



MEDIA RELEASE

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Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival Hailed a Success!

The Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival has been hailed a success in an independent report that measures the economic impact for the region at almost \$2 million.

The carnival, in January, celebrated the arrival of the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race crews in the Whitsundays as they completed the final Australian leg of the 40,000 nautical mile race.

The Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival showcased the region with a raft of events including the Bendigo Bank Welcome Party, the Fish D'vine Long Lunch on Whitehaven Beach, the Whitsunday Foodservice Progressive Cruise Lunch and the Rodeo by the Reef, in Bowen.

Now, a report commissioned by Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) – which was a partner in the event, along with Whitsunday Regional Council, Tourism Whitsundays and Abell Point Marina and the Federal Government – has shown the precise economic benefit to the region.

According to the report, produced for TEQ by event consultants IER, the Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival generated visitor expenditure of \$1,954,448 for the Whitsundays economy.

Almost 8,800 visitor nights were generated in the Whitsundays by attendees who do not reside in the region, and visited the region for the primary purpose of either participating in, or attending, the Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival; or extended their stay in the Whitsundays to attend.

When assessing community pride amongst attendees, the research revealed the highest rating responses were: 'The Whitsundays is a great location for Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival', 'Local residents should feel proud of the Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival' and 'The Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival generates tourism for the Whitsundays'.

Tourism Industry Development Minister Kate Jones said the event further cemented the Whitsundays' reputation as a sailor's paradise.

"The Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival was a great success and promoted the beautiful Whitsundays region as a key events and holiday destination, while injecting \$2 million into the local economy," Ms Jones said.

“With this biennial event returning in 2020 and 2022, we will again see more visitors to the Whitsundays region enjoying the beautiful beaches and the world heritage listed Great Barrier Reef.

“Events like this are key to promoting Queensland’s beautiful destinations, driving visitation and supporting local tourism operators.”

Tourism Whitsundays General Manager Tash Wheeler said it was fantastic to receive the research report, which showed the event had been a huge success.

“We felt at the time that the Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival had been a success based on attendees’ feedback and comments but is very gratifying to receive the hard data, which shows an injection into the Whitsundays economy of almost \$2 million,” she said.

“It was a massive undertaking by everyone involved to stage the event, and all the local event partners should be congratulated. It was a fantastic example of co-operative working.

“I would like to thank the Federal and State Governments and Tourism and Events Queensland, who backed us every step of the way with what was a new event for the region, and also our local partners Whitsunday Regional Council, Abell Point Marina and the large number of sponsors and supporters, who quite literally came to the party and well and truly got behind the carnival.

“We are very excited by these figures, which auger well for the staging of the second Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival, when the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race returns in January 2020.”

Whitsunday Regional Council Mayor Andrew Willcox said major events like the Clipper Carnival provided positive flow-on benefits for the whole region.

“This year Clipper events were spread around the region with the White on Whitehaven Long Lunch and the Rodeo By the Reef in Bowen showcasing our diverse region,” he said.

“Partnering with key stakeholders to sponsor this event was another strategic investment by council to attract major state, national and international events to the region.

“It is about getting the runs on the board and proving the ability of our region to host these events.”

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