



MEDIA RELEASE

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Whitsundays commits to negotiations around flights

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Craig Turner has said he is keen to find a solution to reinstate domestic flights from Brisbane to the iconic tourist destination.

His comments follow the announcement on Wednesday that Tigerair had suspended their Brisbane to Whitsundays service, which Mr Turner said was “disappointing”.

“Tigerair has said that operational requirements, demand and market dynamics played into their decision to suspend the service,” he said.

“At the end of the day, our relationship with Tigerair has, and always will be, very strong and I’m confident that between all parties we will be able to find a solution that will be in the best interests of all concerned.

“I would like to make it very clear that Tourism Whitsundays, Whitsunday Regional Council and the State Government will work with Tigerair, as well as a range of other airlines, to investigate solutions to re-instating Brisbane to Whitsunday Coast flights.”

Mr Turner said the Whitsundays was an iconic holiday destination for both domestic and international travellers, with high demand.

“Demand is not an issue for the Whitsundays, with more than 750,000 tourists visiting the region last year,” he said.

“We are a popular destination with world renowned icons such as Heart Reef and Whitehaven Beach.

“Airport services and route developments are, obviously, a critical factor in the ongoing success of our destination and our growth aspirations.

“It’s about working with airline partners on a sustainable strategy to provide flights to our region to see the wonders of the Whitsundays.

“All parties involved are working closely to find a commercial solution that will satisfy our connection needs out of Brisbane.”

Tigerair Australia Head of Communications Vanessa Regan agreed that the relationship with tourism and airport partners in the region was ongoing.

“We remain committed to the Whitsundays. Recently we added additional Saturday flights on our popular Sydney services in response to consumer demand; we now deliver up to six weekly return services and provide over 2,000 seats per week through Whitsunday Coast Airport.

“We continuously review our network, which evolves based on a number of factors including demand and market dynamics. Tigerair Australia remains focused on providing our customers with affordable and reliable air travel and we will continue to review future opportunities that are sustainable on this route.”

Whitsundays Mayor Andrew Willcox said Whitsunday Coast Airport was one of the fastest growing regional airports in Australia.

“In December we smashed the single month record of 45,000 passengers and this is the sixth consecutive year of positive growth in passenger numbers,” he said.

“We are catering for further growth with a recent runway upgrade and terminal expansion ensuring visitors to our region enjoy a positive experience when transiting.”

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