



February 2010

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► **NOTE FROM THE CHAIR**

**Welcome to the February edition of the VEIC newsletter.**

“It seemed that if it was happening in Australia in January, then Melbourne was the place to be.

Congratulations to all those involved with the Australian Open Tennis on another outstanding Grand Slam event.

It was also great to see the announcement of the redevelopment plans for Melbourne and Olympic Park.

VEIC certainly supports the Government plans to make our facilities the best in the world.

Next is the L’Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival, Melbourne Food & Wine Festival and the Australian Grand Prix.

All of these events again showcase Melbourne as the event capital and reinforces our reputation for delivery world class events.

There is something here for everyone so lets get out and enjoy them”.

Peter Jones

**Chair**

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► **2009 QANTAS AUSTRALIAN TOURISM AWARDS**

Tickets are on sale for the National 2009 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards. This year's winners will be announced at a formal awards ceremony in Tasmania on Friday 26th February, 2010 at the Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart.

We wish the following VEIC members all the best at this year's awards:

- Melbourne Food & Wine Festival - Major Festivals & Events
- RACV Energy Breakthrough - Festivals & Events
- Melbourne Convention & Visitors Bureau - Meetings & Business Tourism

The Qantas Australian Tourism Awards recognises and promotes excellence in tourism. They are the pinnacle of achievement for the tourism industry across Australia.

[Click here](#) for more information on the awards, and to book your tickets!

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## **TOURISM AND EVENTS INDUSTRY WELL REPRESENTED IN THE VECCI STATE BUDGET SUBMISSION**

The VECCI State Budget Submission strongly advocates on behalf of all tourism and events members including those of VTIC, VEIC, HMAA, BOAV and TAV.

The tourism and events sector is vulnerable to fluctuations in the general economic environment and has been impacted by the recent downturn in the economy.

As such, it is important that the 2010-11 State Budget is used not only to assist the tourism and events sector recover from the effects of the downturn, but also help position the industry for sustainable real growth through a combination of strategic investment and marketing investment.

The submission recognises the following issues:

- the need to invest in key infrastructure assets such as the Melbourne Exhibition Centre and Melbourne's airports;
- the opportunity to capitalise on Victoria's abundant natural attractions;
- the increasing importance of public safety and the need to reduce anti-social behaviour;
- the importance of continued funding for marketing; and
- the need for product development, including pre-development research and planning.

Together with sector specific recommendations, tourism and events members stand to benefit from the many State wide recommendations presented on behalf of all VECCI members. These recommendations include:

- a reduction in payroll tax;
- a reduction in the middle-upper land tax rates;
- a reduction in average employer WorkCover premiums;
- a freeze on the indexation of all fees, fines and charges, together with no new or extended taxes or charges;
- the introduction of a Major Projects Facilitation Act to cover major non-transport projects;
- funding to support the development and commercialisation of low carbon energy technologies; and
- ongoing support for bushfire preparedness.

Advocacy and representation for the industry will continue over the coming months as VECCI CEO Wayne Kayler-Thomson and other senior representatives meet with various State Ministers to advocate strongly on behalf of members, reinforcing the recommendations highlighted in the State Budget Submission.

For the full submission [click here](#):

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## **HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE BUS RESTRICTIONS TO SWANSTON STREET**

If you are an operator impacted by the bus restrictions to Swanston Street – we'd like to hear from you.

This short survey seeks to assess the impact of the decision by the City of Melbourne to ban access of all buses from Swanston Street, from 7am to 7pm, starting 1 November 2009. Your feedback will greatly assist us in continuing to advocate on behalf of members on this issue.

To complete the survey, please access the link below:

<http://fs16.formsite.com/vecci/SwanstonStreet/index.html>

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### ▶ **AUSTRALIA INVESTS \$10 MILLION FOR BUSHFIRE TOURISM INDUSTRY SUPPORT PACKAGE**

The commitment of \$10 million to tourism by the Australian and Victorian Governments recognizes the importance of tourism to the bushfire affected regions.

Last August, alongside the Victorian Government, we announced details of the Victorian Bushfire Tourism Industry Support Package.

The Australian Government has been pleased to provide more than \$455 million towards the recovery and rebuilding effort to help the 78 bushfire regions and towns to get back on their feet.

To view full Media Release [click here](#).

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### ▶ **VICTORIAN TOURISM OPERATORS ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS**

To assist the Victorian tourism industry, a comprehensive guide to crisis management was launched by the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Tim Holding.

The online tool, *Open for Business: Crisis Management for Tourism Businesses* was developed to better equip tourism operators to prepare for, respond to and recover from crises such as bushfire, drought and floods.

The tool kit is another government initiative to ensure tourism in Victoria's regional areas remains strong.

Developed in response to impact of last year's severe bushfires, *Open for Business* includes tools, tips and case studies designed to complement the *Crisis Communications Handbook for Regional and Local Tourism*.

To view the *Open for Business: Crisis Management for Tourism Businesses* online tool go to [tourism.vic.gov.au](http://tourism.vic.gov.au)

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### ▶ **VICTORIA GIVES INTERNATIONAL TOURISM \$20 MILLION BOOST**

The Brumby Labor Government has welcomed a \$20 million boost from the Commonwealth Government to help attract more tourists to Australia.

The Tourism Australia package will provide support for tourism initiatives in a number of key source markets for Victoria including New Zealand, China, Malaysia, Korea and Singapore.

To view full Media Release [click here](#).

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### ▶ **CONFERENCE CENTRE TO HELP MELBOURNE KEEP EVENTS CROWN**

Victoria's reputation as a leading destination for business events continues to grow with the official opening of the expanded \$33 million Crown Conference Centre at Southbank.

The new Centre will cater for conferences of up to 840 delegates with 20 concurrent rooms, all on one site. The Promenade Room will accommodate up to 600 guests when configured as a theatre.

The Crown Conference Centre compliments the \$1.4 billion convention precinct which includes significant retail and infrastructure as well as the new Melbourne Convention Centre which opened mid last year.

To view full Media Release [click here](#).

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### ▶ VRC LAUNCHES 150TH MELBOURNE CUP CELEBRATIONS

The Victoria Racing Club (VRC) officially launched its Melbourne Cup 150th celebrations at Flemington Racecourse, announcing an extensive year-long program of initiatives and events to commemorate the milestone, with the help of some of the biggest names in Australian and international racing.

Key initiatives were unveiled at the launch including a calendar of events to be run in partnership with state and local government, tourism and trade agencies, businesses, sponsors, industry participants and national and international communities.

To view full Media Release [click here](#).

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### ▶ ROCK OF AGES TO DESCEND ON MELBOURNE

A stage musical featuring some of the biggest hits - and the biggest hair - of the '80s will be one of *the star attractions on the state government's major events calendar next year*.

The hit Broadway show *Rock of Ages* will open in Melbourne at the Comedy Theatre in April 2011, Tourism and Major Events Minister Tim Holding announced.

The company behind the Australian production, New Theatricals, will receive an undisclosed amount of support from the government-funded Victorian Major Events Company (VMEC), primarily for advertising and marketing.

To view full Media Release [click here](#).

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### ▶ PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR EVENTS

Tourism Alliance Victoria has received feedback about event organisers having difficulties in securing public liability insurance for outdoor events in regional Victoria, due to potential threat of bushfires.

Have you had similar problems? Post your thoughts on [The VECCI Blog](#) or send your comments to [kristina@tourismalliance.com.au](mailto:kristina@tourismalliance.com.au)

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### ▶ WORLD CANCER DECLARATION

Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), in conjunction with Cancer Council Australia, is bidding to host the World Cancer Congress in Melbourne in 2014. It is a 2,000 delegate Congress that would most likely be held in late August over a 5 day period. They will be submitting a bid document to the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) by the end of March. One of the key initiatives of the UICC is the **World Cancer Declaration** which was developed by international cancer control advocates to bring the cancer crisis to the attention of policymakers worldwide.

For the purpose of the Melbourne Bid Document and Presentation, they are aiming for as many Australian Organisations and Individuals as possible to sign the declaration this month. They are able to track the number of signatures they have been able to obtain.

Signing is a **very fast** process, you can sign as an organisation and as an individual by clicking on the link below::

[http://www.uicc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=14227&Itemid=737](http://www.uicc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14227&Itemid=737)

If you would be willing to sign the declaration and forward this email onto family, friends and colleagues to show your support for Cancer Control and assist with the bid from Melbourne for the 2014 Congress, it would be greatly appreciated.

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## ▶ **MEMBER PROFILE - Bicycle Victoria**

### **Who is Bicycle Victoria and what do they do?**

Most people hear the name Bicycle Victoria and think it must be the bit of Government that thinks about bikes. In some respect they are correct, we do think about bikes, the people that ride them as well as those not yet riding them. However we are not government nor are we funded by government. We are a self funded not for profit community organisation that has a mission of More People Cycling More Often. With a membership of over 40,000 people and over 80,000 friends we work to increase the number of people riding and frequency. We achieve this through our effort in growing the investment in cycling infrastructure by governments and the corporate sector. Along side this we conduct behaviour change programs such as Ride to Work and Ride 2 School. The purpose of the events that Bicycle Victoria conducts (Around the Bay in a Day, Great Victorian Bike Ride and 3 Peaks Challenge) are to raise funds so that we can continue to work on our mission.

### **What are the critical issues of concern to BV regarding staging large cycling events in Victoria?**

A challenge that we have continually faced is gaining government support for our events. We are recreational riding where the tendency of sponsorship in cycling leans towards competition. Our success has also been a barrier as many of the funding opportunities that exist are focused on supporting events that are not financially viable. We wait patiently for the moment when we can be measured on the return we can bring to the State.

Another key issue we contend with is the regulatory environment which has change significantly over the last 5 years. No one wants to be responsible for risk and there has been so much focus on how authorities shift risk responsibility that at times the focus delivering the event can be lost. The knock on impact is increasing costs which continue to put pressure on the balance between ticket price and ticket volume.

But if we had to nail down the single biggest challenge we face it has to be finding the right people. At the current moment we have been advertising for a few new positions as well as some replacements and the consensus we have is that there is a shortage of candidates with the right skills and attitude. If you have a quality person that you can give up we would love to have them.

### **Any new events BV is running in 2010?**

Our new event for 2010 is the 3 Peaks Challenge in the High Country. We are aiming this event for the folks at the top end of riding and see it as being the ultimate challenge for road riders. With 4000m of climbing over a 230km course it has even the best riders wondering how they will go. We have a half distance option as well for those that want a year to build themselves up to a full distance ride. The North East is a melting pot of many forms of cycling and we see an opportunity for this region to become the No1 cycle tourism destination not just in the country. This is our first new event in many years and it has been interesting to experience a mixed reaction from people about it – we are certainly testing the boundaries of some people comfort levels.

### **Any other significant developments/news/changes to take place at BV?**

We are currently recruiting for a Development Director on the Events team. This position has the responsibility to do the long lead planning and development of our events so we are after someone that can help build our vision and keep our events in growth for many years.

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## ▶ **BUSINESS SUPPORT AND EVENTS**

### **New social media streams for VEIC members**

At VECCI, we see social media as a means to open up channels of communication with those we represent.

#### ***The VECCI Blog – your policy and advocacy forum***

On the policy and advocacy front stands [The VECCI Blog](#), a resource fuelled by the unique voices and perspectives of our expert advisors. Updated regularly, the blog will cover issues that affect Victorian business and industry in a variety of ways and aims to be an interactive hub for interested parties to have their say and be heard.

#### ***Events@VECCI – your Facebook connection***

We've established a presence on Facebook – the most extensive networking site on the web. [Events@VECCI](#) is designed as an online hub of interaction and networking for past and potential attendees of VECCI's suite of events.

We encourage you to explore these resources and fully utilise them as avenues that help us continually improve the quality of our services for Victorian business.

### **23RD MEETINGS & EVENTS AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE - 17-20 April 2010, Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre**

With an expected 1000 delegates, Melbourne is getting ready to inspire, educate and stimulate the minds of all conference delegates, sponsors, exhibitors and speakers.

**Conference Early Bird Rate Extended until Friday 19 February 2010** [register now!](#)

Please refer to the [Conference website](#) for more details on other conference sessions, pricing and the preliminary program or [contact us](#).

### **2010 VICTORIAN TOURISM CONFERENCE**

The 2010 Victorian Tourism Conference will be held on **19 & 20 May 2010**. Some of the key themes to be discussed at this year's conference are:

- What do travellers really think of Melbourne/ Victoria
- Media
- Websites & Gen Z. Are you ready?
- Surviving external pressures on your business
- Marketing

As we are still developing the full program for the conference we would love to hear from you any speaker and topic suggestions. Thank you to everyone who has already provided us with valuable feedback.

Stay tuned to our conference website <http://www.victoriantourismconference.com.au> for all the up to date information.

### **2010 AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL TOURISM CONVENTION – 16–20 August, 2010**

The 2010 Australian Regional Tourism Convention will be held Monday 16 August to Friday 20 August in the gorgeous Yarra Valley and the Dandenongs region of Victoria.

The Australian Regional Tourism Network (ARTN), producers of the Convention and the peak national body representing regional tourism practitioners, are excited and proud of the program which is already well into development.

As ever, the ARTN is seeking to include its members and the industry its activities and so is inviting suggestions and contributions to the Convention program by way of a 'Call for Papers'.

The attached document provides further details on the Convention and guidelines for the submission of abstracts. The deadline for submissions is Friday 5 February 2010.

Stay tuned for further announcements regarding Convention registration which will commence early in 2010.

For more information, [click here](#).

**Other important dates for 2010:**

- VTIC Forums - 10 March, 16 June, 15 September, 24 November
- VEIC Minister's Lunch - 29 June
- VTIC Minister's Lunch - 13 August
- TAV AGM & Members Lunch - 13 October
- VEIC/VTIC World Cup event - TBC
- Tourism & Event Industry Christmas Party - 29 November (TBC)

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This email was sent to ''.

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