

*Strategic Plan 2002 - 2006*

BUSINESS EVENTS





### Objectives

- Position Melbourne as a premier business events destination.
- Increase business event activity in regional Victoria.
- Maximise yield by achieving increased delegate and accompanying visitor numbers, length of stay and expenditure.
- Develop new business event segments to broaden Victoria's appeal to new target markets.
- Optimise new investment and infrastructure to attract business events.
- Gain greater commitment and unity from all major stakeholders.

### BACKGROUND

The business events market is very important to Victoria's economy and contributes significantly to strengthening the brand and profile of the State. It is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry according to International Visitor Survey research. Business events are generally made up of meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE). However, the corporate travel market is also an important element of this segment as it impacts greatly on the development of infrastructure and air services.

In addition to bottom line economic benefits, business events also raise awareness of the host city, assist the expansion of export markets, aid the exchange of expertise and generally support the development of local and national industries. The importance of the business events industry lies in its ability to create employment and income, to increase foreign exchange earnings and stimulate business activity within Australia and internationally. In addition, it helps promote Australia as an international tourist destination.

### IMPACTS ON VICTORIA

#### Size of the Business Events Industry

The Bureau of Tourism Research (BTR) estimates that more than 1.7 million delegates spent nearly \$1 billion in Victoria in 1999. The key areas of expenditure were accommodation, registration fees, food and beverages, shopping, entertainment and transport. Up to 50% of international delegates were also accompanied by a travel companion.

#### Return business

More than 50% of all business event delegates coming to Melbourne plan to return to Melbourne/Victoria within the next two years for the purpose of a holiday.

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# BUSINESS EVENTS

**Vision:** Melbourne is a world class destination of choice for business events which contribute and deliver high yield economic returns to the Victorian economy.

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**Employment**

Business events enhance employment opportunities in a wide range of industries, including restaurants, hotels and clubs, business services, retail trade, insurance, printing, stationery, communication and clothing. Some regional communities and local businesses rely on the income generated by this segment.

**International Business and Knowledge Profile**

The business events industry (through Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau) is working closely with the State Government to assist in the identification and bidding for business events that fit the State's priority industry sectors. This is very important for attracting new investment and export development for the State. Stimulation of business activity within and between countries helps forge stronger business links and provides opportunities to promote both the national interest and international co-operation.

Business events also provide the opportunity for access to new technology, exchange of ideas, establishment of valuable business and professional contacts and other socio-cultural impacts.

**Community Development**

Business events impact on a wide sector of the community both directly and indirectly.

Regional Victoria has excellent potential to develop business from pre and post conference touring, accompanying persons programs and satellite meetings.

The establishment and progressive maturity of the Regional Victoria Conference Group is providing valuable co-operative leadership and marketing support to expand the benefits of business events in regional Victoria.

**Media and International Exposure**

Victoria can draw a significant benefit from the media coverage of business events before, during, and after they are held. Because a conference or exhibition may enhance the tourism image of an area, this image can have long term positive effects on tourism and tourism investment.

The key industry representatives for the business events market in Victoria are the Department of Tourism, Sport and the Commonwealth Games (including Tourism Victoria), Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development, Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau, Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, Regional Victoria Conference Group and the hotel industry.

**Issues**

There is an opportunity to expand business events to contribute to a more sustainable tourism industry. There is also a need to focus on greater dispersal of business events to regional Victoria.

Business events can contribute to the international profile of Victoria's priority industries including biotechnology, information technology, manufacturing and service-based industries.

**Strategies**

- Brand Melbourne as a successful business event destination through targeted trade advertising and media activity.
- Encourage infrastructure development to increase Victoria's capacity to host major business events, such as a plenary facility for 5,000 delegates.
- Package appropriate city and regional Victorian product, and develop targeted collateral to encourage pre and post touring in Victoria.
- Develop relationships with key contacts in other Australian cities to encourage delegates attending business events in other states to travel to Victoria.

- Capitalise on promotion of business events in international markets to promote Australia as an international tourism destination.
- Continue to support Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau in increasing business event visitation to Victoria, and to maximise yield by encouraging greater length of stay.
- Encourage the dispersal of business events activity throughout regional areas of Victoria in co-operation with the Regional Victoria Conference Group.
- Develop the capacity and co-operative marketing of regional business events.