

MEDIA RELEASE

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INTERNATIONAL VISITOR STATISTICS

Disappointing results for international visitor statistics for the March 2009 quarter confirm the industry's response to the recent TTF survey.

With the wash of seats following the loss of Qantas services from Japan to Cairns, it's understandable to see a 27% drop in visitation from Japan. The statistics show that in the same period Japanese visitor numbers dropped in all markets, Brisbane 40%, Sydney 29%, Melbourne 33% and to the whole of Australia 22%.

The Japan scenario and the fact that UK holiday visitors were down 9% and USA 12% contributed to an overall 13% decline in international holiday visitors to Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef region. Increasing length of stay is an encouraging trend that pulled back the decline to 7% in holiday visitor nights."

Tourism Tropical North Queensland CEO, Rob Giason said "The March quarter is our traditional trough period. Despite the Global Financial Crisis and competitive forces Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef region performed well in the European markets and New Zealand. Holiday visitors and length of stay increased from New Zealand, Italy, Germany, Scandinavia and France, so we have optimism for the future."

Although the holiday market from China continues to struggle, the Indian market is stable, and in December 2009 Jetstar plans to recommence services into Cairns from Western Japan on the routes Qantas cut in December 2008.

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