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GBAC STAR™ Accreditation, Record Number of Delegates, and Facility Reopening Plans Put Phoenix on Path to Recovery

PHOENIX (Aug. 12, 2020) – As the meetings industry continues to struggle amid the ripple effects of global pandemic Covid-19, the Phoenix Convention Center with partner Visit Phoenix paves a new path for recovery.

Bookings into the Future

As the primary booking agent for the Phoenix Convention Center, Visit Phoenix works with the facility along with downtown hotels to book conventions into the downtown community. Together, Visit Phoenix, the Phoenix Convention Center and hotel partners booked 72 conventions with a record 311,734 delegates to Phoenix in future meeting years.

In addition to those 72 conventions booked, 19 programs with 55,508 delegates were rebooked into future years due to Covid-19, bringing the total number of conventions booked during the 2019-20 fiscal year to 91 with an estimated 367,242 delegates.

“One of the most significant drivers for the success of our award-winning Convention Center has been the team’s investment in providing quality service and building long-term relationships with industry planners,” said Ed Zuercher, Phoenix City Manager. “Because of this commitment, and in partnership with Visit Phoenix, we have reached a major milestone.”

Outbreak Prevention

The Phoenix Convention Center is the first public venue in Arizona to receive [GBAC STAR™](#) accreditation. Recognized as the gold standard of safe venues, GBAC STAR™ provides third-party validation to ensure the implementation of rigorous protocols in response to biorisk situations. The GBAC Accreditation program enables facilities to maximize product use and best practices for sanitization and train staff to implement them at the level needed to thoroughly sterilize and clean environments in the era of Covid-19.

“The City of Phoenix is constantly improving and innovating in all areas. While we think about how we will safely reopen after Covid-19, innovation and adaptability are key. The Phoenix Convention Center has kept these values top of mind and has not only achieved a world class accreditation but also an all-time booking record,” said Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego. “These achievements are testaments to the hard work of our employees and the city’s leadership in key industries.”

The GBAC STAR™ certification is the meetings industry standard for cleaning protocols and staff training. In achieving this milestone, the Phoenix Convention Center joins some of the largest and most successful convention centers in the United States and Canada as industry leaders in client care.

“While we continue to fight this pandemic, we look to the future to understand what it will take to keep our community, employees and visitors safe for when it is time to come together again,” said City of Phoenix Assistant City Manager Milton Dohoney Jr. “This accreditation simply validates that our own Phoenix Convention Center is an industry leader not just in Arizona, but in America, and around the world.”

“As the primary booking agent for the Phoenix Convention Center, Visit Phoenix is thrilled that the venue has received its GBAC STAR™ accreditation,” said Visit Phoenix President and CEO Steve Moore. “This effort showcases the priority that safety and cleanliness are for the Phoenix Convention Center, and we look forward to working with our meeting planner clients to ensure their events and conventions focus on attendee health and comfort.”

As a division of the [International Sanitary Supply Association \(ISSA\)](#), GBAC STAR™ is an industry accreditation focused on ensuring a clean, safe and healthy environment. The program establishes requirements to assist facilities by providing best practices, protocols and procedures to control risks associated with infectious agents, such as SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for Covid-19.

“Becoming a GBAC STAR™ accredited facility supports our Center’s ongoing improvement efforts. The multi-step process helped us evaluate, update and align existing practices so we can continue to provide top-notch service. For our clients and their attendees, peace of mind is how we define success,” said Phoenix Convention Center Director John Chan.

Reopening Efforts

In addition to earning the GBAC STAR™ accreditation, the Phoenix Convention Center has developed safety standards, in accordance with federal, state and local public health guidelines, to implement upon reopening. The plan consists of five key strategies: engaging in a process of constant cleaning and disinfecting, removing touch points wherever possible, encouraging personal preventative measures, following recommendations for physical distancing and focusing efforts on client communications and staff training.

Additionally, [Aventura Catering](#), the facilities exclusive food and beverage service provider has also implemented numerous safety measures to enhance attendee’s safe dining experience.

The Phoenix Convention Center is making every effort to [prepare for reopening](#). The goal is to open its doors to a new meetings experience that provides a safe environment for learning, business and entertainment.

About the Phoenix Convention Center

The award-winning Phoenix Convention Center is one of the largest convention venues in the United States. It offers nearly 1,000,000 square feet of rentable meeting and event space. Established in 1969 as a department of the city of Phoenix, the Phoenix Convention Center is a vital economic enterprise for the state and local economy. The Phoenix Convention Center & Venues include the Phoenix Convention Center, Symphony Hall, Orpheum Theatre and five parking garages.

About Visit Phoenix

Visit Phoenix is a private, not-for-profit organization that markets Greater Phoenix as a travel and meetings destination with offices in Downtown Phoenix, Washington D.C. and Chicago. The organization serves as the primary booking agent for the Phoenix Convention Center. Greater Phoenix encompasses 2,000 square miles and more than 20 incorporated cities, including Glendale, Scottsdale, Tempe and Mesa. The area offers more than 68,000 guest rooms at just under 500 hotels and resorts. For more information, go to [visitphoenix.com](#).

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