

MEDIA RELEASE

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Page 1 of 1

TOURISM INDUSTRY WELCOMES PRIME MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Tropical North Queensland tourism industry has welcomed the Prime Minister's announcements in Cairns today as a much needed stimulus for the region.

Tourism Tropical North Queensland Chief Executive Officer Rob Giason and Chairman Bill Calderwood said the aviation initiatives were particularly exciting as Cairns would feature prominently in international aviation negotiations by allowing flights to service other major Australian gateways if they made Cairns the first stopover.

"We are delighted that after nine years and three submissions, the Federal Government has flagged its intention to introduce in the Aviation White Paper some inducements to encourage more international carriers to boost services to regional airports such as Cairns," Mr Calderwood said.

"We also welcome the intention to locate an Australian Tax Office Taskforce in Cairns to investigate ways in which the industry in these tough times may be given some relief or tax deferral."

Mr Giason said the whole range of initiatives including the \$19.5 million for the Cairns Institute and the social housing stimulus were a welcome part of a number of short, medium and long-term responses the Federal Government had made to the Cairns business community via the New Deal proposal.

"The \$446,000 for the implementation of the Tropical North Queensland Food Tourism Strategy is a timely injection into a new segment we are developing for this region," he said.

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For more information, contact:

Stevie King
Corporate Communications Executive
Tourism Tropical North Queensland
Direct Ph: 07 4015 1207 | Mobile: 0420 746 053 | Fax: 07 4051 0127
51 The Esplanade, Cairns 4870 | PO Box 865 Cairns Qld 4870

