

Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman

Associate Minister of Tourism
27 MARCH 2009

Media Release

New Zealand wins bid to host American travel writers' convention

Winning the bid to host America's top travel writers for their annual conference in 2011 is a coup for New Zealand tourism, Associate Minister of Tourism Dr Jonathan Coleman announced today.

Around 350 travel media from the Society of American Travel Writers will spend a week or more in New Zealand in November 2011, with coverage expected to reach millions.

"This represents an enormous strategic opportunity for New Zealand. With this event due to take place immediately after the 2011 Rugby World Cup, it will see the momentum continue in what is already expected to be a huge year for New Zealand's international profile.

"To win this bid against competition from other countries is a credit to the tourism experiences we offer and the strength of New Zealand as a destination."

The bid to host the conference was a joint-bid between Tourism New Zealand, Air New Zealand and Positively Wellington Tourism, with support from Conventions and Incentives New Zealand.

New Zealand won the bid because of the range and variety of story angles on offer to writers, as well as the country's ability to hold a well-organised and appealing convention. The selection panel also commended the strong relationship between Tourism New Zealand and Air New Zealand.

"Many of these delegates will take time while they are here to write about New Zealand as well as to attend the meetings. This is a fantastic opportunity to raise New Zealand's profile in the US travel media."

Wellington will host the main convention programme, with meetings scheduled over five days. However, convention delegates will have the opportunity to participate in pre and post-convention tours in various parts of the country. A Board of Directors Meeting will also be held at Sky City in Auckland.

It is expected that writers from across the US and Canada will attend, representing publications potentially including *National Geographic Traveller*, the *New York Times*,

Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, Condé Nast Traveller, Elite Traveller and the *New Yorker*, as well as various travel guides and news websites.

The last time the convention was held outside the US was in Chile in 2006. Media coverage of Chile following the event was seen by around 21.5 million readers.

“This is publicity that money simply could not buy. “

Ends

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