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Contact: Michael Murray  
mmurray@hvcb.org  
(808) 924-0253

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**HAWAII'S GLOBAL APPEAL FOR MEETINGS SHOWCASED WITH SAME-DAY PROMOTIONS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AND AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 18**

**HONOLULU** – Next week, the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) will stretch its marketing of Hawai'i as a meetings destination to both sides of the Pacific, conducting simultaneous promotions in Northern California and Australia.

HVCB, along with 12 travel companies, will market Hawai'i at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Northern California Chapter of Meeting Professionals International's (NCCMPI) Trade Show, February 18, at the Santa Clara Convention Center.

The one-day tradeshow is particularly effective for Hawai'i's meeting industry, as high-tech, insurance, and finance corporations are a major focus – the kind of lucrative industries and high-spending visitors HVCB is targeting for meetings. More than 500 attendees will take part, including corporate meeting planners, independent planners, and incentive houses representing a wide range of area corporations.

"We're communicating Hawai'i's meeting assets and promoting the business sectors that are consistent with the state's core competencies, especially in the area of technology," said Michael Murray, CMP, CMM, CASE, director of sales for HVCB's Corporate Meetings and Incentives (CMI) division.

Joining HVCB in promoting Hawai'i's meeting assets are Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Grand Wailea Resort Hotel & Spa, Hawai'i Convention Center, Hawaiian Airlines, Hyatt Resorts Hawaii, Kahala Mandarin Oriental, Marriott & Renaissance Resorts Hawaii, Prince Resorts Hawaii, Sheraton Hotels in Waikiki, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii, and Turtle Bay Resort.

MPI is the meeting profession's largest association, with its 18,000 members responsible for 700,000 meetings annually and a buying power of more than \$10 billion. The Northern California Chapter is one of its largest, with Kehaulani McGregor, CMP, HVCB's regional director of CMI accounts, currently serving as its vice president.

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At the same time – 8,000 miles away – HVCB will be marketing Hawai'i's meetings benefits to international corporations and groups in Australia at the 12<sup>th</sup> AsiaPacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME). It is being staged at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre, February 17-18.

AIME 2004 is one of the largest business event exhibitions for meetings in the Asia-Pacific region, attracting corporations and meeting planners from throughout the Pacific Rim and Southeast Asia. This year's convention will attract a record 750 exhibitors from 40 countries and more than 2,600 trade buyers from around the world. AIME organizers estimate the event will generate \$800 million worth of meetings business.

HVCB has promoted Hawai'i at AIME for several years, establishing a presence for Hawai'i and attracting meetings from the region.

This year, Adele Tasaka, HVCB senior director of CMI accounts, will lead five Hawai'i travel companies to promote the state's meeting infrastructure: Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Hawaii Executive Planners, Hilton Resorts Hawaii, Kaua'i Visitors Bureau, and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii.

In addition to the tradeshow, HVCB will conduct a sales blitz of corporations and meeting planners in Australia. "We're anticipating an increase in meetings business from the Pacific Rim demonstrating Hawai'i's value as the 'ultimate global gathering place' for satisfying the goals and objectives of corporations," said Murray.

For information about holding meetings in Hawai'i, the Islands of Aloha, visit HVCB's Web site at [meethawaii.com](http://meethawaii.com) or call the CMI division at 1-888-424-2924.

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