



Fiona O'Sullivan, ITOA president (left) and Fiona Cunningham, NITB market manager for the Republic

NITB beats off competition to host tour operator event

AN Irish tour operator is to hold its AGM in Belfast for the first time.

The Irish Tour Operators Association (ITOA) decision was based on Northern Ireland's impressive product development plans and its ongoing investment.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board beat off stiff competition from regional tourism authorities and product suppliers in the Republic of Ireland to host the meeting here.

Fiona Cunningham, NITB market manager for the Republic, said that the AGM will help showcase all that is great about Belfast and Northern Ireland.

"We are confident that our industry partners will make a lasting impression on ITOA and its

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members and, in turn, the opportunity will lend itself to creating an even more prosperous industry in years to come," she said. "ITOA's decision to take its AGM to Belfast means that not only will Northern Ireland be further exposed to international visitors through tour operators in the South but also that we are strengthening our mark in the world of business and leisure tourism."

Fiona O'Sullivan, president of the Irish Tour Operators Association said that the visit will enable members to see first hand the excellent product available in Northern Ireland.

"We're aware of the exciting developments that are due for completion in Belfast in 2012 and look forward to visiting the city in advance," she said.

Delegates attending the event will stay at the newly refurbished five-star Merchant Hotel and enjoy a gala reception at Belfast's City Hall.

Members will also be taken on visits to some of Northern Ireland's key heritage sites including the Titanic Quarter, St George's Market and Stormont Buildings.

The ITOA AGM is also supported by Belfast City Council, Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau and The Merchant Hotel.

The 2011 meeting will take place in Belfast from February 4-6.