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EXPO OPPORTUNITIES

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Peter Pecotic says the Shanghai World Expo is a crucial opportunity for Australia's image as well as its commerce.



The massive migration of peoples from rural to urban environments in China is of a speed and scale unlike anything seen in recorded history. The 2010 Shanghai World Expo theme, "Better City, Better Life", could not be more relevant. There has never been a greater need for China, and the rest of the world, to gain access to and share the latest ideas, technologies and techniques involved in environmentally sustainable urban planning, design and construction, geared to quality of life and complemented by cleaner energy technologies.

The expo will be held over 184 days. To date:

- 140 countries have confirmed their participation, with 43 commissioners general already appointed.
- 17 organisations have confirmed their participation
- 70 million visitors are anticipated, with a rough breakdown of 20 per cent from Shanghai, 30 per cent from Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, 40 per cent from Greater China, and around 7 per cent (5

million) consisting of foreign visitors

- 16 corporate pavilions will be built, 14 of them new and two redeveloped from the existing site, and six or seven foreign construction companies will be invited to assist in this process.

The Australian pavilion will be located centrally, near the Performing Arts and Main Expo Convention Centre, and close to a metro station and elevated walkways.

This is an important opportunity to enhance our image in China and the rest of the world, to truly reflect the country in a contemporary sense. We need to have the best expo pavilion we have ever had, for very important reasons. China is a focal point globally, and a cultural, economic and political influencer. Shanghai has a large Australian expatriate community and is the headquarters for hundreds of regional corporates. By 2010, this city will be even more pivotal and influential on at least an economic level, and its alignment with World Expo will attract decision-makers from every corner of the globe. For Australian companies with the gumption to take advantage of it, the opportunity is to be exposed not only to China but, through China, to the rest of the world.

But it will take commitment, and time here on the ground, in the thick of it.

Although there are great opportunities, Shanghai is one of the most difficult commercial environments in which to operate, compete and succeed. Viewed from the outside, the markets here seem to be segmented and to operate like those of most other economic centres. Nothing could be further from the truth. Cultivating good business partnerships and alliances is a must, but it takes time.

The Australian Pavilion represents the most significant commercial opportunity presented by the Expo. DFAT has already appointed its commissioner and released the first tender, and a schedule of further tenders may be accessed via their websites. Another possibility is to become a "Recommended Service Provider". The Shanghai Expo Organising Committee is seeking providers across many sectors, but you will need substantial documentation on your company in Chinese to even be considered.

Relatively few Australian companies will get the chance to work on the pavilion, but after all tenders have been awarded, there will still be many opportunities with the Australian federal and state governments.

But why stop at the Australian pavilion? Up to 160 other countries, cities, NGOs and corporations will be exhibiting, with a diverse range of projects needing products and services. Australian expertise and know-how in managing and planning large-scale events is well recognised and, with the right partnerships, there is lots of potential business.

If you are not on the ground in Shanghai looking for participation in Expo, you should be.

The logo is derived from the Chinese character for "World", also symbolising the global family of mankind (a one-child family, it would seem), with the yellow ball symbolising day and the green ball night.

In contrast to the relatively short two-week time span of the Beijing Olympics, the Shanghai 2010 World Expo will be held from May 1 to October 31, 2010, totalling 184 days.

For information on the commercial opportunities available at the Australian pavilion, see:
www.expo2010.com.au/index.html
www.tenders.gov.au/

For other opportunities, see the Shanghai Expo organising committee's website:
www.expo2010china.com/expo/expoenglish/index.html

For more information, contact Austcham Shanghai, or Austrade's Shanghai Mission, on the websites below:
www.austchamshanghai.com/main
www.austrade.com

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