



Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

Saturday 24 February 2007

MEDIA RELEASE

Sydney Royal Easter Show voted Australia's number one event at 2006 Australian Tourism Awards ahead of a strong field including Melbourne's Commonwealth Games and Gold Coast's Lexmark Indy 300

The Sydney Royal Easter Show was named as Australia's **best Major Festival and Special Event** at the 2006 Qantas Travel and Tourism Awards, held on Friday night at Star City Casino.

In the presence of the Hon. Fran Bailey, Federal Minister for Small Business and Tourism and the Hon. Sandra Nori, Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation, the Sydney Royal Easter Show was awarded against an impressive list of finalists including the 2006 Commonwealth Games, Gold Coast Lexmark Indy 300 and the Clipsal 500 Adelaide.

Organised by the **Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) since 1823**, the Sydney Royal Easter Show is Australia's oldest annual event celebrating excellence in Australian agriculture and conveys a strong sense of Australian culture, heritage and identity. It incorporates Australian life, both past and present and showcases the real Australia to locals and visiting internationals alike.

2006 was the first year the RAS proactively marketed the Show to an international market led by an inaugural launch into Hong Kong.

"We are thrilled to be recognised for our efforts in taking the Show to the world. This award also highlights the Sydney Royal Easter Show as one of the world's great events." said **Mr John Aitken, General Manager, Events & Marketing**.

"With such tough competition from other state finalists, this is a great coup for the RAS. The support of Tourism NSW has been instrumental in our success in taking the Show to New Zealand, Hong Kong, China, Korea and now Singapore. We have plans to extend our tourism push into many more markets targeting both leisure and business tourism that will see our economic impact for NSW increase dramatically from an already impressive \$462m per annum." (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, 2005)

"With around 1 million people visiting each year from all over Australia, it's a great celebration for international visitors to partake in.

Mr Aitken believes the impact of this Tourism Award will also be felt closer to home.

"Some may be surprised that the Show was awarded ahead of established international events such as the Commonwealth Games and Lexmark Indy. Being an annual celebration, those who have grown up with the Show sometimes take it for granted, with many Sydneysiders having not attended since our move from Moore Park. Perhaps this accolade will help rekindle their interest as we also see many thousands of tourists travelling half way around the world to come to the Show."

The 2006 Sydney Royal Easter Show attracted over 18,500 international visitors. This was a result of a new tourism strategy launched in 2006, where the Show was taken to the world. The RAS worked closely with NSW Tourism offices in Hong Kong and New Zealand to achieve great results in Show attendance and awareness overseas.

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The Show has been recognised on several occasions by Tourism NSW, winning the NSW Awards of the Decade in Tourism Excellence in 1999 and the NSW Major Festivals & Special Events category in 1994.

The 2007 Show will celebrate its 10th anniversary at Sydney Olympic Park in the \$400m world class purpose built venue.

For further information on the Show, please visit www.eastershow.com

See you at the 2007 Sydney Royal Easter Show, 5 – 18 April 2007!

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