



Thursday 19th May 2011

**Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, Leo Varadkar T.D.
launches *Irish Hospitality Institute Strategic Plan 2012-2014*.**

Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport Leo Varadkar today launched the Irish Hospitality Institute Strategic Plan 2012-2014 at the National Hospitality Managers' Conference and AGM "**Position Yourself for the Future**" in The Gibson Hotel, Point Village, Dublin 1 with over 100 delegates in attendance.

The IHI as a professional institute since 1966 driving professional excellence in Tourism & Hospitality, have refocused activities in the development of their new Strategic Plan 2012-2014. This plan given the current economic climate is focused on Membership for sustainability of the Institute. In addition, it also forms the basis for the first time in further promoting professional development, by offering a structured CPD status accredited by the Institute direct.

Speaking at the conference the Minister, Leo Varadkar said "The tourism sector has an extremely important role to play in returning the country to growth. Tourism is a priority for the Government, and initiatives to boost the sector are at the heart of our economic regeneration policies. The recent Jobs Initiative had a large number of measures to boost tourism. Equally, it is vital that each and every one of our visitors is pleased with their experience of Ireland, so pleased that they will not only return again but will also convince their friends to do the same. Ireland's reputation for hospitality is second to none and it is very important that we maintain that well-deserved tribute."

Fergal O'Connell FIHI, President, IHI stated "'Position Yourself for the Future', the theme of to-day's National Hospitality Management Conference', reflects this national ambition. In particular Fergal commented on the recent governmental report stating that "IHI welcomes the Government's new Jobs Initiative which places our industry in the front line of the drive towards economic recovery. The ending of the Air Travel Tax, the new 9% VAT rate on many tourism services, the reduction in the lower rate

of Employers PRSI, the relaxation of the visa process and the creation of a new Tourism Marketing Fund are all positive initiatives which will stimulate tourism and we warmly welcome them. Our Institute is keenly interested in the decision to provide an additional 6,000 skills training courses and we plan to play our role in the delivery of appropriate courses to professionals within our industry. He then extended a warm welcome to the Minister who has taken time out from his schedule to be present in officially launching the IHI new Strategic Plan 2012-2014. He added "It is through this plan "The Irish Hospitality Institute will continue to play a pivotal role in enabling the industry to manage change".

The conference boasted an exciting line-up of speakers in addition to our Guest of Honor Minister Varadkar, professionally managed by Sarah Grennan, Hotel & Catering Review, Harry Crosbie, Crosbie Property, Maurice Bergin, Hospitality Solutions Consulting, Rob Pryce, Microsoft Advertising, Ian Cleary, Fáilte Ireland, Jerry Kennelly, Tweak.com, Patrick Ryan, National Asset Management Agency (NAMA).

The Conference "***Position Yourself for the Future***" was sponsored by Fáilte Ireland (The National Tourism Development Authority). Additional sponsors include Febvre & Co., the Hotel & Catering Review & The Gibson Hotel.

In addition the Institute would like to thank all trade for exhibiting at the conference throughout the day which included: The Irish Times, NetAffinity, ARAMARK, Nostra Systems, The Pensions Board, Green Hospitality, Bookassist, Hospitality Trust, Compass Group, Avvio, East Coast Facility Support, Great National Hotels and HospitalityeNews.



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Left to Right: Natasha Kinsella FIHI, CEO IHI, Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport TD, Leo Varadkar TD, Fergal O'Connell FIHI, President IHI.