



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*For immediate release  
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### **The Heart of the Great Barrier Reef is Healthy in the Whitsundays**

The heart of the Great Barrier Reef is alive and ticking.

In response to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's (GBRMPA) announcement this morning around the health of the reef, Tourism Whitsundays CEO Craig Turner said while there are bleaching events happening across the Great Barrier Reef, the effects of bleaching within the Whitsundays were minimal.

"We recognise that there are areas of the reef that are experiencing bleaching events at the moment, however, the reef is over 2,300kms long and there are varying degrees of effect," he said.

"The Whitsundays is located in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR), halfway between Brisbane and Cairns, and the reef in the Whitsundays is in good shape - it is still going to provide visitors with an exceptional life-changing experience.

"Our industry is continually monitoring the reef to ensure that all efforts to safeguard the GBR are being undertaken.

"It should be noted however that, as stated in the GBRMPA release, warming temperatures and bleaching events are a global issue and concern, and are not only occurring on the GBR."

Gary Kilby, General Manager of Operations at Cruise Whitsundays – one of the Great Barrier Reef's largest marine operators - said while there were some effects, overall, the Whitsundays' reef was still in "fantastic" condition.

"Operators within the Whitsundays have been monitoring the effects of warming temperatures, as they do every year, with the 'Eye on the Reef' program," he said.

The GBRMPA release said mass coral bleaching is occurring on the Great Barrier Reef for the second consecutive year. GBRMPA experts spent six hours flying over the reef between Townsville and Cairns, alongside researchers from the Australian Institute of Marine Science.

In the heart of the Great Barrier Reef on Queensland's coast, the Whitsundays is made up of 74 island wonders in the warm waters of the Coral Sea.

The Whitsundays is the perfect place to swim and snorkel the Great Barrier Reef, charter a boat and cruise the islands, or witness the incredible diversity of marine life including turtles, whales, dolphins and tropical fish.

To find out more about the Whitsundays and to book your next tropical escape, visit Tourism Whitsundays website here [www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au](http://www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au)

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