

SA Tourism acquires Meetings Africa

South African Tourism yesterday, Thursday, 20 September 2007, announced the purchase of Meetings Africa, reportedly the continent's premier business tourism trade show, from Thebe Exhibitions & Events. Meetings Africa, held annually in February in Gauteng, will continue to be managed by Thebe Exhibitions & Events for the next three years.

“The purchase of Meetings Africa is a strategic development on our part,” commented SA Tourism CEO Moeketsi Mosola.

“As the owners of Indaba, Africa's leading leisure travel trade show held every year in Durban in May, we have acquired substantial trade expertise. We are therefore well-placed to spearhead the future development of Meetings Africa to provide a powerful, globally-recognised platform to showcase the country's business tourism offerings to the local and international travel trade, as well as to our primary stakeholders.”

Increase international trade participants

In the short to medium term, South African Tourism plans to increase the number of international trade participants as well as exhibitors attending the show. This will be achieved by capitalising on existing relationships built by SA Tourism's overseas offices with the trade in core markets, with a particular focus on the segments that deliver the greatest value as identified in the Business Tourism Growth Strategy.

“Thebe is thrilled to hand over the reigns of Meetings Africa to SA Tourism. Given [its] international and domestic trade network, [it is] best placed to grow this trade show to even greater heights,” said Carol Weaving, MD of Thebe Exhibitions & Events.

“The acquisition represents a synergy with the establishment of our dedicated Business Tourism unit three years ago and our recently devised Business Tourism Growth Strategy which defines the markets we play and how to win meetings business from those markets,” elaborated Mosola.

“Rapid growth”

“The business tourism industry has experienced rapid growth over the last few years and has become an increasingly important sector for us. The purchase of Meetings Africa is illustrative of our commitment to the industry to help develop it even further.”

- Business tourism focuses exclusively on the provision of facilities and services to the millions of delegates who annually attend meetings, congresses, exhibitions, business events and/or who participate in incentive travel and corporate hospitality.