



News release - 1 April 2016

New Zealand industry leader steps into IAPCO President role

NEW PRESIDENT

Jan Tonkin, managing director of Auckland-based The Conference Company, will today take up the presidency of the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers. Jan was elected at the Association's annual General Assembly in Cape Town in February, and takes over from outgoing President Michel Neijmann for a two-year term.



Headquartered in the UK, IAPCO is the industry body dedicated to continuing education, development and quality standards in the meetings industry. Jan says it is an exciting time to be stepping into the position. "Our business is undergoing a period of intense change, as new technologies bring about the commodification of traditional services and the diversification of meeting formats. And the role of the meeting planner is also shifting, from logistician to a more strategic partnership. IAPCO's role is to help manage and lead that change. We do that by bringing together the best insights, ideas and strategy, passing them on to practitioners, and in turn, their clients."

The new Council will meet in Edinburgh in mid-April to review the Association's strategic plan. Education is expected to be a strong continued focus, as the Association builds on the success of initiatives such as the new IAPCO EDGE seminar programme and the web-EDGE library of online educational resources. "We look forward to consolidating these programmes as well as developing further opportunities for high-quality, affordable, accessible education," says Jan.

"If you're an organisation choosing a meeting planner, looking for a provider with IAPCO membership is an assurance of quality. But we're also a great resource for organisations themselves. If you're hosting your first conference or wanting to run a health check on your existing practice, we publish a range of materials to help.

“It’s a personal mission of mine to strengthen ties between IAPCO and the Asia-Pacific region. It’s a twofold opportunity: as well as profiling IAPCO to organisations, venues and bureaux in Asia Pacific, I’m looking forward to profiling the strength of the Asia-Pacific industry, and the extraordinary work being done in this region, to the rest of the world.”

NEW COUNCIL

Along with a new President, the 11-strong Council welcomes three new elected members, and a fourth co-opted as host of next year’s Annual Meeting and General Assembly.

The three new council members, Jean Evans, MCI Dublin; Alain Pittet, Congrex Switzerland and Keith Burton, African Agenda join the existing Council members; Medhat Nassar of Meeting Minds Experts, Dubai, was co-opted as the Host of the 2017 Meeting in Dubai. Combined with the existing members, this council represents a truly international board reflective of the 41 countries that constitute the membership of IAPCO.

“It’s a privilege to lead a Council with such a range of geographical perspectives, united by a shared love of our business,” says Jan. “The seniority of the group and the diversity of their skillset is a great base for the Council’s variety of specialist portfolios. IAPCO members can be confident that their Association’s mission is in good hands.”

IAPCO Council 2016-17

President: Jan Tonkin, The Conference Company, New Zealand

Vice President: Mathias Posch, ICS Vancouver, Canada

Treasurer: Peder Anderson, DIS Congress Service, Denmark

Members: Keith Burton, African Agenda, South Africa
Jean Evans, MCI Dublin, Ireland
Nicola McGrane, Conference Partners, Ireland
Kayo Nomura, Congress Corporation, Japan
Alain Pittet, Congrex Switzerland

Co-opted: André Vietor, Barceló Congressos, Spain (Chair of Training Academy)
Medhat Nassar, Meeting Minds, UAE (Host 2017 Annual Meeting)

About Jan Tonkin

Jan Tonkin is the founder and managing director of The Conference Company, a full-service meeting planner with offices in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and extensive operations in Australia. The Conference Company became IAPCO’s first and only New Zealand member in 2002. Jan has been a member of the IAPCO Council since 2008, and Vice-President for the last two years. She is also Vice-Chair of the IAPCO Training Academy and is a regular presenter at IAPCO seminars.

About IAPCO

IAPCO (International Association of Professional Congress Organisers) is the leading international association for professional conference organisers. Its mission is to raise the standards of service among its 115 member organisations and other sectors of the meetings industry through continued education, connection and support. For further information, please contact:

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