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Overwhelming Success of Special Events Reserve Fund

For Immediate Release

(Charlottetown, PE, May 22, 2009) – The Special Events Reserve Fund Committee is very pleased with the success of this fund to date. “This was established to attract sport, cultural events and festivals to our city that have a tourism focus and strong potential for incremental growth,” said committee chairman Lee Drake. “We are very pleased with the success of SERF to this point and look forward to supporting other new initiatives”. Since 2007, over 35 events have received monetary support from this fund. Due to the overwhelming success of this program, the Special Funds Reserve Fund is now accepting applications for the April 1, 2010 fiscal year. In 2008 and 2009, SERF has provided support to great events like 2008 Canadian Juvenile Basketball Tournament, 2008 Under 14 National Soccer, Canada Rocks Christmas Concert and Fall Flavours.

The support for these events is made possible because of the 2% Tourism Accommodation Levy that was implemented on April 1, 2007 for accommodation operators with 25+ rooms and since January 1, 2009 for accommodation operators with 10+ rooms in the Charlottetown Area. Thirty-three percent (33%) of the total levy raised each year goes into the Special Events Reserve Fund. “The Hotel Association of Prince Edward Island saw a serious need to increase its marketing and promotions efforts to remain competitive over the long term and to leverage additional resources. It is very pleased that the fulfillment of this vision has begun, thanks to the success of this partnership initiative between the Hotel Association of Prince Edward Island, the city of Charlottetown and Tourism Charlottetown”, says Walter van Beek, interim president of the Hotel Association of Prince Edward Island.

The Fund is administered by a committee that includes Lee Drake, Director of Marketing and Promotions, Harness Racing PEI; Michael Bird, General Manager, Delta Prince Edward, Roger Bevan, General Manager of Inn on the Hill, Mike Murphy, General Manager of Great George Inn representing the Hotel Association of PEI; Wayne Long, Events Development Officer, City of Charlottetown and Secretariat Lee Gauthier, CEO, Tourism Charlottetown and PEI Convention Partnership.

"The Tourism Accommodation Levy has allowed Charlottetown to further expand as a leading event hosting destination," said Mayor Lee. "In fact, the number of events that we have been able to attract, as a direct result of having 33% of the Accommodation Levy funneled to the Special Events Reserve Fund (SERF), has surpassed our expectations. Clearly, both

Charlottetown's event attraction efforts and the creation of the SERF fund is paying off in dividends."

"It is also important that we recognize the volunteer SERF board members for their contribution to the Committee and growth of the event hosting industry in Charlottetown. I, along with my colleagues on City Council, applaud the efforts for the SERF Committee, chaired by Lee Drake," added Mayor Lee.

SERF's mandate is to attract special events, major conventions, and sporting events to Charlottetown that will have significant incremental impact on tourism visitation to the city. The fund is managed by Tourism Charlottetown, the City of Charlottetown, and the Hotel Association of Prince Edward Island. A committee, with representation from each of these areas, reviews each proposal in detail and administers funds based on the fund's guidelines and merit of each project applicant.

For more information, please contact
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