



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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Tourism Whitsundays welcomes new board members following AGM

Tourism Whitsundays has appointed the 2018/19 board and thanked outgoing board members for their services at the organisation's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Members convened at the Mantra Club Croc today to pass resolutions and vote in four new members to the 11-person board.

Matt Boileau, General Manager of Hotels for Hamilton Island, was re-elected as the island representative, while Kim Thomas, General Manager of BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort, was voted in as representative for the Whitsundays accommodation sector.

Tourism Whitsundays former deputy chair and Ocean Rafting owner Jan Claxton was appointed to the board in the capacity of tourism transport representative while Cruise Whitsundays General Manager Gary Kilby was voted onto the board as a representative for any sector of the tourism industry.

Outgoing board members Naomi McKinnon from the Fat Frog Beach Café and Greg Waites General Manager of Coral Sea Resort were acknowledged for their contribution to the board over the past 12 months.

"It has been great to catch up with our members at the AGM and I would like to welcome the successful candidates to the Board," Tourism Whitsundays Chairman Al Grundy said.

"Thank you also to Greg and Naomi for volunteering your time to support the organisation."

All resolutions were passed at the AGM which received a record number of votes from membership. The board nomination process is independently audited by Connole Carlisle Chartered Accountants.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer Natassia Wheeler provided board and members with an update on the company's activities throughout the year and reiterated the organisation's commitment marketing the region as the globally recognised Great Barrier Reef destination.

"Our focus remains on spearheading exciting and innovative destination marketing campaigns for the Whitsundays to drive increased domestic and global visitor numbers to our region," she said.

Commenting on his appointment, Mr Kilby said it was an honour to be elected to the Tourism Whitsundays' board for 2018-19.

"I am extremely pleased to be appointed to the new board in the capacity of representative for any sector of the tourism industry and look forward to working closely with all stakeholders to continue to drive a strong future for the Whitsundays," he said.

The AGM was followed by an official board meeting with Tourism Whitsundays new-look board which you can view [here](#).

To view the 2017-18 Annual Report, [click here](#).

Please see below bio information on newly elected board members:

Gary Kilby: *I have over 24 years' experience in the local and domestic tourism industry, working my way up from skipper to General Manager. Over the last decade I have held GM roles for 2 large marine businesses, aviation business and divisional GM on Hamilton Island. Diverse and detailed local area and tourism knowledge, engaging leadership and diplomacy are my biggest strengths. I work closely and regularly with GBRMPA and sit on the board of Marine Park Tourism Operators to ensure industry has a voice when dealing in matters that effect marine park operations.*

Matt Boileau: *is the General Manager of Hotels and Resorts for Hamilton Island Enterprises. With a career spanning over 30 years in the hospitality industry, the majority of which has been in senior resort management, Matt brings a breadth of experience and knowledge to Hamilton Island's hotel and resort operations. As part of Matt's role of managing Hamilton Island's diverse group of hotels and resorts, he works directly with Hamilton Island's executive stakeholders and oversees the operations of Hamilton Island's world-class resort, qualia. In addition to Matt's portfolio of Hamilton Island's hotels and resorts, he is responsible for the Conventions, Special Events and Property activities on the Island. Matt is passionate about collaboration and working with the wider teams in the Hamilton Island Business to ensure that hotel occupancy and guest experience ratings remain at the high levels that Hamilton Island has enjoyed under his leadership. Having called the Whitsundays home for the past 20 years, Matt is dedicated to the success and growth of the region. Throughout his 20-year tenure working for Hamilton Island, Matt has actively engaged with local industry bodies. Matt has previously served on the board of Tourism Whitsundays as part of his commitment to ensuring the continued development and advancement of the Whitsundays tourism industry.*

Jan Claxton: *has been an integral part of the Whitsunday tourism industry for 14 years as owner of tour operator, Ocean Rafting. With her husband, Peter, they have grown the operation into a successful business with five vessels carrying up to 142 guests daily to some of the Whitsundays' best destinations. Jan is proactively involved in all aspects of the company, with a particular focus on sales and marketing. These skills, a background in administration and finance and her passion for the region, make Jan an ideal candidate to continue her role as part of the Tourism Whitsundays Board.*

Kim Thomas: *only recently moved to Airlie Beach. However, with 30 years of tourism and hospitality experience in the Cairns region and tourism consulting experience throughout Australia, Asia, Fiji and New Zealand I believe that I would be able to contribute greatly to the depth of experience on the Tourism Whitsunday Board. I have owned and operated small dive and reef operations been employed as General Manager of very large reef operations, up to five-star island resorts and recently Australia's most awarded Holiday Resort. In these roles I have also served on numerous Marine Park advisory and industry committees.*

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