



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Whitsunday businesses score big at Australian Tourism Awards**

The Whitsundays' tourism industry is celebrating after two operators won Gold and Silver at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards on Friday night.

Ocean Rafting took out Gold in the Major Tour and Transport Operator category and BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort won silver in the Caravan and Holiday Park category at the prestigious awards ceremony, held in Darwin.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Craig Turner said it was fantastic to see two Whitsunday Tourism businesses win an award at national level, the highest standard that can be attained.

"This is absolutely fantastic news and obviously big congratulations to both Ocean Rafting and BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort, who well and truly deserve these accolades," he said.

"They are both exemplary businesses that are always innovating and pushing the boundaries to deliver the best possible product they can.

"I would also like to mention Pinnacles Resort and Cruise Whitsundays' Reefsleeper who were also in the running on Friday night and should be congratulated on reaching the Australian Awards, having both won Gold at Queensland level last year.

"We have a very robust tourism industry in the Whitsundays with some of the best operators in the country and this has been borne out with these awards.

"As CEO of our regional tourism organisation I see the hard work and effort our operators put in every day as they continually strive for excellence and it's fantastic when they get up and are recognised like this."

Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) Chief Executive and Australian Tourism Awards Chair Daniel Gschwind said Ocean Rafting was a deserving recipient of the Gold award, cementing the tour and transport operator as the best in the country.

"Locals and visitors alike have been delighted with the service Ocean Rafting has provided and to see the company recognised once again on a national scale is fantastic for the Whitsunday region and for Queensland," Mr Gschwind said, adding that Queensland brought home a total of 13 awards on Friday night.

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