BUREAUX INC.

THE ASSOCIATION
BEHIND THE BUREAUX
WHO MARKET
AUSTRALIA FOR
BUSINESS EVENTS

ADELAIDE BUREAU CHIEF APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF AACB

Damien Kitto, CEO of ACTA (Adelaide Convention Tourism Authority) has been elected the new President of the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB). Joining him as Vice President is Lynn Fairbrass, Manager of the Northern Territory's Convention Bureau.

Mr Kitto thanked outgoing President Sandra Chipchase for her tireless efforts over the past two years. Ms. Chipchase will remain on the Business Events Implementation Steering Group (BESIG) representing AACB member interests. The BESIG is an initiative of the Business Events Council of Australia (BECA), and established by Federal Minister Martin Ferguson AM, MP.

Commenting on the current economic environment; Mr Kitto said "whilst the world is currently in the midst of tough economic times, they also present a number of opportunities for AACB's membership as we consider new ways of not only conducting our own business, but also in the way we go about the business of attracting conventions and incentive visitation to Australia." "I look forward to the challenges and changes that will come about in the coming year and working with all AACB members and their partners to present Australia as a desirable destination within the highly competitive international business events market."

International business visitors spend around five times more than leisure tourists. These visitors offer Australia high yield and dispersal of up to 46% on pre or post tours to regional areas of Australia.

"As well as the obvious economic benefits for Australian venues, exhibition and staging companies, hotels, shops, restaurants and transport providers, these high profile international conventions and corporate events play an important role in sharing knowledge, building expertise, facilitating the growth and development of our key industries and leaving valuable legacies that will benefit Australians from all walks of life for years to come," Mr Kitto said.

"Australia boasts some of the world's best venues for staging conventions and exhibitions. When combined with our vast range of tourist attractions, nature, beaches, Indigenous history and culture, shopping, food and wine, this makes us a highly desirable business events destination." "Research has shown, that many of the delegates attending business events in Australia later return as tourists, often bringing family members with them."

"But we have a problem. Globally, Australia is currently ranked 9th in the world in terms of the number of associations meetings per country. We need to get that back to where it was a few years ago, and we hope that with Australian Government support and focus on the importance of the sector, coupled with the more aggressive collective marketing of Australia's Business Events capabilities, in conjunction with Business Events Australia and Austrade, we will be close to, if not in the Top 5 in the next few years" said Mr Kitto.

In welcoming Mr. Kitto to his new role, Mike Cannon – AACB's executive director said that "AACB's goal is to encourage development of initiatives that will persuade more and more members of the global business and associations communities to choose Australia for their business event experience. We want these communities to experience how professional and efficient we are, see how fantastic this country is, and come back again – for business and leisure".

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AACB Inc - REPRESENTING THE 16 LEADING CONVENTION BUREAUX OF AUSTRALIA
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Founding member of **BECA** (the Business Events Council of Australia)
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