



## **EIA House of Commons Reception**

### **Full House!**

EIA held an evening reception hosted by Lord Tom King of Bridgwater at the House of Commons on 5 February 2007, which brought together over a hundred people including MPs, Government officials, senior representatives of Business Tourism Partnership, Tourism Alliance, VisitBritain, Arup, BSI and senior members of AEC, AEO and AEV.

The quality and quantity of attendees as well as the networking and energy in the room was a reflection of the positive and significant step initiated by EIA, towards collaborative work between Government and the events industry.

After an introduction by host Lord King, Trevor Foley, EIA Group CEO, in his keynote speech said: "We feel that the size and scope of our industry has not been fully appreciated by Government. Some of the reason for that lies with us and a key aim of EIA is to rectify that by working more closely with Government to get things done which can benefit UK Plc.

"For centuries the UK has been a world-trading hub for goods and services. Our future depends on it remaining so. The basic aim of both trade shows and consumer events is to bring buyers and sellers together.

"We are aware that the creative industries are viewed with increasing importance by Government, and the Government's agenda in relation to the Creative Economy Programme is one that we can contribute to. If you like, we are the experience economy within the creative economy.

"UK events and organisers are considered to be the world leaders in creating and launching events then cloning and exporting events. Events are a major contributor to both business and leisure tourism".

Closing his keynote address, Foley outlined concrete ways for our industry to work successfully with Government.

"We hope to...

1. Gain top-level Government support in our bids to run peripatetic events at UK venues.
2. To have ministers open and attend key exhibitions and events. It really does help generate additional business and economic impact.
3. Collaboration to resolve areas of conflicting policy/action and wider rules and regulations affecting our sector, which arise because of poor communication between Government departments. Examples would be visa fee increases; airport passenger taxes; licensing fees and some health and safety rules.
4. We can be great partners with Government in the Olympics run up to and post Olympics, as Lord King has outlined.

5. In contrast to our Europe counterparts, it is still considered expensive to participate in UK events by UK plc. And again, this is something that we can address together.

**It is our vision that, in partnership with our Government, the UK events industry can help UK Plc cement, develop and grow its position as the world's creative services hub."** Trevor concluded.

Lord King addressed the audience saying: "It does surprise me that this is an industry that the Government has failed to recognise the significance of and I hope that this event tonight will be a start of a much better recognition of what this industry already does for Britain and what it can continue to do in the future".

Below are the comments that document the event.

"Tonight is a very positive achievement for the industry. It was a tremendous presentation, and I wish you well."

*Lord Davies of Coity CBE*

"Well done! Tonight is a very important part of our campaign to start to influence Government. We need to keep it going now and get into more senior places!"

*Alastair Gornall, Chief Executive, Reed Exhibitions Ltd*

"This is a great step forward. Such a tremendous turnout from the industry reflects how much people care about the involvement of Government. I feel very confident that in future we will see a greater input and support from Government."

*Nigel Nathan, Group Commercial Director, Earls Court & Olympia*

"As a new entrant into the events business, an event like this gives us a fast-track opportunity to meet everyone you need to know."

*Fergus Campbell, publisher, magazines and manager, events, Channel 4 Events*

"Talking to the MPs tonight it was interesting to hear how they view the exhibition industry and what the impact is at a local level for their residents. There was clear interest from the MPs to learn more and to help where possible while still achieving the right results for their constituents".

*Charlotte Mulady, Marketing Manager, ASP*

"This is a great initiative to raise the profile of the UK exhibitions industry among key influential people and policy makers. In Europe events generally receive far more Government support than here in the UK, and tonight is the first step towards addressing this".

*Marcus Timson, Group Commercial Manager, FESPA*

"The attendance this evening reflects the significant contribution this industry makes to UK GDP."

*Neil Kirkpatrick, Associate Director, ARUP*

"Any opportunity to get together and network at this level is useful."

*Steve Webb, Group Event Director, CMP*

"This is the first step in putting this industry on the map."

*John Sanders, Exposure Event Creations*

"It's very rewarding to see influential members of the three associations speaking directly to MPs and Government officials, sharing their passion and enthusiasm for our industry."

Chris Skeith, EIA Project Director and AEC Deputy Director.

===ENDS===

*High-resolution images of the event available upon request*

---NOTES TO EDITORS---

**About the EIA: [www.eventsindustryalliance.com](http://www.eventsindustryalliance.com)**

The Events Industry Alliance (EIA) is the new marketing arm for the exhibitions and events industry, tasked with telling business leaders and media planners about the huge prospects for business growth through the medium of "Face to Face Marketing", and increasing recognition in Government of the considerable value of the industry to the UK economy.

This new body has been formed by and is equally owned by members of three associations that have increasingly worked together to speak with one powerful voice for the industry:

- The Association of Exhibition Contractors (AEC)
- The Association of Exhibition Organisers (AEO)
- The Association of Event Venues (AEV)

The EIA aims to:

1. Provide a single stronger voice for the industry
2. Better resource industry promotion activities
3. Enable greater sharing of information and intellect between existing association parties and new communities
4. Increase professionalism within and knowledge of the industry at all levels within member companies, In order that all members can run existing events more successfully and win more exhibition/event business.

For more information, visit the website at [www.eventsindustryalliance.com](http://www.eventsindustryalliance.com)

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