

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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G'DAY HAWAI'I! HVCB GOES DOWN UNDER TO SELL INCENTIVES

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) will be in the land of kiwis and koala bears for the next two weeks to sell the islands as a business destination and capitalize on a growing market for meetings and incentives.

Sales blitzes conducted first in New Zealand and then Australia will be capped off by a statewide tradeshow exhibit at the 2005 AsiaPacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME), February 22-23, in Australia's Melbourne Exhibition Centre.

"Hawai'i has realized significant growth from Australia and New Zealand over the past year and we're going to keep building on this momentum with an intense sales and promotional drive to land new business," said Michael Murray, CMP, CMM, CASE, HVCB director of sales, corporate meetings and incentives (CMI).

Murray added that the launch of Hawaiian Airlines' Sydney-to-Honolulu service in May 2004 and the robust performance of the Australian dollar have combined to help generate more group programs for Hawai'i's meetings industry.

Leading the Hawai'i sales promotion is Adele Tasaka, HVCB senior director of accounts. "Interest from our CMI industry partners has been excellent and makes for a much more compelling message when selling Hawai'i as an incentives and meetings destination," noted Tasaka. "We have twice as many tourism suppliers joining us this year reflecting how this market has expanded in importance."

HVCB's marketing efforts begin today with a delegation conducting a sales blitz of meetings and incentives companies in New Zealand from February 10-15.

The Hawai'i team then travels to Australia for a second week of one-to-one sales and marketing opportunities, promotions, client presentations, and a special Hawai'i-themed client reception at Aria Restaurant in Sydney.

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Led by HVCB, Hawai'i has maintained a strong, visible presence at AIME for many years, establishing and nurturing client relationships within the marketplace.

For AIME 2005, the Hawai'i team will highlight the islands' natural beauty, multi-cultural diversity, range of activities, and variety of world-class resorts and meeting facilities available statewide to meet any budget.

One of Asia-Pacific's largest business event exhibitions, this year's AIME convention is expected to be its largest ever, with 2,800 attendees and 800 exhibitors from 45 countries.

Joining HVCB for the AIME 2005 exhibition are 12 CMI industry partners: Fairmont Hotels & Resorts; Grand Wailea Resort Hotel & Spa; Hawai'i Tourism Oceania; Hawaiian Airlines; Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa; Hyatt Resorts Hawaii; Island Partners Hawaii; Kaua'i Visitors Bureau; Sheraton Hotels & Resorts Hawaii; USA Hosts Hawaii, LLC; Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort; and Wailea Marriott Resort.

MeetHawaii.com

For information about hosting corporate meetings and incentives in Hawai'i, visit HVCB's Web site at MeetHawaii.com or call 1-888-424-2924.

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