



17 November 2021

### **Business Events Industry Aotearoa appoints new Independent Chair**

Steve Armitage has been appointed the new Independent Chair of Business Events Industry Aotearoa (BEIA).

He takes on the position held by Tony Gardner, who is stepping down from his six-year tenure as Board Chair after the association's Annual General Meeting, to be held online next Thursday, 25 November.

BEIA Chief Executive, Lisa Hopkins says the work of BEIA has grown and developed under Tony Gardner's leadership.

"The industry will be forever appreciative of Tony's guidance and support," she says.

"Tony has been instrumental in building an active and engaged Board and I know I speak on behalf of them and the BEIA team when I say how grateful we are for the work he has done.

“We are delighted to welcome Steve Armitage to this role and I have no doubt that he will add his own quality to the position. A seasoned and well-respected leader with extensive experience working across all levels of the political landscape, Steve’s experience in public affairs, diplomacy, and the corporate sector supports BEIA’s own intentions for the future.

“Most recently, Steve held the position of General Manager – Destination at Auckland Unlimited, a high-profile role which encompassed a broad range of sectors including business events,” Hopkins says.

“Like Tony, Steve understands the nuances of the sector very well and the need to be future-focused.”

Armitage says he is excited to be working alongside the Board, Lisa, and her team, and the wider membership base to help shape the future of the sector.

“I am firmly of the view that business events should be at the forefront of New Zealand's economic re-opening to the world given the clear value they bring socially and economically,” he says.

“I want to acknowledge Tony and the Board for the excellent platform that they have established. The BEIA team have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic representing the sector with mana and clear purpose, and I cannot wait to build on the momentum they have generated.”

Tony Gardner says it has been an honour to contribute to CINZ / BEIA, and the business events industry as a board member, then Chair, for the past eight years.

“The key areas of progress for BEIA since 2013 have been leadership, partnerships with Tourism New Zealand and Air New Zealand, and maintaining a strong focus on member interests. Getting the right leadership in place has been the key to the association's success.

“Building on the financial strength that John Duncan, the previous Chair, really built has seen BEIA able to survive Covid. Thanks to Sharon Auld, BEIA's connections and influence in Australia remain strong and will prove to be vital as New Zealand reopens.

“Lisa Hopkins has shown amazing strength and resilience to lead BEIA through Covid, with every prospect of being a better association than ever,” Gardner says.

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Click here to download an image of [Steve Armitage, BEIA Board Chair](#)

### **About Business Events Industry Aotearoa (BEIA)**

- [Business Events Industry Aotearoa \(BEIA\)](#), formerly known as Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ), is the official membership-based association of New Zealand's business events sector with more than 460 members across a broad range of sectors.
- BEIA works to actively promote the sector for its members and New Zealand, providing advocacy with central government and offering assistance, information, professional development, and real business opportunities to its members.
- The impact of the sector on New Zealand's economy includes financial, social, regional investment, and environmental. In 2019 in New Zealand, the business events industry was valued at \$1.45 billion per annum, with over 3.6 million attendees both domestic and international, employing 22,000 people. However, since Covid-19, the value of the sector has reduced by 78 percent. This can be attributed to a combination of reduced international visitors due to border closures, the impact of Alert Level 2, 3, and 4 restrictions, and the compounding lack of confidence from the sector.
- BEIA manages New Zealand's only national annual trade show MEETINGS. Last held in June 2021, MEETINGS generated \$74 million of business for the New Zealand industry.

- [MEETINGS 2022](#) is scheduled for 15-16 June at Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre.
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