

# **£100bn TOURISM TARGET AT RISK**

15/03/05

Unless there is significant investment in tourism infrastructure and marketing in the UK, Government's national tourism target of achieving £100bn in revenue by 2010 is at risk.

Sir Digby Jones, Tourism Alliance President, will be delivering this message at the National Tourism Conference (Tourism UK-05) on 16 March at the QEII Conference Centre. To ensure that this target is achieved, thereby creating an additional 300,000 jobs throughout the UK, the Tourism Alliance is launching a manifesto, "Backing a Winner", featuring a range of new initiatives that the Government needs to undertake.

"Government's ambitious target of increasing tourism revenue to £100bn by 2010 is at considerable risk unless all Government Departments start taking tourism seriously. Despite considerable evidence that for every £1 that the Government invests, the UK receives £30 in export earnings and the Treasury receives £5 in tax from tourists, tourism is too often seen by some Departments as a Cinderella industry" he said.

The Tourism Alliance's new manifesto looks for improved partnerships between Government and industry in order to implement initiatives that;

- Establish a coherent structure for tourism in the face of national and regional devolution
- Remove fiscal and regulatory barriers
- Improve skills in the industry
- Increase investment in the industry
- Improve the quality of products and services.

As well as the economic benefits that this would bring, there needs to be increased recognition across Whitehall that tourism underpins many other key Government objectives such as social inclusion, regional development, rebuilding the rural economy and protecting and enhancing our cultural, historic and natural resources. It is also fundamental to the health and wellbeing of the nation.

If Government Departments undertook the initiatives contained in the manifesto, it would go a long way toward improving the international competitiveness of the British tourism industry.

"Tourists pay 50% more tax on the products and services that they purchase in Britain than they do on the same products and services purchased in continental Europe. The Government needs to address this imbalance if we are to provide the social and economic benefits that tourism can deliver" he concluded.

Notes to Editors:

- The Tourism Alliance is the Voice of the Tourism Industry. It was established in 2001 with the support of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and comprises over 40 Tourism Industry Associations that together represent 200,000 businesses of all sizes throughout the UK.

- The purpose of the Tourism Alliance is to identify and develop policies and strategies to raise standards and promote quality within the industry and work with and lobby Government on key issues relevant to the growth and development of tourism.
- Tourism is the sixth largest industry in Britain. It generates £75bn p.a. for the UK economy (6.4% of GDP) and directly supports 2.2 million jobs (7.7% of the total workforce).

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