

Wednesday, 30 August 2006

GEOCHEMISTS ROCK INTO MELBOURNE

Around 1,300 Geochemists from 40 countries have gathered in Melbourne this week for one of the world's largest and most important scientific events, the Goldschmidt Conference 2006, Minister for tourism, John Pandazopoulos, said today.

This is the first time the event is being held in the southern hemisphere. The conference runs until September 1 at the Melbourne Convention Centre (MCC).

The Goldschmidt Conference is an annual event for the Geochemical Society, a private non-profit international scientific society founded to encourage the application of chemistry to the solution of geological and cosmological problems.

"This event further enhances Victoria's reputation as a major hub for research and development," Mr Pandazopoulos said.

"Attracting conferences such as the Goldschmidt Conference 2006 is vitally important to the Victorian economy and the local scientific community and shows the important role played by the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau.

"This event alone will see delegates spend more than \$4 million during their stay in Melbourne. It will also allow many of them to experience other parts of Victoria on scientific site visits, and bring a total economic benefit to State of almost \$9 million.

Seth Davis, Business Manager, Geochemical Society, Washington University, St. Louis, USA said having Goldschmidt in Melbourne is a huge opportunity for Australian Geochemists to expose their research to the international geochemical community.

"It's an opportunity many of them wouldn't have had before. Being under one roof in a location so close to the city and all its attractions is an added bonus. Having more opportunities for networking in the evening has been a positive result of the convention centre's location," Mr Davis said.

Mr Pandazopoulos said more than three quarters of those taking part in the conference are from overseas.