

Thursday, 13 December, 2007

## MELBOURNE WINS CONVENTION ON AGEING

Melbourne will host an international congress on ageing which is expected to attract more than 1,200 delegates, injecting more than \$6 million into the Victorian economy, Minister for Senior Victorians, Lisa Neville announced today.

Ms Neville said the Asia/Oceania Regional Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics will be held in Melbourne in 2011 and was last held in Australia in 1980.

“The congress will discuss healthy ageing, models of care for seniors (community, health and residential care), education and training, policy and planning, major geriatric illnesses, aged care workforce support and retirement housing,” Ms Neville said.

“This important event places an international focus on how Victoria is addressing issues affecting our seniors and contributes to our international reputation as a leader in ageing research, education and policy.

“The congress will increase our understanding of the impact of Australia’s aging population as Melbourne gains access to the leading Asia Pacific professionals in this field.”

The bid to secure the event was led by Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB) in partnership with the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) - the peak body representing professionals, including researchers, practitioners, academics, and policy makers, working within the field of ageing.

Associate Professor Laurie Buys, National President of the AAG said it is an honour to be chosen by an international organisation to host its flagship event.

“The International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) combines medicine and other health sciences along with the social sciences in providing a comprehensive platform to promote research and education in all aspects of ageing,” Professor Buys said.

Sandra Chipchase, Chief Executive Officer of MCVB said winning this event helps to attract other events in related fields to Victoria.

“Medical and science associations world-wide are hearing about Melbourne’s success in delivering international business events and as a leader in industry and innovation,” Ms Chipchase said.

The congress will be the 18<sup>th</sup> international business event confirmed for the new Melbourne Convention Centre when it opens in 2009.

Leigh Harry, chief executive of the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre said early international interest in using the new facility is encouraging.

“We’ve got conventions confirmed from all over the world on everything from religion and engineering to medical and bio-medical sciences, the combined economic impact for Victoria amounts to more than \$293 million for 43,800 international delegates,” Mr Harry said.