



# Communiqué

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES PALAIS DE CONGRÈS  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONGRESS CENTRES  
INTERNATIONALER VERBAND DER KONGRESSZENTREN

## NEW MEMBERS:

### Manchester International Convention Centre...



Located in the heart of Manchester, one of Europe's most vibrant cities, Manchester International Convention Centre and G-Mex Exhibition Centre together provide flexible, state-of-the-art facilities for conferences of all sizes as well as exhibitions, banquets and special events. From its humble beginnings as a windmill in 1812, it has become the focal point for major events and is "designed to surpass the needs of the most discerning organizer".

Features include an auditorium / theatre which can accommodate over 800 with raked seating and a fully equipped stage; the 1900 sq. meter Great Northern Hall which offers street access and is virtually column-free; the Seminar Suite, which acts as a hub and provides meeting space for up to 700 delegates and a series of other halls and breakout rooms. The G-Mex Exhibition Centre offers an additional 10,350 sq. meters of exhibit space to complement those spaces available in the MICC.

The Centre offers easy rail and road access as well as global access via the nearby Manchester International Airport.



### ...and Zagreb Fair Convention Centre.



Originally founded in 1909, Zagreb Fair is one of the oldest fairs in its part of Europe. The Zagreb Fair Convention Centre is "a place of modern business and professional communication" and offers a series of conference, exhibition and event spaces that can accommodate up to 2,000 delegates. In addition to a variety of function spaces, Zagreb Fair Convention Centre provides a full range of technical support, including conference communications, projection and presentation facilities and full IT services.

One of Zagreb Fair's key assets is that it offers a full PCO service, with services that include conference planning, registration, technical and financial support for events.

Zagreb itself is 900 years old, and the scientific, cultural, political and business centre of Croatia. It features over 5,000 hotel rooms in a variety of categories, and attracts visitors with the beauty of its architecture and natural surroundings as well as the warm welcome of its residents.



### Security Planning Joins other AIPC Publications

AIPC's Guide to Security Planning for Congress centres is the latest in a series of new AIPC publications on key topics of interest to members. The first two AIPC Guides, released earlier this year and in 2003, were "Environmental Strategies for Congress Centres" and "Media Relations for Congress Centre Managers".

The security publication was the result of an extensive survey of current industry practices as well as a joint AIPC / IAPCO seminar on this topic that was held at the IMEX industry trade show in 2003. At that time, panelists Steve Piper of Brighton, Jim Papineau of Suntec Singapore, Rainer Kostka of AIMS International Austria and Philippe Mahaus of the Hilton Prague outlined their respective views on how centres and PCO's could best work together on enhancing security arrangements for events in congress centres.

The publication covers such topics as assigning responsibility and assessing risk as well as facility design and operational considerations. There is an overall event strategy which is intended

to serve as a guide for the more detailed planning that must be undertaken based on the specific issues and characteristics of each event.

One of the most important areas identified in the publication is the role of coordination and communications amongst the many different groups that may be involved in a major event. It states that "The experiences of many operators who have had to deal with the realities of an emergency situation suggest that the biggest overall issue, and the one that carries the greatest potential for serious problems should an emergency situation arise, is that of coordination amongst multiple parties all engaged in different aspects of a security response". As a result, there is a section that deals with ways in which this coordination may be better managed.

Copies of the new publication are being mailed to all members in the next few weeks, and additional copies of all publications in the series are available through the AIPC Secretariat Office.



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event organizers have for AIPC and the APEX Award has become very evident to us. What this recognition allows us to do is show that while being a relatively new centre in a regional location, we can deliver the world class facilities and services that international clients increasingly expect."

As in previous years, the Apex Award was made on the basis of a comprehensive performance and customer satisfaction analysis carried out by an independent team from the University of Applied Sciences in Heilbronn, Germany. The analysis is developed from surveys completed by event organizers and meeting planners and provided in confidence directly to the evaluation team. This evaluation process ensures an objective analysis of data

### ...and Begins a Refurbishment!

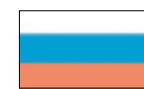
The Cairns Convention Centre will undergo an extensive refurbishment over the next 12 months after an AUD8.5 million capital injection by the Queensland Government. The funding boost will ensure the Centre continues to meet international and national expectations, and will include new audio-visual and communication equipment, an external and internal facelift, new paving, landscaping, gardens and shading, new carpeting, painting and signage for reception and foyer and upgraded lighting, air conditioning, security and catering services.

covering topics such as congress facilities, project management, catering, the overall infrastructure and suitability of the destination for delegates and technology.

Maple stressed that while the Apex Award winner is the focus of the competition, other participating AIPC members benefit as well. "As part of their involvement, all participating members get an individual evaluation report on their particular centre's results from the team at the University of Heilbronn. This enables them to see how they are rated in various aspects of their operations, and to identify areas where they may wish to consider improvements."

Cairns Convention Centre Managing Director Geoff Donaghy, said the funding would ensure the Centre maintained its competitiveness as an international convention venue. Queensland Premier, Mr Peter Beattie, said 2003 had been the Centre's best year with 24 major global and national conventions attracting over 22,000 delegates and generating an estimated AUD60 million for the Cairns economy. "This success is a credit to Centre management, and to the entrepreneurial spirit of the Cairns community," Mr Beattie told State Parliament.

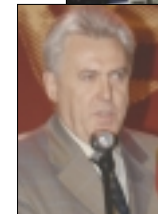
### World Trade Center Moscow – 25 Years in Business!



This November the World Trade Center Moscow, one of the major business properties in Russia, is celebrating its 25th Anniversary. "WTC Moscow" is now one of the primary Russian suppliers of office, hotel, convention & exhibition, as well as trade information and business services.

The decision to erect a World Trade Center in Moscow was adopted in June 1973, and construction began in September 1975. It is an architectural integration of two office towers, a congress center and 2 hotels totaling 200000 m2. In 2004 a significant expansion in the Congress Center facilities took place, and now WTC Moscow has 26 function halls, conference and meeting rooms with capacity ranging from 8 to 1200 delegates and exhibition space totaling 3000 m2.

WTC Moscow is a city within a city, providing world-class facilities and services for business, residence and leisure, western standard offices, serviced apartments, conference & meeting



Sergey Tarachanov, Director General

rooms, a business center, a trade library, banks, a post office, express delivery, air-tickets agencies, rent-a-car, a printing house, an underground garage, secured parking, a car diagnostic station, laundry and dry cleaning, a medical center, a beauty parlor, shops and boutiques, restaurants, bars and billiards. It also boasts a superb fitness club with a swimming pool, saunas, Turkish baths and gym, and now houses more than 400 tenants.

Over the past 25 years, WTC Moscow has hosted over 7000 events, including many prestigious forums at which vital issues in the sphere of politics, business and science were addressed. WTC Moscow aims at expanding its cooperation with Moscow and regional businesses, scientific and social circles and with foreign partners, providing all-round support to the Russian business community.

### President's Message:

### Annual Conference Helps With Information Overload

As always, this year's Annual Conference provided a huge amount of new information about what's going on in the industry and what we can expect in the future. At times, all this can seem almost overwhelming – but very quickly the patterns begin to emerge. Here's some of what struck me most out of all the details;

First, it's a tough market out there. Even though business recovery seems to be well underway in many areas, it's still a buyer's market and clients are, in the words of one of our panelists, often creating "needs without solutions". Value is on everyone's mind even as expectations rise – and what was

considered to be a luxury a few years ago – in the area of technology, for example – is now just something to be expected. We're going to be under steady pressure to come up with more innovative and cost-effective ideas for many of our clients and to help them shape the congress experience in ways that will attract more delegates.

Second, and probably related: many members are looking at new ideas to enhance revenues by adding new kinds of events and services. The pressure really appears to be on room rates, and in order to meet bottom-line expectations, other types of activities ranging from concerts to restaurants are emerging in people's thinking. At the same time, there appears to be more pressure for community access in many areas and this again needs to be factored into planning for the future. As far as services go, there's lots to suggest many centres are looking to add different

types of services which could also bump up revenues – but some question as to whether clients are prepared to pay for them!

Third, we seem to be seeing all kinds of structural changes as different governments look at new models for managing and financing congress and convention facilities along with their operation and marketing. Sometimes – as appears to be the case with our host country of Scotland – these changes are directed at other organizations such as tourism marketing bureaus. However, they will still have big implications for centres to the extent that they impact the ways that our destinations are marketed around the world.

Finally, we are reminded again of how much constantly evolving technology will impact not just our operations but the way we design new facilities and organize spaces within centres. We are increasingly dealing with a new generation of planners and delegates that take sophisticated technology for granted and expect that the very latest communications and presentation capabilities will be available for their use. It's a great reminder of the fact that we need to be not just constantly updating ourselves on how technology is evolving but also evaluating how new developments will be absorbed and which of them represent genuine trends as opposed to the latest "gadget".

However, in all these areas, the biggest lesson is again how much we benefit from the ability to discuss these issues together and learn from the experiences we all have in our different parts of the world. By using our collective knowledge and expertise to advantage, we can stay on top of these new developments and plan strategic responses to them in ways that few of us could alone.

My thanks and complements to all our speakers, panelists and participants – it's you who make our organization what it is and that add so much value to events like the Annual Conference!



Barbara Maple, AIPC President

### Cairns Convention Centre Named 2004 Apex Award Winner...

After a hard-fought battle with many well qualified competitors, Cairns Convention Centre emerged as the 2004 Apex Award winner at this year's AIPC General Assembly in Edinburgh. Also recognized were the two runners-up to this year's award; Bregenz Festspiel und Kongresshaus in Austria and Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre in Australia.

"We're pleased to congratulate Cairns Convention Centre on their achievement in winning the Apex Award, and want to emphasize the importance that this accomplishment has in our industry", said AIPC President Barbara Maple. "The Apex Award is the ultimate form of recognition amongst convention centres, and in order to win, a centre must have extraordinary performance in all aspects of their operations. Furthermore, because the entire basis for the Apex award is the evaluation of a centre by its own clients, a win is not just a peer evaluation but an endorsement by the market itself."

Cairns joins a prestigious group of only four other centres that have held the honour since the Apex Award was initiated in the year 2000 as a way of recognizing the achievements of AIPC members in their pursuit of excellence in congress centre management. Previous Apex Award winners have been the

Melbourne Exhibition & Convention Centre in Australia, Congress Innsbruck in Austria, the Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre in Canada and the Palacio de Congresos y de la Musica de Bilbao in Spain.



"The Centre has entered the APEX Award every year since we joined AIPC and have used the evaluation report as a valuable tool to measure and benchmark our performance in the international convention market", said Cairns Convention Centre's Managing Director, Geoff Donaghy. "However, to have been announced as the 2004 winner was an enormous thrill and cause of great pride for every member of the team at the Cairns Convention Centre".

"Even within the short time since the win was announced the high regard that meeting planners and

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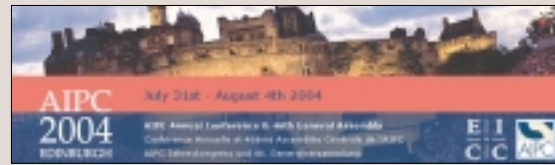
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# AIPC Annual Conference

## Panelists Identify Future Challenges

Following on a successful panel discussion at the 2003 Annual Conference in Mannheim, moderator Warren Buckley took Edinburgh delegates through a second-stage look at the future of the convention centre business world wide and the key issues facing AIPC members as they make plans for the years ahead.

In opening the panel, Buckley reflected on the fact that business is more challenging than ever, with more competition, greater client expectations and an ever-changing operating environment. He identified the need to anticipate events rather than simply responding to them, and to consider a variety of factors from demographics to technology in making plans.

Congress Center Messe Frankfurt VP Georg-Günther Kruse stated that the events of the past few years have created "a time of challenges, in which everyone is struggling to keep up". In Germany, said Kruse, there is more space than demand, which has created a situation where there are much higher client expectations. At the same time, costs are up and there is less spending by both delegates and event organizers themselves. These factors, combined with emerging new competition in areas such as eastern Europe and China, mean that centres need to work harder than ever to meet "needs without solutions".

The answer, says Kruse, is for centres to try harder to think and feel like their customers, and to develop new ways of seeing things. "We need more innovation in the way we do business, and how we respond to the needs of our customers", he said.

Canadian industry consultant Lyle Hall sees fundamental changes in how business gets done as being one of the major considerations for the future of the industry. "Recent surveys show that exhibitors think the ability to do business face-to-face is more important than their customers do", said Hall. "We're dealing with a new generation that thinks differently - who are into instant messaging - yet we expect them to behave the same way as our clients do now", he said.

Hall also pointed to the implications of a larger supply of convention facilities. More supply, he said, creates a "buyer's market", with attendant issues such as shorter booking times, greater price competition, and the emergence of quality and destination attributes as

key differentiators. He also saw new roles and expectations for convention centres, including the idea of centres as permanent showcases for governments and a growing expectation by communities for better access.

International consultant Chris Skinner focussed on the theme of transformation in presenting his views on change in three key areas; demographics, psychographics and technology. Amongst the major demographic implications he saw were the emergence of "old is cool" where older people have more interesting and complex lives along with the wealth to indulge themselves. "Life is becoming more complex, and people's lives have many different elements now", he said. "This has important implications for how people work and look at the world - one implication could be that permanent jobs may disappear in the sense we now know them".

Under the category of psychographics Skinner noted that people are becoming more pampered and selfish. "They want to have experiences, and have the resources to do just that. At the same time, they are becoming more cynical". As to technology, he stated that one of the driving forces will be that there will be "chips in everything", and that this will enable phenomena such as "precognition", where a great deal of information is known about individuals before they even arrive in any given situation because of sensors that will organize and present the information about them.

The panelists' "final word" brought out a number of recommendations as to how delegates might prepare themselves for the future of the meetings business. Georg-Günther Kruse re-iterated the need to focus on client needs and added that the key word was "accelerate - in the speed and quality of service" while at the same time being ready for the next level of expectations that will follow. Lyle Hall stated that there was a need to "design for flexibility - because we don't always know what direction the next set of changes may take". Chris Skinner indicated that there would be a need for more effort to appeal to a wide diversity of cultures and ages in order to respond to growing variety of interests, and to recognize the implications of new technologies in planning for people interaction.



## Here's The Client Perspective:

Visualizing the future of the convention centre business doesn't mean much without getting the perspective of clients - and that was the purpose of a feature panel at the Annual Conference. Panelists Jorge Castex of Congresos Internacionales and Ray Bloom of IMEX provided the views of international associations on the one hand and trade exhibitions on the other, creating an informative picture of how the needs of these two key client groups are evolving.

Bloom based his observations on recent research that looked at how the exhibition business is changing and some of the new imperatives the industry is facing as a result. While the overall industry outlook is much more positive now than in a number of years, there are a number of concerns driving event organizers, including:

- The cost of facilities and services is a bigger issue than ever
  - There is more competition amongst venues
  - New issues have emerged as a result of recent global events, most safety and notably security related
  - There are also concerns arising from these issues, such as how to deal with rescheduling in the event of cancellations, and
  - There are greater technical requirements and expectations than ever before.
- On the other hand, there have also been positive developments, including
- More interest in new destinations, opening up greater opportunities for many areas
  - A "formalization" of environmental policies by client groups
  - A greater concern about service quality, particularly by organizers having to deal with new and inexperienced staff in certain venues, and

- A greater appreciation of the need for a higher industry profile as a way of dealing with future issues.

On balance, these factors tend to favour centres that can offer demonstrable quality and consistency with good value, which reinforce the most positive qualities that most centres strive for.

Speaking from the international congress perspective, Jorge Castex noted that increasing globalization means that both clients and delegates have greater and more diverse expectations. "There is a need to define the purpose of each event and find opportunities to address this in the conference program", he said.

The ability to measure results is also becoming more important. "There is a greater need to evaluate ROI - but not just in terms of money. Things like increased attendance and the degree to which conference objectives have been met are also important aspects of evaluating the success of an event".

Health and terrorism have created their own series of issues, said Castex. Among these are the potential need to change venues, rising insurance costs and the growing importance of cancellation clauses. Most of these are areas where a joint approach that involves both PCO and venue can be much more productive.

Castex noted that the PCO business itself is changing. "PCO's are increasingly more involved with strategic and consulting roles rather than just logistical ones", he said. "As a result, their relations with venues are more complex as well".

As a result of these factors, alliances between centres and PCO's are of increasing benefit, since they provide for a joint approach to working through problems and opportunities. "By working together, we can offer a greater range of solutions to issues and improve the quality of the experience for both event organizers and their delegates", he said.

## Bureau - Centre Relations Get Scrutinized - Again!

A topic of continual debate got a full examination in a panel discussion that looked at bureau - centre relations and the ways in which these might be improved. The discussion had the benefit of a broad spectrum of perspectives with panelists ranging from a bureau chief to a facility CEO, with a joint bureau / centre chief thrown in for good measure!

Panel moderator Rod Cameron began the discussion by noting that in looking at the conference theme of "expanding horizons" it was also necessary to take into account the performance of our industry partners. "Opinions in this area tend to run to extremes, with those who say that bureaus are the lead agency for marketing the whole destination and centres are only one small part, on the one hand, and those who maintain that bureaus are leisure-oriented and can't be trusted to represent the convention area properly at the other". Key questions to the panelists included: do we as centres need to rely on CVB's to help market our product; if so, what form of relationship will produce the best result, and what sort of expectations should we have of our CVB's?

Panelist Eddie Friel, former CEO of the Greater Glasgow Tourist Board, said that marketing had to be a joint undertaking and that the important thing was for everyone to recognize that business would only be realized by working together. Friel felt that the destination was the key factor in a convention decision and that this could be the catalyst for bringing various different industry members together in a common effort.

Geoff Donaghy, who serves as both Managing Director of Cairns Convention Centre in Australia and CEO of the Suncorp stadium in Brisbane, was formerly GM of the Cairns Tourism and Convention Bureau. His perspective was that most bureaus work within a very traditional framework and haven't always adapted well to changing conditions. As a solution, he suggested a process

whereby the various functions involved in completing the sale be analyzed and assigned according to who was best positioned to carry them out. Using this approach, said Donaghy, bureaus might carry out functions more related to mass marketing while centres focussed in on the industry-specific areas like research on the one hand and sales on the other.

Panelist Jose Salinas was in the unique position of being both the Managing Director of the Valencia Tourist Board and Convention Bureau and Managing Director of the Valencia Conference Centre since its opening in 1998. His perspective was that structure and funding were key areas determining a successful relationship and that by defining a continuity of purpose for both centres and bureaus, each could focus on those areas where they had the greatest expertise and ability to influence business.

Questions from the audience prompted a series of other observations. Included among these was the sense that as many traditional bureau functions were being addressed by the Internet, there was increasing interest in others such as convention marketing that had not been priorities in the past. In addition, the point was made that there are often problems with one party claiming credit for getting business when the actual process is a long and complex one that necessarily involves a number of groups. Finally, it was noted that bureaus tend to be membership driven and thus more eager to demonstrate achievements than largely government owned centres.

In concluding the discussion it was noted that everyone seemed to be in agreement on what factors needed to be addressed in a successful model - but not on how an unsuccessful relationship should be addressed. The consistency of the concerns being expressed suggested that this will be an issue to be debated for some time to come!

## Annual Conference Fan Mail!

"The conference was both very useful, and also a nice event from the social and networking point of view!"

*Anna Uponen - Helsinki Fair Centre*

"All in all a very worthwhile event. It is a very useful way to spend time each year to keep in contact with what is happening in our industry."

*Ernest Vincent - The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London*

"I must say that I had a fantastic time; the destination, conference and social events were fantastic".

*Geoff Hanraban - Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre*

"The organization and the panels were excellent and I learned more than ever which will serve me for the new Brussels Convention Centre".

*Jean-Marie Pire - Brussels Exhibition & Conference Centre*

"The contacts I made were really good ones, and I appreciated the conference very much. I am looking forward to the next conference in Quebec!"

*Gerhard Stübe - Bregenzer Festspiel- und Kongresshaus Gmbh*

"It was an absolute fabulous conference. The content of the conference was most interesting and the social program will remain as a lasting souvenir."

*Hélène Schüpbach - Centre de Congrès Montreux SA*

"Congratulations for the very informative and convivial AIPC meeting we had in Edinburgh; Jean Paul and I were extremely pleased."

*Rose-Marie Nannipieri - Acropolis Nice Conference and Exhibition Centre*

## Québec, Montpellier Featured as Annual Conference Destinations

A key piece of association business was completed at the Annual Conference in Edinburgh with the selection of Montpellier, France as the host of the 2006 AIPC Annual Conference and 48th General Assembly.

Following a presentation by AIPC member Le Corum Congress Centre Montpellier, delegates



François Barbance, G.M., Le Corum Congress Centre Montpellier

voted to accept the proposal and confirm that the event will be held in this beautiful French city. The presentation

included two video presentations as well as remarks by Centre General Manager François Barbance.

At the same time, delegates were treated to an in-depth look at the 2005 Annual Conference host city of Québec, with again a visual



Claude Pinault, President & CEO, Centre des Congrès de Québec

presentation supported by a personal invitation from Centre des Congrès de Québec President and CEO Claude Pinault. Québec's presence had been clearly visible from the beginning of the conference as a result of their promotional efforts which included the appearance of a series of Québec historical characters (each complete with appropriate name badges); a booth in the trade show, a series of delegate gifts and a sponsored coffee break featuring traditional treats from "la belle province" in Canada.

Conference dates for Québec are July 20-23 in 2005, and the event offers one of the most unique and attractive cities in North America as a backdrop for the conference. With a distinctive European atmosphere, it is the only fortified city on the continent and has an historic and cultural ambiance second to none. Watch for more conference details in the next issues of Communiqué and make your plans now to participate in the 2005 event!