



Corporate Standards for Meetings, Events and Incentive/Recognition Travel ***Talking Points***

- **The business practices of our customers impact the welfare of our industry, our employee base and the economic health of the communities where we do business.**
 - Meetings, events and incentive travel are smart, cost effective ways to retain and develop employee talent, build engagement, generate ideas and share knowledge that drives business growth.
 - Critics have mislabeled many meetings and events as unnecessary and forced businesses – those that have received federal government support and many that have not – to cancel planned and future activities.
 - When businesses cancel productive meetings and events, the American worker and local communities from coast-to-coast are the unintended victims.

- **The meetings, events and incentive travel industries are addressing an urgent public need by developing clear, workable guidelines designed to ensure responsible business travel practices within companies that have received emergency government lending.**
 - Many prudent companies already have in place policies that ensure travel expenditures are reasonable, justifiable and verifiable. The standards we have issued are an aggregation of best practices that we are recommending our business clients follow.
 - Our standards support the Treasury Department's recent call for the board of directors of companies that have received emergency government lending to develop guidelines on conferences, events and employee recognition programs.
 - Our guidelines demand accountability and transparency, including:
 - Events exceeding \$75,000 must be supported by a written business case identifying a specific business purpose and positive return on objective and investment metrics;
 - At least 90 percent of incentive program attendees shall be other than senior executives (as defined by Treasury Department guidelines) from the host organization; and
 - Total annual expenses for meetings, events and incentive/recognition travel shall not exceed 15 percent of the company's total sales and marketing spend.

- **Clear standards requiring transparency and accountability protect taxpayers, our industry, more than one million employees and the communities where we do business.**
 - Meetings and events are responsible for 15 percent of all travel spending and generate more than one million jobs and nearly \$40 billion in tax revenue.
 - Bellmen, maids, wait staff and other hourly wage employees are the first to lose their jobs as meetings, events and travel incentives decline.
 - The Labor Department reported a loss of 200,000 travel related jobs in 2008 and Commerce Department data predicts a loss of an additional 247,000 travel related jobs in 2009.
 - Undue restrictions on companies receiving government assistance to conduct productive meetings and events stifle their ability to recover and place them at a competitive disadvantage.