



Press Release – May 2010

Melbourne grows presence in China

Ms Sandra Chipchase, CEO of the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), announced at IMEX 2010 today MCVB's expansion in China.

The new role, Business Development Manager – China, will be based in Shanghai and will report to MCVB's North Asia Regional Sales Director, Jennifer Tung, who is based in Hong Kong.

Ms Chipchase said the role was created as a result of demand generated by MCVB's current activities and from growth opportunities identified in China. The role provides an opportunity to extend Melbourne's Business Events reach.

"International visitation to Victoria from China has shown positive growth within the last financial year, and MCVB is committed to growing this market for Business Events travel to Melbourne.

"In 2009 Victoria received 163,000 visitors from China. Expenditure by Chinese visitors increased by 43.9 per cent to \$528 million compared to the previous year.

"Chinese visitors spent 5.2 million visitor nights in Victoria Year End June 2009, representing an increase of 30.9 per cent compared to the previous year. This increase is markedly higher than the national increase of 8.9 per cent, and surpassed our domestic competitors' performances."

Ms Chipchase said that MCVB's new role will focus on business development, as well as relationship building with a range of stakeholders, from industry partners to government officials.

"The establishment of a larger presence in China attests to MCVB's commitment to growing the market. China is forecast to become Victoria's largest tourism market in 2014, and is one of our fastest growing markets for incentive travel.

"This role will be responsible for sales development, focusing on the key source markets of Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou. Further developing strategic relationships with Business Events travel operators and corporate end-users as well as adding to our business presence throughout China will be key.

"We also see this as an opportunity to promote Melbourne's accessibility. There are 11 direct air services to Melbourne from Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou with Air China, China Eastern and China Southern Airlines as well additional direct flights to Hong Kong by Qantas and Cathay Pacific.

"We know from the success of our Amway Greater China Leadership Seminar event - which was Melbourne's largest ever incentive event, attracting more than 7,000 delegates in 2008 - that Melbourne offers everything that this important market wants, and that now is the time to capitalise on this."

Ms Chipchase said the creation of this new role follows a series of strategic moves to increase MCVB's push into the China market, including in-market sales calls and hosting familiarisation trips to Melbourne for sales and corporate-end users, as well as media.

"MCVB has been extending its reach into China for the past four years. Major initiatives include taking our Asia Roadshow to Beijing last year, showcasing some of Melbourne's best high end



product and unique Victorian experiences to buyers and incentive agents, as well as key trade and business media.

“We also launched a television campaign on the Australia Network earlier this year, targeting China amongst other countries throughout Asia, focussing on Melbourne’s Business Events facilities, medical and scientific infrastructure and capabilities and diverse pre and post touring options.

“MCVB also recently created traditional and simplified Chinese language pages on our website, and offers a host of incentive collateral in Chinese.

“The incentive market for Asia delivered more than \$32 million for Victoria last year and through this new role we aim to build even greater economic wealth and business opportunities for Victoria,” Ms Chipchase said.

For more information contact Brooke Daly, MCVB Communications Manager:
telephone +61 3 9693 3317 or email brooke.daly@mcvb.com.au