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### **GTMC CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCES RADICAL RE-EVALUATION OF ORGANISATION**

THE GUILD of Travel Management Companies' chairman, Travel by Appointment's Maurice Veronique, has announced that a radical re-evaluation of the organisation will take place in 2009. Veronique was speaking at a lunch following the GTMC AGM, where he said that as GTMC chief executive Philip Carlisle is retiring this year it was a natural opportunity to look in depth, at the shape and direction of the Guild.

Veronique said: "The achievements of our strategy in 2008, coupled with the shape of the marketplace after the turmoil of an economic downturn in 2008 and 2009, make it prudent and sensible to examine every facet of the GTMC structure so that the organisation is truly ready for the next ten years and fit for purpose going forward."

Veronique announced that an independent firm of consultants "Tenon Group PLC", has been appointed to conduct the review.

Veronique said: "Tenon Group's brief is simple and unequivocal. To get the GTMC fit for the future. Their focus will be on creating a Guild that meets the changing face of business and society in the future. We intend to use 2009 to undergo the most radical and sweeping re-evaluation of the GTMC's structure, the most thorough review in our organisation's 40 year history."

Veronique also announced that 2008 had been a record year for the Guild in terms of new members, partners and associates joining the organisation. GTMC, which already includes thirty TMC members, gained three more – Wexas Travel, Co-Operative Travel Management and Business Travel Direct. Hotel Groups recognising the value of becoming GTMC partners or associates were von Essen Hotels, Fairmont Hotels, The RF Collection, Hilton Hotels and returning to the fold Marriott Hotels. Lufthansa, Online Travel Training, Etihad and Dot2Dot all joined as associates.

Veronique said of the expansion of the organisation: "Overall our aim will be to create a win-win-win environment for our clients, partners, associates and the industry at large. Our strategy for 2009 will be to create an organisation that is seen as a magnet for TMCs, customers, suppliers and the wider industry. We want to inspire the TMCs outside the Guild. We want to attract more members who will see the Guild as an organisation whereby they can gain greater contacts, advice and voice.

"A wider membership, partnership and associate base will create more contact between all, generate more business and ultimately create greater revenues for everyone. "

Talking of the commitment he made, at the 2008 AGM, to form a Twenty/20 Group of up and coming middle managers drawn from the Guild's membership, Veronique updated the audience on activity. The Group has been meeting regularly and a delegation will travel to the GTMC conference in Dubai in May to unveil a major project they are developing. The project will look at the 'digital native', the business traveller of tomorrow.

Talking of the current business uncertainties Veronique said: "This coming year is going to be tough – but we are ready for it. Through the GTMC partnership strategy that we are now pursuing, through the transparent communications and the preparation of our leaders of tomorrow, the Guild is determined to – and indeed will - continue to play a pivotal role in the travel management sector.

"We will seek to create a Guild where, through a well thought out lobbying policy we influence the legislature and their advisors be they in the UK or Europe. A Guild where we prepare for the marketplace of tomorrow – with its different social mores, technology and market conditions by equipping the leaders of tomorrow, today."

Two new members took places on the organisation's executive council at the AGM. Ajay Sodha of Key Travel and Adam White of Bath Business Travel. Graham Ramsey of ATP International, Derek Barlow of Travel Alliance and Alan Spence of Fcm Travel were all re-elected. The other members of the executive, not due for re-election this year are, chairman, Travel by Appointment's Maurice Veronique; deputy chairman, Portman's Michael Hare; immediate past chairman Ian Allan Travel's Paul Allan; Carlson Wagonlit's Andrew Waller; Richard Boardman of Reed & Mackay Travel and Capita's Simone Buckley. Pat Fauvel of Travel Focus holds the honorary treasury position and Philip Carlisle acts as secretary.

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***THE GUILD OF TRAVEL MANAGEMENT COMPANIES***

*Founded in 1967, the Guild of Travel Management Companies is made up of a diverse range of travel management companies, from small independent specialists to the world's largest multiple, and from major London-based organisations to top regional agencies. GTMC members account for some 80% of business travel spend in the UK and facilitate more than 11 million transactions, including the sale of over 6 million airline tickets each year.*

*The key activity of the Guild is to lobby all those that have an impact on the business travel of members' clients, be they travel suppliers, Government or EU legislators, opinion formers or the media. It is the key thrust of the Guild's activities to provide a better deal for organisations and their travelling employees.*