Once again, it is time for IMEX and amongst the array of other activities, our role in the Politician’s Forum.

In this issue of Communiqué, I’d like to share with you my remarks to the government representatives at IMEX with the hope that they may be of some use to you as you interact with your own government owners;

Whatever kind of business or professional activity you can imagine, chances are that there is a major convention, exhibition or meeting associated with it. These are the kinds of activities that make the economy work and grow. They are also what helps a city or country engage more effectively with the global economy. By hosting such events – and attracting them into the local community – our member centres are not only driving delegate spending but generating a lot of business-related activity that will ultimately benefit the broader business and professional prospects of that community.

The point is, investing in a convention centre is not just about attracting more visitors – as valuable as that may be. It’s also about attracting the kind of events that drive more business activity in the community.

From this perspective, we know that this past year has been a difficult one for governments world wide. We also know that the financial burdens assumed by many governments in order to create economic stimulus programs will shape, and in some cases restrict, their options for the future. Our greatest disappointment during this period was that so many governments failed to appreciate the key part that convention centres do and could play in supporting economic growth – and our greatest hope for the future is that this recognition will increase, and our much wider role in economic development will be better recognized and utilized.

A convention centre is a major investment for any government, particularly when finances are tight. We understand that in order to justify that investment, there needs to be a good return to the community.

What we most want to achieve is a broader understanding that when it comes to convention centres, ROI takes many different forms, some of which are barely understood even by their owners, let alone the community as a whole.

We are all used to measuring the economic returns from convention centres by the impacts of delegate spending – and this is a good, solid measure of incremental benefit since by definition, most of those attending such an event are bringing new money into the local economy. However, it would be a mistake to think the benefits stop there.

The fact is, nobody creates or attends a convention or conference just to stay in a hotel room or dine in a restaurant, however good that may be for the local economy. These are just a by-product of the meeting process and the real reasons for such events are what they actually accomplish. These fundamental reasons why meetings take place should be of much more interest to government owners, because they go to the heart of what drives the global economy.

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The point is, investing in a convention centre is not just about attracting more visitors – as valuable as that may be. It’s also about attracting the kind of events that drive more business activity in the community. As a result, convention centres support everything from professional and product development to new investment and global profile – and these are amongst the most important dividends a centre can deliver in a time when economic stimulation is the top priority. CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

I am pleased to welcome our visiting government representatives to the Politician’s Forum on behalf of AIPC, the International Association of Congress Centres.

Government relations are of very real importance to our members for the simple reason that over 70% of such facilities are government owned. This means that we are often operating in a very challenging interface, because we need to be able to compete successfully in an increasingly competitive global market while still respecting government processes and priorities which are generally quite different from those of that market. Some would call that the worst of both worlds – but we like to think of it as something that adds an interesting dimension to our work!

"Working together we can help each other a great deal..." 

Edgar Hirt, AIPC President
A Very Unique and Targeted Program for Senior Centre Executives

Here Comes Liverpool!

AIPC’s 2010 Annual Conference is only weeks away – with a very unique and focussed program combined with an historic and engaging destination. Here’s everything you need to know to make your participation both rewarding and highly enjoyable!

Here are the Program Sessions:

**HAMISH MCRAE | KEY NOTE**

Fitting into the “New Economy”:
Our second keynote is Hamish McRae, a prominent business commentator and authority on innovation who will be offering his insights into how the industry can best position itself in the economies of the future. In the process, he will be providing examples of innovation and success in other sectors that centres may wish to consider in developing their own future plans.

**WILL HUTTON | KEY NOTE**

Where’s the Money?
A keynote presentation in which noted senior economist Will Hutton reviews government circumstances in the period following the greatest financial crisis of our time, and suggest how centres will have to deal with deeply indebted government shareholders in terms of their ongoing operations and investment requirements.

**CHRIS ESEMAN + TODD VOTH**

Converting Concepts into Design:
This session will take the insights of centre expectation research and show how factors ranging from diversifying program requirements to a need for distinguishing features in a competitive environment can be translated into architectural design. Led by architects Chris Eseman, Partner, LMN Architects and Todd Voth, Senior Principal, POPULOUS, the session will include a workshop on the process of creating design elements out of industry trends.

**MICHAEL HUGHES**

How Centres are Evolving:
A research-based review of changing expectations and evolving building requirements that will impact the kinds of facilities we will need to meet the future demands of our clients and the changing mix of business we can expect in the future. Based on original surveys carried out in partnership with Industry Consultant Michael Hughes.
This is a timely, fully integrated program that will offer AIPC members high value not just for the short term but as a valuable addition to your overall knowledge as centre managers.


Along with our ongoing senior level management updates and issue exchanges, this year’s Annual Conference will feature an executive theme with implications for centre managers everywhere.

Expansions, renovations and new facility development are becoming ongoing functions of a large proportion of convention centre management activity, as rapid changes in the industry generate increasing levels of such activity in order for centres to remain competitive. Yet such programs are often outside the mainstream of centre manager’s expertise and those who do obtain direct experience may have little use for it after their own project is complete.

As a result, this year’s AIPC conference will incorporate the concept of “Project Development – Start to Finish”; a comprehensive look at the process of facility development from initial planning through government and community relations and actual project management. The results will be of intense interest not only to members engaged in or contemplating a major project but those who recognize that such projects are an inevitable part of the industry future.

Experiences and Lessons Learned:
A panel of AIPC member centres who are engaged in and / or have recently completed major projects share their war stories and offer advice on a variety of factors involved with the development process for those embarking on similar projects.

The Realities of Project Management:
Many centre managers are thrust into the role of major development manager as a product of decisions to pursue renovations or expansions without the depth of experience needed. A leading expert in major project management will outline the principles of major project management and how they apply to a recent project in the UK and explain what needs to be understood and what could be done better when it comes to major project management.

The Requirements and the Costs of Going Green:
Is It Worth It? Do You Have a Choice? Setting aside the discussions around sustainable operations, this session will instead focus on the facility design component and what the options and differences are. The session will draw from a panel of design experts to compare standards and their implications as well as laying out the state of play and the cost of playing in the sustainable design game.

Winning the PR Battle:
What are the most effective community and government relations tactics that can be used to win the support and commitment required to see a project through to a successful completion in a more critical investment environment? This session will look at new positioning, messaging and alliances critical to winning the credibility war.

LYLE HALL
Building Today’s Business Case:
From feasibility studies to business projections, the essential elements of a business plan and who and what you need to develop it effectively in today’s and tomorrow’s financial and government policy climate. Led by prominent industry analyst Lyle Hall of HLT Advisory, the session will place a special emphasis on how arguments need to be shaped in today’s challenging financial environment.

LEO JAGO
What are we Measuring, Anyhow?
The success of a convention centre has for too long been assessed primarily on tourism-related measures like room nights and the economic impacts of visitor spending. But to demonstrate real value in today’s climate, we need to be able to document what meetings actually accomplish in terms of growing the overall economy. This session, led by Professor Leo Jago, Acting Director of TTRI at Nottingham University Business School, will be based on his recent landmark study in Australia will look at what the choices are and the role that centres can play.

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A Social Program to Match the Intensity of Our Agenda:

“All work and no play” doesn’t equate.

Here’s what we have lined up to make sure your AIPC Liverpool experience is as pleasurable as it is fulfilling:

SATURDAY JULY 3rd
Informal Get-together: ACC Liverpool – Riverside Balcony
Meet up for an informal get together, meet with colleagues, catch up on industry news, and enjoy the wonderful setting of the Riverside Balcony overlooking the River Mersey at ACC Liverpool. Drinks and canapés will be provided.

SUNDAY JULY 4th
A walking tour of Liverpool city centre:
Take in the stunning Mersey Waterfront, browse the city’s famous cultural quarter and experience the delights of Liverpool!

SUNDAY JULY 4th
English Garden Party at Knowsley Hall
Set in the beautiful English countryside, Knowsley Hall is a privately owned estate and historic Hall set in 2,500 acres of land, including sprawling fields and manicured lawns. The home of Lord Derby will provide the setting for our Garden party. Enjoy the surroundings and experience a typical English Afternoon Tea Party with different outdoor activities. Should the English weather not play along, explore the hall with its many rooms and historic treasures.

SUNDAY JULY 4th
A Welcome Cocktail and Informal Dinner: Maritime Museum, Albert Dock
The Maritime Museum is set in the world renowned Albert Dock, a World Heritage Site which houses several bars, clubs, and is home to both the Maritime Museum and the Tate Gallery. Steeped in history the maritime museum will provide us with the perfect background for a welcome cocktail and informal dinner (finger food). Catch up with colleagues from around the world and walk amongst some outstanding artifacts.

MONDAY JULY 5th
AIPC Award Dinner
The AIPC Award Dinner is a traditional high point of the Annual Conference, where we will be recognizing the winner of the 2010 AIPC Apex Award. This year, we will be celebrating this important event in the elegant surroundings of the Liverpool Town Hall.

TUESDAY JULY 6th
Free evening or Join Us for Football Night at the PanAm Bar
The quarter final of the Football world cup will be screened exclusively for AIPC attendees at the PanAm Bar and club on the Albert Dock. Overlooking the Albert Dock, Pan Am will provide a relaxed environment for you to enjoy the football.

OPTIONAL SOCIAL PROGRAM
In addition to the above, there will be a wide variety of Optional Social Program activities available. These are not included in registration fee, and require early booking as spaces are very limited. They include:

SATURDAY JULY 3rd
Beats Tour plus visit to the Cavern Club
The definitive tour for Beatles’ fans, young and old alike to one of each of their homes, schools and colleges along with Penny Lane, Strawberry Field and Woolton Village where John and Paul met for the first time. Drinks are provided in the world renowned Cavern Club following the tour.

Anfield Tour & Museum
Takes you behind the scenes, to visit the dressing rooms, interview areas, the famous “This is Anfield” sign and the team dug out. Your tour finishes in the Kop End, one of the iconic structures in world football and the museum, home to 5 European Cups. Refreshments will be provided.

Walk and tour of Picasso’s Peace and Freedom at the Tate Liverpool
“Peace and Freedom” is a major exhibition bringing together over 150 works by Picasso from across the world in the first exhibition to explore the post-War period of the artist’s life in depth.

SUNDAY JULY 4th
Golf at the West Lancashire Golf Club
The West Lancashire Golf Club is one of the ten oldest golf clubs in England and offers a tough test of golf over a wonderful lay-out which offers panoramic views of the Mersey Estuary, Anglesey and the distant Welsh Hills (not suitable for high handicap players or novices).

There is also a very attractive Accompanying Persons Program; details of this and all social program options are available on the AIPC web site in the 2010 Annual Conference area.
The Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC), of which AIPC is a longstanding member, has announced the beginning of a new initiative that will see it moving into a more aggressive role as a representative of the global Meetings Industry. At the heart of the plan is the decision to establish the Council as an independent organization with a permanent presence and an ongoing program of industry advocacy.

“We now have the major international industry organizations around one table, and are using that momentum to create a program that truly addresses our collective concerns”, said JMIC President Leigh Harry, CEO of the AIPC member centre in Melbourne. “While we are an industry with many sectors and specialties, it is also important that we can present a strong and united front when the need arises, and our sense is that given the challenges we are currently facing as an industry, that time is now”.

For much of its history JMIC has been a vehicle for information exchange amongst member associations, but it began to take on a more active role several years ago with the development of the “Profile and Power” program, which provided resources designed to help build industry profile, as well as an awards program to recognize those who exemplified industry best practices.

“JMIC is a well established forum for the industry; however, its potential has always been limited by the lack of an ongoing program and an independent administration to ensure consistent action”, said Harry. “Now, in the face of some significant challenges to the overall industry, we see a need to make JMIC a more effective representative, and we are addressing this by creating a structure and a program that will provide continuity of action and increase the effectiveness of its programming”.

The new initiative is being supported by a combination of Council members and partnerships with the two major industry exhibition organizations, IMEX and Reed Travel Exhibitions. “We are very pleased that the two most important trade show organizers in our industry have partnered in this initiative and we believe this will make the program even stronger and more effective”, said Harry.

One of the initial focuses of the new program will be the staging of an industry Summit with the objective of identifying and clarifying major industry issues and initiatives, selecting areas for collective action and generating a new level of attention to the role of the industry in global economic and professional development. It is expected that the Summit will create a forum for initiating more productive cooperation and coordination amongst members as well as addressing gaps in the overall mix of activities such as research and standards. At the same time, the Council will be working to encourage a greater exchange of information and resources amongst members and preparing unified positions in areas that impact the industry as a whole. It will also be developing new resources for individual organizations to use in delivering a more powerful message about the industry.

Talking to Politicians CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

So if I can leave you with one message tonight, it would be this – don’t restrict the way you look at the role a convention centre plays in the local economy to how much money our clients and delegates leave behind. Instead, look to us as a partner in attracting and accommodating the kind of business and professional activity that produces economic stimulation – and as a key to long term economic stability. Working together, we can help each other a great deal – you, by advancing your economic agenda and us by getting the support we need to attract more high quality event business. Best of all, it will enable you to ensure that as an owner, you are maximizing the return you can and should be expecting from your convention centre investment.

Edgar Hirt, AIPC President
The AIPC Academy: a Landmark Year, an Exceptional Program!

2011 will mark the fifth year of the AIPC Academy – and is a major milestone for a program that has grown in value and importance as a leading industry professional development program each year of its existence. Now, it is an established and streamlined offering which has addressed its original objectives in a highly focussed way while continuing to evolve in response to changing industry conditions and emerging educational opportunities.

Where we started:
The original concept was for a program that would assist AIPC member centres in two key areas. The first was to provide a broad industry overview and for centre staff who management felt had potential to take on broader responsibilities in their centre but whose focus had been restricted to a specific area of operations. The second was to provide a quick, in-depth industry orientation to incoming professionals who were new to the industry and needed some context to make their own expertise more effective. Both of these objectives arose from what many surveys have identified as a major issue for centres – a need to bring either newly promoted or recruited staff “up to speed” in a time when it would be increasingly difficult to find individuals who were already fully qualified in terms of industry expectations.

How it’s grown:
The AIPC Academy has grown in scope and content each year with the benefit of program and faculty experience as well as the valuable feedback obtained from successive groups of participants. During this period, it has

- Increased and diversified curriculum content
- Updated continuously in response to new industry challenges
- Extended by a day and a half into a full working week
- Established a full complement of faculty as well as a wide range of associate presenters on special industry topics
- Incorporated site visits and client interactions as a formal part of the curriculum
- Incorporated the Academy Challenge as a vehicle for channelling and expressing content into practical applications

The AIPC Academy today:
As we head into our fifth year of the Academy, it has now become a well established offering with a consistent curriculum and an array of expertise to share with participants from around the world. Along with meeting its original objectives it has become a program that can refresh experienced staff, expand their global perspective, help participants update themselves in an ever-changing industry environment and expand industry networks to long term advantage. Content for the 2011 Academy will include:

- Industry Structure and Trends
- Financial Management and Strategic Planning
- Human Resources and Leadership
- Event Management and Client Servicing
- Sales and Marketing Strategies for Convention Centres
- Corporate Communications: Managing Community and Shareholder Relations
- Building Systems and Operations
- Health Safety and Security Programs for Convention Centres

Two More AIPC Centres Achieve Quality Standards Certification

Two more AIPC member centres have now completed the AIPC Quality Standards program audit at the gold level, bringing to ten the number of centres who have achieved this standing.

Communiqué: Why did you decide to pursue AIPC Quality Standards qualification?

Middendorf: It is of great value to have an international standard of quality for venues such as the World Forum. Of course the ultimate test for a client is how we execute their event, however this standard will add to the trust which can be granted to us before the event even takes place.

Lyons: We decided to pursue this certification as it is an industry specific achievement. It identified both areas where we are excelling and those where there needs to be some
Lyons: It was a very smooth process. We formed a committee with key people and tasked everyone with acquiring information on certain sections. The committee would then regroup, present their findings and provide recommendations if applicable. The main benefit was recognizing specific “gaps” in areas that need to be addressed and on the flip side seeing where we excel.

Communiqué | How do you intend to use your new qualification going forward?

Middendorf: The Gold Standard of the AIPC will be used in our external communication because we are proud of it! But more important: it will be used in our internal communication to keep us on the cutting edge of our service standards. The only challenge of “having gold” is to keep it....!

Lyons: The designation will provide us with more recognition in the international markets, and assist us in improving the areas we have identified as needing some work.

Communiqué | How challenging was the process for your staff? What other benefits came out of the exercise?

Middendorf: Evaluating and fine tuning our work process was a healthy exercise. It made us think and rethink. It made us conscious about good and bad habits of our operation.

Lyons: It is now being used in all news that we send out to both external and internal audiences and will be included in future collateral and marketing materials. I’ve been quoted in the media as saying “This certification allows us to have that much more recognition in the international markets. Everyone here is proud of this accomplishment which would not have been possible without our staff’s hard work and dedication.”

The Academy Venue:
The venue for the 2011 AIPC Academy is again the Dolce la Hulpe, just outside of Brussels. This is a dedicated training facility that has demonstrated its ability to provide a perfect learning environment with full technical facilities along with sophisticated accommodation and services. Hotel features include a variety of restaurants and bar facilities along with a full service spa and exercise facilities, while its location in an extensive and highly attractive wooded area with nearby walking/hiking trails and an historic chateau offers the perfect opportunity for healthy relaxation between sessions.

The 2010 program benefitted a great deal from the participation of the Square Brussels Meeting Centre, Brussels’ newest conference space in the heart of the historic city, who hosted the Academy and provided a presentation, facility tour and meal function that enhanced the overall experience for participants. In addition, the Academy was hosted at the headquarters of SWIFT International, located in a splendid chateau close to the Dolce la Hulpe, and again treated to both an insightful presentation and a superb lunch as a part of their program. Future Academy programs will also incorporate such activities as a means of creating new insights and a more diversified experience for participants.

A Strategic Investment for Convention Centres:
Enrolling staff in the AIPC Academy program is one of the best investments a centre can make in the development of fully professional managers with the potential to play a positive role in your future development plans. The Academy offers the kind of training and network development opportunity needed to develop and maintain a fully professional team in these challenging times, and is an opportunity which is available only to AIPC member centres.

In the interests of maintaining as constructive a learning environment as possible, registration is limited and Academy programs have been fully subscribed every year. Centres should book a place early as next year promises to be even more competitive as more centres experience the need for the kind of staff development only programs like the AIPC Academy can deliver.
Go Ahead, Steal Our Materials

They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery – but theft isn’t far behind!
AIPC members should feel free to use and / or adapt any materials you see in Communiqué for your own publications and newsletters if you feel they will be of use to you and your colleagues! The same is true of AIPC media columns and articles, all of which can be downloaded from the web site. www.aipc.org