

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HVCB KEEPS PUSH ON IN CALIFORNIA FOR MPI BUSINESS
February 16th Oakland Tradeshow Follows San Diego Convention

HONOLULU – For the second time in three weeks, the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) will lead a contingent of tourism partners to California for a major push to sell Hawai'i to members of Meetings Professional International (MPI).

Dallas-based MPI is the meeting industry's largest association with more than 19,000 worldwide members booking 700,000 meetings annually.

On February 16, the Northern California Chapter – one of MPI's largest – will hold its 17th Annual Trade Show at the Oakland Marriott City Center. Four thousand corporate, association, and independent meeting planners are invited. Especially vital to Hawai'i's interests will be the presence of numerous high-tech, finance, and insurance corporations, lucrative industries that produce higher-spending business visitors.

Joining HVCB to sell Hawai'i are Big Island Visitors Bureau; Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Hawaii; Grand Wailea Resort Hotel & Spa; Hawai'i Convention Center; Hawaiian Airlines; Hyatt Resorts Hawaii; Marriott Hotels and Resorts Hawaii; Prince Resorts Hawaii; Sheraton Hotels & Resorts Waikiki; The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua; and Turtle Bay Resort.

"MPI's business is essential because its members represent a diversity of industries and types of meetings that are perfect for Hawai'i's infrastructure," said Michael Murray, CMP, CMM, CASE, HVCB director of sales for corporate meetings and incentives (CMI). "Working with our CMI industry partners, we've established a great relationship with MPI that has proven very fruitful with bookings statewide."

The Oakland tradeshow comes three weeks after HVCB organized an all-island exhibition in San Diego at the 2005 MPI Professional Education Conference – North America (PEC-NA), January 23-25. Attending were 2,700 meeting professionals.

HVCB and island chapters Kaua'i Visitors Bureau, O'ahu Visitors Bureau, Maui Visitors Bureau, and Big Island Visitors Bureau were joined by Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Hawaii; Grand Wailea Resort Hotel & Spa; Hawai'i Convention Center; Hawaiian Airlines; Hilton Resorts Hawaii; Kathy Clark Meetings & Incentives; Marriott Renaissance and JW Resorts Hawaii; Prince Resorts Hawaii; Radisson Kauai Beach Resort; Radisson Waikiki Prince Kuhio; Renaissance Ilikai Waikiki Hotel; and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii.

"It's such a bonus for the state to have the collective support of so many Hawai'i partners selling the destination and its amenities to planners," Murray said.

MPI Board Meeting on Maui, February 24-25

HVCB's marketing of MPI doesn't end with the California tradeshow. On February 24-25, MPI's executive board will hold its annual meeting on Maui at which HVCB and its island chapters will showcase Hawai'i's meeting assets. HVCB and the Hawai'i Convention Center are collaborating on bids to host future MPI conventions, similar to the PEC-NA Convention booked by HVCB and held at the Center in 2002.

Leading the marketing efforts at the board meeting is Adele Tasaka, HVCB senior director of accounts and past president of MPI's Aloha Chapter. In addition, Murray is a member of the board's international brand marketing committee.

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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