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## MCB supports plan for fourth hotel at Crown Casino complex

Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) has welcomed the proposal for a fourth hotel at the Crown Casino complex, saying it will have significant benefit for business events and Victoria's economy as well as bringing new life to Queensbridge Square.

"We operate in an extremely competitive environment for this lucrative business and the addition of new hotel stock so close to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) is a real advantage for Melbourne when it comes to attracting large international conventions and incentive groups to the city," said Karen Bolinger, Chief Executive Officer of Melbourne Convention Bureau.

"With the expansion of MCEC due to get underway within months, and this proposal for new hotel rooms linked via an air bridge to the Crown complex, it will make Melbourne's convention precinct an even more appealing asset.

"Location is vital when competing internationally for these large events and while MCEC, just a short walk or tram ride for delegates to their hotels and into the CBD, is a significant competitive advantage for Melbourne, too often at peak periods the city reaches capacity. This is limiting our ability to confirm lucrative new conference and incentive program business," Ms Bolinger said.

"We need to look to the future to maintain our international reputation as a must-visit destination for business travellers and discerning tourists seeking an experience that they cannot get elsewhere in Australia.

"MCB works hard to deliver business events for the city and I welcome any initiative that increases our competitive advantage and the overall visitor experience," Ms Bolinger said.

Over the 2014/15 financial year, MCB delivered 203 business events, a 19% increase on the previous year. These contributed \$308 million to the Victorian economy, 9% higher than the previous year.

"We had almost a 70% increase in the number of incentive programs from Asia last financial year. We need to continually expand our hotel stock in order to continue to deliver results such as this," Ms Bolinger said.

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