

MEDIA RELEASE

SUCCESS FOLLOWS SUCCESS FOR PORT DOUGLAS DAINTREE

Port Douglas, 12th October, 2022 – Tourism Port Douglas Daintree is celebrating after looking back on a successful year following the COVID-19 pandemic slump.

Tara Bennett, TPDD chief executive officer, told attendees at tonight's (Wednesday) annual general meeting at Pullman Port Douglas Sea Temple Resort and Spa that the year had kicked off to a positive start with the signing of a three-year funding agreement with Douglas Shire Council worth \$1.4 million.

"The agreement was the precursor for a highly productive collaboration on a range of COVID support programs, industry development and sustainability projects," Ms Bennett said.

She said travellers spending big in the regional hot spot had aided the recovery.

According to Tourism Research Australia's latest released data, \$5.7 billion more was spent on domestic travel across Australia, than in the same period in 2019, with \$3.8 billion finding its way to regional areas.

The Daintree Rainforest, Port Douglas, Mossman and Cape Tribulation were hotspots during this period, sharing 58,000 more trips than 2019, making it the second highest Australian growth area. This was ahead of Hobart, Margaret River and the Barossa.

This data was reflected in the region's financial year highlights. Domestic visits to the Port Douglas and Daintree region for the year ending June 22 was 380,661, up 14 percent on the 2018-2019 financial year, while visitors nights were up 25 percent compared to 2019, at 2,178,155, just 7% short of the full year results in 2019 inclusive of international travellers.

Ms Bennett acknowledged support from Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) and the Cairns Airport marketing partnership, which has been pivotal in the region's recovery efforts.

Successful projects conducted in partnership with Douglas Shire Council included the launch of 'Be Douglas' customer service training program, measures to reduce travellers' COVID-19 concerns, and the launch of 'Adopt A Worker' support with high level advocacy to address the local housing crisis and resultant staffing shortages.

She said the post-pandemic upturn was capitalised on with a solid marketing push. Highlights included direct work on the ground with the Domestic Agent Mega Famil and Taste Port Douglas trade famil, and the Douglas Experience Expo.

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Marketing campaign activity also included the distribution of 156,000 'Discover Paradise' visitor guides into Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and North Queensland, business events content development with a brand relaunch and website redesign, and the 'Summer in the Tropics' campaign.

The campaign had a reach of 892,000 and generated 21,000 social media clicks, while 'Summer Lives On' generated 3.3 million impressions and 36,000 link clicks.

"Our achievements following the pandemic are a great cause for celebration and we are grateful to our collaborators, especially Douglas Shire Council, TTNQ and Cairns Airport," Ms Bennett said.

"But any organisation is only as good as its members and I am delighted the participation, enthusiasm and support for TPDD-led activities is high.

"I am also delighted TPDD has a membership retention of 95 per cent and we welcome our broad range of new members who have joined over the past year."

Ms Bennett welcomed incoming Directors Lisa Chambers of Experience Co, Rachael Hodges of Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre, Rachel Brophy Douglas Shire Council and Jessica Whitworth of Peppers Beach Club to the TPDD Board and thanked outgoing directors Megan Bell, Chris Northam, Lisa Golding, Garry Porter and Dean Clapp for their excellent contribution to the organisation.

ENDS



L-R: Juan Walker, Jessica Whitworth, Abi Ralph, Lani Strathearn, Cam Charlton, Lisa Chambers, Rachel Brophy and Andrew Hearn. Absent: Rachel Hodges



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