

MEDIA STATEMENT



THE HEART OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

For immediate release
August 4, 2020

SUPPORT NEEDED FOR THE WHITSUNDAYS

40 tourism products in The Whitsundays reported losses of over \$5M in direct bookings and countless more in indirect spending, through the Greater Sydney travel restriction (in the first 72 hours following the announcement). This last blow, after months of struggle, has left key Whitsundays industry representatives no other choice but to directly reach out to Premier Palaszczuk to request immediate support and action for The Whitsunday tourism industry.

The Whitsundays is one of the most tourism reliant regions in the country representing 1 in 3 jobs and accounting for approximately 40% of the \$6.3B Great Barrier Reef market to Queensland. During the initial COVID restriction period, the region lost over \$75M a month from the local economy.

Further to this, total overnight visitor expenditure for year-ending March 2020 shows that The Whitsundays had a decline of 14.3% compared to the same period 2019, which was the greatest across the state.

It seems a disproportionate amount of COVID recovery funding has been allocated to other areas of Queensland, which has left our local tourism operators asking, at what point through COVID will The Whitsundays Great Barrier Reef, Islands, Marine Tours and Mainland be considered iconic and significant?

To be recognised as a valued tourism region, The Whitsundays representatives have requested the following support and action from the Queensland Government:

1. Funding provided directly to Whitsunday tourism businesses including island resorts, marine tourism operators and backpacking sector
2. Additional funding to the Whitsunday Coast and Hamilton Island Airports for aviation development
3. A dedicated destination recovery marketing fund
4. Fast-tracked approvals in support of the Whitsunday Skyway Project
5. Relax eligibility criteria for the COVID small business adaptation grant to allow greater take up from The Whitsundays

- ENDS -

The Whitsundays, located in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef surrounded by 74 island wonders and home to the pure white silica sands of Whitehaven Beach. a visit to The Whitsundays is a feast for the senses. The stunning natural landscapes of coast and islands are dotted with secluded beaches, resorts and friendly towns. Whether you choose to base yourself on the coast or on the islands, there's so much to do, you'll have to work out how to fit it all in!

Tourism Whitsundays

PO Box 479 | Cannonvale QLD 4802
1/5 Carlo Drive | Cannonvale QLD 4802
+617 4948 5900
www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au

**Tourism
Whitsundays**

Destination Marketing | Industry Development | Visitor Services

MEDIA STATEMENT



THE HEART OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

About Tourism Whitsundays: *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.*

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:

Liza Muller

Publicity and Content Manager

Tourism Whitsundays

Ph: +61 7 4948 5917 or +61 417 765736

Email: liza.muller@tourismwhitsundays.com.au

To access the Tourism Whitsundays Media Centre click [here](#)