Choice Hotels Names Brent Russell President & CEO of Flag Choice Hotels Of Australia

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Choice Hotels International, Inc., today announced that Brent D. Russell, national vice president, franchise operations, has been named president and chief executive officer of Flag Choice Hotels of Australia, effective January 15, 2003.

"Brent Russell has demonstrated clear, measurable leadership in his experience with Choice, which includes sales and marketing, operations and delivering exceptional service to our franchisees," said Charles A. Ledsinger, Jr., Choice's president and chief executive officer. "His appointment to the top post of Flag Choice bodes extremely well for our franchisees and their guests in the Pacific region."

"Brent will provide the leadership required to implement our business plan for Flag Choice Hotels," said Bruce Haase, senior vice president, international. "Under his leadership, Choice will reinvigorate the Flag Choice organization, improve franchise services, enhance marketing programs, and build a strong base for our brands throughout the Pacific."

He added, "Brent's significant experience in building strong franchisee relationships and implementing effective marketing and operational programs will be critical to our efforts to drive more business to our Flag Choice franchisees in Australia and New Zealand."

Russell, 44, joined Choice in 1997 as vice president, franchise operations, and opened the company's Golden, Colorado, regional office. Last year he was promoted to his current position after holding a series of increasingly responsible positions. Prior to joining Choice, Russell spent 20 years with The Daniel Group, a commercial real estate and hotel development and management company. He is a 1984 graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University, with a Bachelor of Science degree in business management.

Choice announced its acquisition of controlling interest in Melbourne- based Flag Choice Hotels on July 1, 2002. Under the terms of the agreement with Flag International Ltd., Choice acquired a 55% controlling interest and was granted an option to purchase the remaining 45% over a five-year period.

As a result of the transaction, Choice significantly accelerated the growth of the Clarion, Quality and Comfort Inn brands in Australia by converting existing Flag brand properties.

Choice Hotels International is one of the world's largest lodging franchisors, marketing more than 5,000 hotels open or under development in 46 countries under the Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Clarion, Sleep Inn, Econo Lodge, MainStay Suites and Rodeway Inn brand names. For more information on Choice, visit the company's web site at http://www.choicehotels.com/ .

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