

Chair and CEO statement

Queensland's tourism and events industry has endured the biggest challenge in its history, as the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 continued to provide uncertainty for businesses and travellers throughout the 2020-21 financial year.

While the challenges have been significant, what has also stood out has been the way the industry has united in its quest to rebuild, buoyed by the support of Queenslanders travelling throughout their own state during such a challenging time.

As restrictions eased in the second half of 2020, we saw tourism in many parts of the state start to recover, as firstly intrastate, followed by interstate visitors, travelled in Queensland. Our reputation as a safe and welcoming destination resonated strongly with travellers, which is a credit to Queensland's tourism industry, who continuously adapted to ensure COVID Safe guidelines were met.

Tourism and Events Queensland's (TEQ) approach to drive recovery and growth simultaneously was through initiatives that focus on the state's effective management of the pandemic, its safe and flexible travel environment, and the compelling experiences Queensland has to offer. In the 2020-21 financial year, TEQ's marketing activity centred around evolving the 'Good to Go' campaign which launched in June 2020. The campaign supported \$7 billion in overnight visitor expenditure and 42 million visitor nights throughout the year.

TEQ has also tested new and innovative approaches to encourage visitation and bookings in regions significantly impacted by the loss of international tourism through the launch of a travel voucher initiative known as '*Holiday Dollars*'. Through ongoing collaboration with Regional Tourism Organisations, the program has yielded positive results and been widely acclaimed by operators. As at 30 June 2021, the program had generated 22,000 bookings for operators around the state, worth more than \$6.78 million to the Queensland economy. Similarly, we saw a solid return on investment; for every \$1 of program spend, around \$2.60 went back to operators.

Queensland has also become the nation's sporting hub, as various sporting leagues relocated to the Sunshine State. This includes the Australian Football League (AFL), including the once-in-a-lifetime AFL Grand Final in October 2020 which generated an estimated \$31 million for the state, Suncorp Super Netball, the Women's National Basketball League, a full capacity State of Origin decider in November 2020 and the first-ever regional State of Origin match in Townsville in June 2021.

More broadly, we have supported our events industry to continuously adapt to be able to stage COVID Safe events. The events supported by TEQ in 2020-21 are estimated to have contributed \$414 million to Queensland's economy and more than 1.4 million visitor nights. These events included the Women's State of Origin, Noosa Eat and Drink Festival, Winton Way Out West, the NRL All Stars in Townsville, the Brisbane Truck Show, Blues on Broadbeach and two exhibitions at QAGOMA - Motorcycles and European Masterpieces. This has been a welcomed boost to the communities in which they are hosted, driving visitation and consumer spending.

Despite these wins, we know that the tourism and events industry has continued to be severely impacted by the lockdowns and traveller restrictions both in our state and around the country. TEQ remains committed to working with our industry and government stakeholders to provide clear and timely communication on the latest guidelines, support available and information on how operators can leverage TEQ marketing activity as travel resumes.

While the future of international travel remains uncertain, TEQ is maintaining its presence in key source markets to ensure that when the borders reopen, Queensland is top of mind with travellers around the world and important trade relationships are maintained.

Over the next year, we know consumers will continue to seek experiences that are joyful, boost wellbeing, drive emotional connections to people and places and celebrate the simple pleasures in life. With our pristine natural environments, vast landscapes, incredible culinary experiences and authentic Indigenous experiences, the offerings of our state are incomparable and our industry is at the heart of our recovery.

TEQ will also begin to make the most of the incredible opportunity that comes with Queensland hosting the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, an unprecedented opportunity to showcase our state to the world for decades.

We know that the next year will present further challenges for tourism and events in Queensland, and we are committed to working together with our industry to showcase Queensland as a destination of choice for travellers in the months and years to come.



Brett Godfrey

Chair
Tourism and Events Queensland



Leanne Coddington

Chief Executive Officer
Tourism and Events Queensland