

## PATA to Scrutinise 'Brand USA'

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Thousands of people are choosing not to visit the US because they believe that foreigners are unwelcome, says the Discover America Partnership (DAP) in its groundbreaking US\$300 million plan, A Blueprint to Discover America (Blueprint).

As a consequence, the US economy is missing out on US\$16.4 billion in new expenditure, 189,000 new jobs and US\$2.6 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues.

This April, travel and tourism leaders will congregate in Canada for the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Board of Directors meeting and the 56th Annual General Meeting (AGM), where a special half-day seminar will form an integral part of a new-look AGM programme on April 22. Taking place ahead of the PATA AGM, the seminar will focus on key issues and implications related to Blueprint, DAP's plan to welcome international travellers back to North American shores.

PATA has invited Blueprint Executive Director Mr Geoff Freeman to present on the range of measures proposed in the plan to fix the country's travel 'crisis' such as, creating a 21st century visa system, modernising and securing ports of entry, and changing perceptions through co-ordinated communications.

A panel discussion involving Mr Freeman, Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) President and CEO Ms Michele McKenzie, and other industry leaders will provide stakeholders the opportunity to discuss key issues and implications related to the Blueprint, particularly as they impact travel and tourism flows between Asia Pacific and North America. Ms McKenzie will also present big picture issues facing North America from Canada's unique perspective.

Seminar delegates will also see the official unveiling of PATA's flagship report, 'Asia Pacific Tourism Forecasts 2007-2009'. PATA Director-Strategic Intelligence Centre Mr John Koldowski will present three-year forecasts for arrivals, departures, receipts and market share performance, as well as future trends from key and emerging source markets, for the 39 profiled Asia Pacific economies.

Entitled Asia Pacific & North America - the Way Forward, this compelling half-day seminar is free to members and open to non-PATA members at the price of US\$50 per person, including lunch.

Last September, the PATA Board voted unanimously to give Canada its first chance in 17 years to host an Association event by approving Vancouver's bid for the PATA Board of Directors meeting and the 56th AGM. Vancouver is consistently recognised as one of the top 10 meeting destinations in North America, and one of the best cities in the world to live.

The PATA Board Meeting and AGM will be held at Hyatt Regency Vancouver from April 19 to 22, 2007, bringing together PATA directors and members from 42 PATA member destinations, and industry stakeholders from Asia Pacific and worldwide. The events are supported by the CTC, Tourism Vancouver, Tourism Montreal, Tourism Whistler and the Vancouver Airport Authority. CTC is also presenting the first PATA Foundation Charity Gala Dinner at the Marriott Pinnacle Downtown hotel on April 21.

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