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Focus on bigger picture

SOMETIMES it takes a crisis to bring other opportunities into focus.

And so it may be the case with the Qantas decision to downsize the Cairns-Japan links.

For the first time in possibly 10 years the region's economic drivers and big players put aside local agendas to focus on the big picture – what benefits the region as a whole can benefit the individual parts.

By agreeing that a regional approach to finding alternative income streams to tourism can bring forward some major projects, a positive outlook has emerged from the gloom of the Qantas decision.

For too long sub-regional

agendas have been a hand-brake that has seen the region come to rely too heavily on one major industry – tourism.

And now we have been forced to realise how vulnerable our economy is when a major decision negatively impacting on tourism is made.

There is no doubt there will be pain in the short term – a predicted 1200 jobs losses and more than \$100 million has to bring pain.

But if out of this the focus spreads to the potential of the region's other unique and rich industries, as a whole we will come out the other side much stronger.

Tourism and Industry Minister Desley Boyle wants to ensure red tape does not hold up major infrastructure projects and this can only be positive – in the short term and over a much longer period.

Someone also once said: "What doesn't kill you only makes you stronger."