

# CEO Briefing



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## Welcome to the September 2010 edition of the VEIC CEO Member Update.

VEIC has had a very busy month with the culmination of many activities coming together. We now have a federal government, which to some degree has simply sounded the starting gun for the next round of advocacy activity leading up the Victorian State election in November.

September featured the inaugural [Victoria Tourism Week](#), attracting over 2500 industry professionals to events across the state. In addition, Victoria Tourism Week engaged the general public by encouraging them to get out in their own backyard at one of the more than 60 events that took place.

Victoria Tourism Week was all about bringing industry together and telling the story of the tourism and events industry. The week generated over 60 media articles on the tourism and events sector and featured 200 30 second television commercials in regional Victoria.

Key themes of Victoria Tourism Week included the value of our sector to the economy, employment, innovation, social cohesion and brand Victoria. Of course events underpin so much of Victorian tourism that the tourism industry and events industry are increasingly morphing into one. Victoria Tourism Week could not have been delivered without our event partner, Destination Melbourne, and we look forward to working with them to deliver more events in the future.

[Victoria's Events Industry Development Plan](#) was also launched this month. The plan was developed by the Victoria Events Industry Council and the Victoria Tourism Industry Council, in collaboration with broader industry. It follows on from the Tourism and Events Strategy 2016, first developed by industry in 2008, and incorporates an assessment of where we are coming from and outlines a vision for where we want to go.

The Plan sets out the context in which the Victorian events industry operates, in addition to its relationship with and importance to Victoria's tourism sector. Further the Plan sets out ten priorities which, when accomplished, will foster future growth for the events sector.

In addition to this VEIC in partnership with VTIC also launched its [Tourism & Events Industry Agenda](#) in preparation for the Victorian State Election. This document outlines key issues for the events sector and will underpin advocacy efforts leading up to November's poll.

On another note, I would like to thank Gregory Hywood for his contribution to the industry over the last six years as the CEO of Tourism Victoria and in particular for his valuable input into the 2020 Tourism and Events Strategy. VEIC wishes him all the best in his future endeavours.

**Todd Blake**  
Chief Executive

## NEW \$2 MILLION FUND FOR SIGNIFICANT SPORTING EVENTS

Victoria will continue to remain a world leader in hosting significant sporting events thanks to a \$2 million boost from the Brumby Labor Government. Event organisers, state sporting associations, sporting venues and Local Government Authorities can now apply for grants of up to \$300,000 to host events in Melbourne and regional Victoria as part of the new Significant Sporting Events Program. [Read more...](#)



### **DEAL FOR V8 SUPERCARS CHAMPIONSHIP ANNOUNCED**

The V8 Supercars have announced a new 10-year deal to race at Melbourne's Sandown circuit. In one of the longest agreements between the category and an individual circuit, V8s will be racing at Sandown until at least 2020 in a deal which will also see the track's paddock and pit lane refurbished. The deal ties in with this year's plans to celebrate 50 years of the Australian Touring Car Championship at the Sandown event to be held from November 19-21.

### **GEE LONG TO HOST NEW THREE DAY MULTI-SPORT FESTIVAL**

Geelong will host a new three day multi-sport carnival which will attract elite athletes from around the world. Organisers are hopeful of attracting about 3,000 competitors and 10,000 spectators to the Geelong Multi Sport Festival to be held annually in February from next year. Geelong will stage the festival over the next three years with strategies in place for its long-term future. The centrepiece will be the Olympic distance triathlon, while some of the world's best triathletes will contest the Australian Sprint Distance Championships.

### **OPERA AUSTRALIA TO TAKE ON RING CYCLE IN 2013**

Melbourne's cultural reputation has been given a further boost with the announcement that Opera Australia will spend more than \$15 million on the Mount Everest of operas, Wagner's 15-hour *Ring Cycle*, at the State Theatre in 2013. It is made possible by a \$5 million donation from Maureen and Tony Wheeler from Lonely Planet, and a contribution by the Victorian Major Events Company, estimated to be worth \$2 million. It is a co-production with Houston Grand Opera but will premiere at the Arts Centre.  
[Read more...](#)

### **PLANS FOR UPGRADE OF MCG SOUTHERN STAND UNVEILED**

Plans have been released for a \$55 million upgrade of the Great Southern Stand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). The Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) is contributing \$25 million to the plan, on top of the \$30 million already announced by the Victorian Government. The Southern Stand is now 20 years old and needs improvements. The plan includes upgrades for food areas, concourses, toilets and improved entry and ticketing systems. Viewing areas will be upgraded so that they are similar to the Northern Stand and there will be updated audio and visual equipment. The upgrade follows four years after the completion of the \$464 million upgrade to the Northern Stand.

### **NEW INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS RELEASED**

Tourism Research Australia's International and National Visitor Surveys have been released for the year-ending 30 June 2010. For the full reports on both surveys visit [www.ret.gov.au/tra](http://www.ret.gov.au/tra).

### **VEIC WELCOMES NEW CEO'S FOR MAJOR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

VEIC welcomes the appointments of international environmentalist Dr Bill Jackson as the new Chief Executive of Parks Victoria, and Mark Stone as CEO of Tourism Victoria.

Dr Jackson is internationally recognised with expertise in parks management and forest conservation strategy and practice, and climate change, bringing a range of skills which he has developed in a number of senior forest management and development roles both interstate and overseas.

Mark Stone, former CEO of Parks Victoria, will act as Deputy Secretary of Tourism, Aviation and Communications and CEO of Tourism Victoria, following the resignation of Greg Hywood. Mark is also a member of the Board of Directors for Tourism Australia.

We look forward to working with them both in their respective roles.

## **VTIC TOURISM INDUSTRY SURVEY: DIFFICULT AUGUST QUARTER CONDITIONS; STRONGER NOVEMBER QUARTER EXPECTED**

### A Summary of the Results:

Trading conditions within the tourism industry were difficult over the August quarter 2010. Respondents reported a widespread decline in profitability, influenced by ongoing wage costs and a small net decline in sales and selling prices. Respondents also indicated a decline in employment and overtime levels over the past three months. The growth in investment reported in the previous quarter eased in the three months to August.

State Government regulation and wage costs were the most commonly identified factors constraining business growth. Concern over State Government regulation was reported equally across the State, while regional businesses reported the highest level of concern over wage costs. The majority of additional comments made by survey respondents this quarter related to regulation, taxes and Government charges, as well as concern over rising costs and the impact of this on both business and consumers.

Over the coming quarter, respondents expect a widespread improvement in general business conditions, as the start of the peak tourism season approaches. Over this period, respondents expect an improvement in profitability, sales, selling prices and employment levels. While positive, any improvement in business investment is expected to be moderate.

The level of optimism within the tourism industry about trading prospects over the longer term declined for the third consecutive quarter. Overall, businesses located in the metropolitan area were more optimistic than those located in regional and rural Victoria. To download a copy of the survey results please visit [www.vtic.com.au](http://www.vtic.com.au).

## **MURRINDINDI/MITCHELL BUSHFIRE TOURISM RECOVERY GROUP**

Stay up to date with the latest developments as the Shires of Murrindindi and Mitchell recover from the 2009 Victorian bushfires. Log onto [www.watchusgrow.com.au](http://www.watchusgrow.com.au) for news updates, upcoming events, a directory of businesses operating within the shires and more.

## **TAPPING INTO TOURISM GUIDE RELEASED**

Destination Melbourne launched the 'Tapping into Tourism' guide as a part of Victoria Tourism Week celebrations. The guide has been designed to help Local Government and Trader Groups across Melbourne tap into the Visiting Friends and Relatives multi-billion dollar tourism industry. For more information visit [www.destinationmelbourne.com.au](http://www.destinationmelbourne.com.au).

## **GLOBAL DESTINATIONS FORUM – EDINBURGH**

Destination Melbourne's annual Global Destinations Forum will be held the evening of Tuesday 5 October. The keynote speaker this year will be Kenneth Wardrop, Chief Executive, Destination Edinburgh Marketing Alliance Ltd. This event follows the successful forum last year which featured Clive Geddes, Mayor of Queenstown, New Zealand. [Click here](#) to register.

## **VEIC TEAM**

Following a very successful three years with the tourism and events team here at VECCI, and prior to that at Tourism Alliance, Anita Donnelly has moved on to new challenges. We wish her luck in her new role and look forward to working with her as she will remain part of the Melbourne tourism scene.

VEIC will be seeking to recruit a replacement for Anita in a membership development and services role. In the interim VEIC members will be serviced by the following team:

Todd Blake	CEO VEIC
Jodie Wickham	Senior Policy Adviser
Kristina Burke	Tourism Operations Manager
Monica Lougoon	Office and Membership Services Coordinator

Please direct policy or advocacy issues to Todd Blake or Kristina Burke in the first instance and any membership related issues to Monica Lougoon as we seek a permanent appointment to resource the membership area.

## **LATEST BLOGS**

To read more articles about tourism and other topics affecting the wider business community, visit The VECCI Blog at <http://blog.vecci.org.au>.

### ***Other important dates for 2010:***

- VEIC Members Meeting – 25 October
- [The pARTnerships Conference](#) – 14-15 October
- VTIC Forum 15 November
- [Victorian Tourism Awards Gala Dinner](#) – 15 November