



Association of Australian
Convention Bureaux

MEDIA RELEASE

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AACB COMMENDS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR ENGAGING WITH INDUSTRY AT IMEX AMERICA

The Association of Australian Convention Bureau (AACB) has welcomed the Federal Government's support of the business events industry.

The Hon Steven Ciobo MP, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment visited IMEX America last week to help promote Australia as a premier business events destination. This occasion signified the first time a Federal Minister has ever attended an international business events trade show.

Karen Bolinger, AACB President and CEO of Melbourne Convention Bureau, said that it was great to have the Minister walk through the trade show and see the level of competitiveness within the business events industry.

"It was fantastic to have the Minister join us in Las Vegas last week to see, first hand, the highly competitive nature of our industry and the potential for strategic trade and investment opportunities for Australia provided by international business events.

"The timing is important, as Australia's international rankings continue to drop, falling to 16th in 2016. A decade ago, Australia was consistently among the top 10 most popular countries to host major international association conventions."

At the show, Tourism Australia's Business Events division highlighted Australia's strength as a business events destination, joined by 23 Australian tourism businesses, including AACB members, Brisbane Convention Bureau, Business Events Cairns and Great Barrier Reef, Business Events Sydney and the Melbourne Convention Bureau.

IMEX America boasted over 3,200 hosted buyers and an additional 2,500 plus attendees.

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Quote attributable to Lyn Lewis-Smith, CEO of Business Events Sydney:

"IMEX America provides Business Events Sydney with an opportunity to connect with a broad range of international business event decision makers. This year's involvement by the Hon Steven Ciobo MP, Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, enabled us to connect the Minister with our bid to secure a high-profile diplomatic business forum to Sydney. If secured, this important forum will directly lead to global trade and investment deals in New South Wales and across Australia, particularly from Asian delegates, and will create jobs and growth within key sectors, such as financial services and infrastructure."

Quote attributable to Juliet Alabaster, Acting General Manager of Brisbane Convention Bureau:

"Through more than 30 client meetings, the Brisbane Convention Bureau, together with the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, generated 11 new leads for international conference opportunities through to 2029. Appointments also included confirmed business that resulted from past tradeshows including the World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine 2019 and JHI Association Asia Pacific and International Conference 2018."

Quote attributable to Rosie Douglas, Director at Business Events Cairns & Great Barrier Reef:

"Most of the interest we received at IMEX America was from buyers who hadn't done business with Australia before and are now looking to pitch the region to their clients. As a convention bureau, we are always looking to expand our client base and this year's show certainly achieved this objective."

*About AACB: The Association of Australian Convention Bureaux is the peak Australian business events network driving economic prosperity for Australia. The Association **brings** together 16 influential city and regional bureaux dedicated to marketing their specific region as premier business events destinations to domestic and international markets. AACB and its members represent more than 1700 tourism and events industry operators.*