Department of Economic Development

*Rheynn Lhiasaghey Tarmaynagh*

**News Release**

Department of Economic Development

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**Promoter Selected for TT and Classic TT**

The Department of Economic Development (DED) is to seek the approval of Tynwald to appoint events company Vision Nine as the promoter of the TT and Classic TT Races.

Vision Nine has ambitious plans that would see spectator numbers for the TT and Classic TT grow significantly. In doing so, Vision Nine can help to play a valuable role in growing our economy, balancing Government’s budget and contributing to smaller, simpler Government.

Minister for Economic Development Laurence Skelly MHK commented:

‘The TT is a huge part of our local identity and brings the Isle of Man both recognition and visitors from around the world. In recent years, the Department has greatly improved the events’ marketing, operations and safety as well as their economic benefits and Government income. The Department is convinced that additional expertise and investment is necessary if we are to improve the visitor experience, grow our coverage and reach a wider audience and so ensure the events continue to grow sustainably.

‘Subject to Tynwald approval, Vision Nine will work closely with the Department and the many other partners who make these exciting events possible including riders and teams, volunteer organisations, Government bodies and private businesses, both local and international. Vision Nine will also bring valuable new partners including the world leading sports TV distributor IMG who will help raise the image and awareness of the events globally. Vision Nine has industry-leading skills in developing events and will bring substantial investment to fund essential innovations that will attract more visitors and generate more spending in our economy.

‘I also believe their appointment will further drive growth in the Festival of Motorcycling including the Classic TT and Manx Grand Prix with the continued support of the Manx Motorcycle Club.’

David Cretney MLC, the Department’s political member with responsibility for Motorsport, commented:

‘This decision is essential for the continued growth and evolution of the TT races. As a lifelong supporter, and having been central to the decisions which have seen the current success of the TT, I believe we now need to take the next steps. The appointment of a promoter partner will give the TT the investment and innovation needed for it to thrive and grow for the next generation. I will be working closely with Vision Nine and their partners to make sure we retain our core TT audience as well as increase visitors to the Island via a new, global fan base.’

Gary Thompson MBE BEM, Clerk of the TT Course, said:

‘On behalf of ACU Events Ltd, we would be pleased to work alongside Vision Nine who have been identified as the preferred Bidder for the Isle of Man TT and Classic TT festivals. While there may be some changes with regards to the promotional aspects of the TT, the Race Organisation, the delivery of the practice and race schedules and the overall safety and marshalling of the event will not be compromised and from a Race Organisers point of view it will be ‘business as usual’.

‘ACU Events Ltd will continue to carry out the Risk Assessment process, review the safety of the TT Mountain Course prior to the event and deliver the TT Races in the same way and we look forward to working with Vision Nine in taking forward the TT Races into a new era.’

Julian Topham, CEO of Vision Nine, commented:

‘We are very pleased to be identified as the preferred partner to drive the Isle of Man TT forward. We will be working alongside the Department of Economic Development and all key stakeholders to enhance visitor experience and grow the TT races and their coverage. We will also continue to work with the army of volunteers who bring such a significant contribution to the event.’

The selection of Vision Nine follows a formal tender process, commenced on 2nd November 2015, to identify an independent partner to take a significant level of operational, promotional and commercial delivery responsibility for the TT and Classic TT races. The proposed contract is for a period of 10 years with an option of a further 5 year extension. Their appointment would begin in 2017. The 2016 TT and Classic TT will be unaffected.

Tynwald will be asked to approve the appointment of Vision Nine at the April sitting of Tynwald.

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors**

**TT and the Festival of Motorcycling**

In recent years the Department has invested in the TT and the Festival of Motorcycling events to deliver growth, including improved marketing, better TV coverage and better event management.

As a result, both events have grown significantly in the last 5 years:

* Visitors by 43% to 57,000
* Economic value by 63% to £28m
* Government income by 63% to £5m.

**Vision Nine**

Vision Nine has a team of 40 staff working on events for world renowned brands across Europe.

Its vision is to:

* Develop events and festivals that have global appeal, and
* Create live platforms with national and international growth potential.