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### Puerto Rico Convention Bureau Posts Healthy Bookings and Other Successes as it Begins Final Quarter of Fiscal Year 2004-2005

San Juan, May 3, 2005 -- As the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau is approaching the end of 2004-2005 fiscal year, Ana María Viscasillas, president and CEO, announced the latest group and room night bookings, as well as other key service areas in which the Bureau is driving group meetings and convention business to Puerto Rico.

"We're enthusiastic about our numbers in every area in which the Bureau measures its value to our members and the entire community," stated Viscasillas. "Our bookings are healthy, interest in our product continues to grow, and more than ever, we're serving the needs of meeting planners who have chosen Puerto Rico as their meeting or convention destination."

The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau has confirmed a total of 411 definite group bookings between July 1, 2004 and March 31, 2005, representing a 13 percent increase. In addition, the Bureau confirmed a total of 156,206 room nights booked, representing a 9 percent increase during the same period last year, for a potential economic impact of \$58.5 million.

The Bureau has also increased the number of site inspections conducted during the past year, one of the most critical elements in persuading groups to choose Puerto Rico as a meeting destination. Between July 1, 2004 and March 31, 2005, the Bureau conducted 114

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site inspections with meeting planners and other executives, representing a potential of 130,746 room nights for the Island and a potential economic impact of \$49 million. This represents an 85.5 percent increase in the overall potential impact compared to the figures from the same period during the prior fiscal year. Key factors contributing to this increase include ongoing interest in Puerto Rico as a meetings destination, further expansion into the incentive market and increased airlift to the destination. "Puerto Rico is top-of-mind among meeting planners and our sales team has done an outstanding job in leveraging that awareness into bookings through site inspections," stated Viscasillas.

"The area in which we are experiencing greatest potential growth is within our Destination Services group," Viscasillas continued. "This area has expanded considerably in recent years, serving 802 groups in the first three quarters of the year, while referring over \$2 million in potential revenue to non-hotel partners affiliated with the Bureau."

The Destination Services group of the Bureau refers business leads to members and serves as a liaison between meeting planners, local business vendors and other meeting service providers. This year, between July 1, 2004 and March 31, 2005, the Destination Services group generated 1,552 leads to non-hotel members, representing a potential of \$2,375,051 in revenue for member-partners and a five-fold increase in potential revenue, representing an increase of 46 percent in groups served versus last year.

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"As Puerto Rico continues to emerge as the Preferred Meeting Destination of the Americas, we continue to demonstrate our level of service and commitment to fulfilling the needs of meeting planners as well as our membership, and we look forward to a strong finish to our fiscal year at the end of June," concluded Viscasillas.

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**Editor's Note:**

*The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau (PRCB) is a non-profit organization established in 1962 to drive meetings, conventions, trade shows and incentive groups to Puerto Rico. With offices in San Juan, Chicago, New York, Miami, and Washington DC, the Bureau strengthens Puerto Rico's competitive position in the Americas and abroad by increasing awareness of the Island's outstanding meeting facilities and services, and produces approximately \$83 million to the local economy. The Bureau can be reached electronically through the Internet at [info@prcb.org](mailto:info@prcb.org) or at its website [www.meetpuertorico.com](http://www.meetpuertorico.com). The PRCB is the official marketing and sales agent for the new Puerto Rico Convention Center (PRCC) slated to open in late 2005. For more information on the new Convention Center visit [www.prconvention.com](http://www.prconvention.com). The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, representing the capital city of San Juan, has been granted full membership as of January 2005 into BestCities.net, a global alliance of Bureaus that represent the highest standards of service in the meetings and convention industry. For more information, visit [www.bestcities.net](http://www.bestcities.net).*

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