

Québec Association of Convention Professionals: Business tourism network releases statistics for 2014

October 8, 2015 – The Québec Association of Convention Professionals (QACP) conducts an annual analysis of statistics on events and conferences held at member destinations. With an economic contribution of more than **\$164.7 million** made by clients, the 2014 fiscal year continued on the growth curve we've seen since 2006. This encouraging result confirms yet again the significant contribution the business tourism and convention industry makes to regional economies around the province.

QACP President Steeve Gagné, who also chairs the statistics committee, points out that *"It's important to realize that the figures we're releasing today present a picture of the QACP network as it was in 2014, with 33 destinations and 87 hotels and convention centres. We've now been compiling statistical data on business tourism in the various regions for 19 years, and since the sector is constantly changing, we need to take a long view. With a total of 1,944 conventions or events, the figures for 2014 are similar overall to the previous year. This means that every day, an average of eight business tourism events are held at one of our member destinations. Total tourism spending stands at \$164,676,000, which represents average regional earnings of \$84,710 per activity. Since our association covers nearly the whole province, that means an average weekly economic contribution of \$3.2 million to the regions of Québec - and for some regions, that injection of capital into the regional economy has a highly significant impact."*

The most recent positive results are right in line with statistics compiled by the QACP. In fact, the association notes that since 2010, the number of activities related to business tourism seems to have stabilized at about 2,000. *"Competition between various players in the industry is fierce, and every year we see new infrastructures appear that improve what we have to offer. However, the domestic Québec market has its limits, and we have seen changes in how clients conduct their business - specifically, the growing number of small meetings. It's extremely difficult to paint an exhaustive picture of the Québec business tourism market, which is multi-faceted and constantly changing. As a tourism sector association, the QACP makes every effort to collect as much information as possible on the sector, based on solid and extremely conservative indicators,"* notes Ginette Bardou, General Manager of the QACP.

To date, the QACP has exclusively listed clients who used commercial accommodations for an event that generated at least 50 overnight stays. In 2014, when an average activity in the association's network generated about 230 overnight stays, the average length of stay was 3.6 days. Tourism spending calculations are based on the concept of "overnight stay," which is equivalent to one room rental for one night, plus related ordinary expenses to meet the needs of this market segment. That includes meals, coffee breaks, room rentals, audiovisual materials, etc. For the last fiscal year, average spending for the entire network came to \$295/night.

The QACP has compiled statistics on events and conventions generating stays of 50 nights or longer in member regions since 1996, producing a mass of data that is doubtless the largest information base on business tourism in Québec. That market intelligence has been made possible through the cooperation of QACP members. In 2014, 31 destinations provided data: Alma-Lac-St-Jean, Bromont, Carleton-sur-Mer, Charlevoix, Drummondville, Gatineau-Outaouais, Granby, Lanaudière, Laurentians, Laval, Lévis, Longueuil, Maskinongé, Matane, Memphrémagog, Nicolet-Yamaska, Québec City, Rimouski, Rivière-du-Loup, Rouyn-Noranda, Saguenay, Saint-Georges (Beauce), Saint-Hyacinthe, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Shawinigan, Sherbrooke, Suroît, Mont-Tremblant, Trois-Rivières, Val-d'Or and Victoriaville.

The term "convention" includes colloquiums, business meetings and training sessions, while "event" is used to refer to competitive sports, exhibitions, trade shows, festivals, etc. Please note that the spending scale for the Laval, Gatineau and Québec City regions has been adjusted upwards to better reflect the economic realities of these urban areas.

"We at the QACP are convinced that the economic impact of business tourism plays an extremely important role in the entire provincial tourism ecosystem - probably more than is generally acknowledged. We are delighted that the contribution of our sector has been added to the strategies pinpointed by the Ministry of Tourism to achieve the ambitious objectives of the development plan for 2012-2020. The figures we're releasing today are conservative and are lower than the real impact made by our sector. We are working to improve our performance indicators to give us a better picture of where we stand and to be better equipped to pursue our development," said Gagné.

The QACP is a network of 110 qualified organizations and participants that are very familiar with the convention market in their respective regions. These experts in business tourism are professionals who can provide first-hand advice when you're organizing your events. You can rely on the strong QACP network as you check out destinations around Québec to make your events a great success. Visit our website at www.congres.com for further details.

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