

Media Release: 21 July 2011

CLIENT SURVEYS RESULTS CONFIRM BESTCITIES' APPEAL



Cape Town
Copenhagen
Dubai
Edinburgh
Melbourne
San Juan
Singapore
Vancouver

21 July, Cape Town: After more than 10 years together as the world's only CVB alliance of certified convention bureau, BestCities Global Alliance's main objective remains the delivery of the highest levels of service, expertise and quality standards for meeting planners.

David Frandsen, the alliance's Board Chair 2011 explains: "First of all, BestCities' Quality Management System (QMS) provides an established set of quality standards across the Alliance. Then, through the annual certification by LRQA (Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance), the alliance is able to guarantee to clients that all BestCities destinations live up to these standards. This year, the alliance will undergo its 4th annual LRQA audit between August and September"

In addition, the delivery of an independently administered client survey evaluating the performance of the eight cities that make up the alliance – Cape Town, Copenhagen, Dubai, Edinburgh, Melbourne, San Juan, Singapore and Vancouver – on a broad range of aspects, acts as a barometer of the ongoing commitment. In particular, the provision of services during the bidding process, and/or services for the planning, set-up and delivery of an actual event, provides the evidence base to inform these ongoing quality control processes across the alliance.

The results of the alliance's 2nd annual client surveys – which enjoyed a 50% response rate from clients who were contacted right after their bid process, and within 30 days of their event being held in a BestCities destination, were recently released. A total of 103 clients from the association market segment, participated in these surveys. The questions used a rating scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is 'very poor' and 10 is 'very good'.

73% of bids by BestCities partners were successful, with 97% of their clients reporting their expectations of the host city as being matched or exceeded. 82% felt that the attendance level at their congress was either "as expected" or "above expectations." This can be attributed to the strong attendance boosting service offered by BestCities ("satisfaction with delegate boosting = 8.07") and/or the attractiveness of a BestCities destination. The average score for meeting planners who would recommend BestCities Global Alliance to their other colleagues was 8.6.

The overall experience with a BestCities bureau was rated at 9.18. Aspects surveyed included satisfaction with the organization of site inspections; usefulness of the information provided; response time to requests; assistance with identifying destination options; preparation of bid documentation and assistance with making bid presentations. Partner destinations were, again, rated very highly across the board from transport considerations to the range of services and activities, to generic factors like cleanliness and safety. The overall alliance destination score was 8.91 against 12 areas surveyed this year. "Value for money" is the only metric which was rated below 8 at 7.82 this year (against 7.27 last year).

Frandsen adds: "After the development of the QMS and the sharing of resources and expertise, we have now established our Bid Intelligence Registry with an information bank of client bid requirements as a useful reference point going forward. This sharing of intelligence will help us to service our clients even better. One example is the International Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology World Congress. It was held in 1998 in Edinburgh, followed by Melbourne in 2001 and then Vancouver in 2005. Copenhagen will host the 2012 congress."

BestCities recently held their Board meeting in Frankfurt followed by the annual Alliance Management Review and Client workshop in Copenhagen. – ends -

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Note to Editors: BestCities is the first global alliance to put in place a certification programme – with standards certified by Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance (LRQA) - to ensure a consistent level of convention bureau service excellence from all partner cities. BestCities Partners are Cape Town, Copenhagen, Dubai, Edinburgh, Melbourne, San Juan, Singapore and Vancouver.

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