

Media Release

More space for Melbourne – MCEC reveals plans for expansion

29 May 2016

The design for Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre's (MCEC) upcoming expansion was today unveiled by Acting Premier, Hon. James Merlino MP and Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Hon. John Eren MP.

The project will add nearly 20,000 square metres of flexible, multi-purpose event space including new exhibition halls and additional meeting and banquet rooms. It will be fully connected and integrated with the existing Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, increasing its total size to over 70,000 square metres.

Once completed, the additional space is anticipated to generate an additional 74,000 international visitors annually, who spend on average \$693 each day while in Melbourne, resulting in an annual \$167 million boost to the Victorian economy.

"Victoria is the national leader when it comes to major business events, and this expansion will help keep our hotels full, our restaurants and bars buzzing and our economy strong," Mr Merlino said.

"This new boost will help our state bid for more events, which will see more people visiting, more jobs created as we become an even stronger state," Mr Eren added.

The 2015-16 Victorian Budget provided \$205 million for the expansion of MCEC, which will build on the existing success of the venue and help cater to the growing demand for exhibitions linked to conferences.

This project is part of a South Wharf development that will connect visitors and local traders with a new 341-room hotel and multi-deck car parking facilities. Leading infrastructure business, Plenary Group and its partners in the precinct are investing more approximately \$150-175 million in this development.

MCEC Chief Executive, Peter King said the expansion was critical to ensuring the venue can continue to accommodate the growing global demand for multi-purpose meetings and event spaces.

"We're thrilled to share our plans, which complete the vision for MCEC as a vibrant, world-class events and entertainment destination," Mr King said.

"One of the key features of MCEC is the diversity of events that are conducted at the venue every day, attracting over two million visitors annually. This expansion means more events for Melbourne and most importantly, allows our customers to grow their events with us."

“We’re excited to continue our business as usual operations while our new building is constructed and we look forward to sharing more details as they become available,” Mr King added.

Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) Chief Executive Officer, Karen Bolinger said that this investment supports the ongoing ‘Team Melbourne’ partnership MCEC has with MCB and the City of Melbourne to attract business events to Victoria, which are worth \$9.98 billion each year and generate 65,000 jobs.

“Business Events are the highest yielding sector of the Victorian visitor economy and we applaud and support the expansion of MCEC, which will contribute to the ongoing benefits this sector generates for Melbourne and Victoria,” Ms Bolinger said.

Preliminary works on MCEC’s expansion have commenced, with construction estimated to be completed in early 2018.

-ENDS-