Queensland casino operator supports Indigenous tourism jobs initiative

Earlier this year, Echo Entertainment Group announced a $300,000 partnership with a Queensland tourism and hospitality initiative to promote job and career opportunities for Indigenous people.

As part of its ‘creating jobs for Queenslanders’, Echo Entertainment is providing funding to the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) to assist in expanding its work to create and promote Indigenous employment opportunities.

Their support will guarantee that work will continue through to at least June 2016, and will also help maintain and grow Australia’s first support network for Indigenous employees in the tourism industry.

“We want to support the very important work of QTIC that is helping tourism employers engage and increase the number of their Indigenous employees,” said Geoff Hogg, Managing Director Queensland of Echo Entertainment Group.

The QTIC Tourism Indigenous Employment Champions Network, supported by Echo Entertainment, is a voluntary body that is supported by 26 Queensland companies focused on increasing employment pathways for Indigenous Australians. “We are delighted to know our funding will help grow this initiative. By joining the network, Echo Entertainment will also benefit from sharing experiences of Indigenous employment relations with other members and working with industry colleagues to develop best practices for tourism sector employers.”

Mr Hogg said Echo Entertainment was committed to improving sustainable employment for Indigenous Australians in the tourism industry, and would use its membership to actively promote the network to others in Queensland’s growing tourism sector.

In Queensland, Echo Entertainment Group employs more than 3,500 people and operates the Treasury Casino & Hotel, the Jupiters Hotel & Casino, the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre. Echo Entertainment Group, Chow Tai Fook and Far East Consortium (Destination Brisbane Consortium group), was announced as the successful bidder for the re-development of the Queens Wharf precinct.

The $2 billion Queens Wharf project will be the city’s largest single private development ever undertaken and is set to transform the northern river bank of the Brisbane CBD. Site works are anticipated to commence in 2017 and run until 2022, resulting in approximately 3000 jobs during construction and 8000 ongoing jobs.

QTIC Chief Executive Officer Daniel Gschwind said the QTIC Tourism Indigenous Employment Champions Network aims to increase operators’ awareness of how to encourage and maintain increased participation of Indigenous Australians within the mainstream tourism industry. “It does this by enabling members to share experiences and identify areas of opportunity and collaboration. As well as producing resources and industry case studies, we also bring together stakeholders from around the state for an annual forum on Indigenous tourism challenges and opportunities,” Mr Gschwind said.

Mr Gschwind said Echo Entertainment’s support has enabled the voluntary employer group to set up Australia’s first support network for Indigenous employees in the tourism sector. The QTIC Indigenous Employee Network—NQ Chapter was launched in June 2015 in Cairns. Membership of the network includes Assistant General Managers, Sales Executives and tour guides.

“We want to thank Echo Entertainment for its generous financial support, which builds on the very significant in-kind support from other volunteer companies in the network,” Mr Gschwind said.
Meet our newest QTIC Champions

Darrell Harris
Executive Officer, UMI Arts Limited

Darrell has lived in North Queensland all his life. He has worked in the banking industry for 15 years, and worked and volunteered with non-profit organisations in senior executive roles for over 30 years. Darrell has experience in all aspects of managing and operating community organisations and small business. He joined UMI Arts in 2008 as Business Manager, and at the start of 2013 became UMI Arts’ first Indigenous Executive Officer.

Cameron Costello
CEO, Quandamooka Yoolooburrrabbee Aboriginal Corp

Cameron Costello is a Quandamooka man from Moreton Bay off Brisbane in South East Queensland. Cameron is a law graduate from the University of Queensland and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Leisure Management. Cameron has worked previously in the legal industry and over 15 years in local and state governments delivering Indigenous policies and programs including the Backing Indigenous Arts Program and the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair.

Cameron is currently the CEO for the Quandamooka Yoolooburrrabbee Aboriginal Corporation - the Native Title Body for the native title determination over Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island). He has also been the Chair of Minjerribah Camping, a joint venture business between the Quandamooka People and Indigenous Business Australia.

Wayne Costelloe
Indigenous Employment Support Specialist, Accor Hotels

Wayne is a descendant from three first Australian Nations. On his Mother’s side he is Bada Bada Clan of the Wargamay Nation of the Ingham area in North Queensland. Also, he is Gungurru Nation of the Mitchell area in South West Queensland. On his Father’s side he is Ngugi Clan and Nunukul Clan of the Quandamooka Nation of Minjerriba (North Stradbroke Island).

Wayne currently serves as the Indigenous Employment Support Specialist for North Queensland. His specific region covers from Yeppoon to Port Douglas and out to Mount Isa. Currently based at the Cairns Mercure Harbourside Hotel where the rainforest meets the reef. He is a proud North Queenslander born and bred and loves working in this beautiful part of the world. Wayne’s role is to increase the numbers of First Nation’s Australians within ACCOR and he is absolutely loving it. He works to increase knowledge, understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and societies and to create a workplace where First Nations staff feel welcome, safe and a part of a team.

Glenys Grigson
Indigenous Employment Support Specialist, Accor Group

Glenys is a passionate advocate for the empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through employment and training. Glenys is a proud Yamatji, Martu and Badu Island woman. Glenys has over ten years experience in the development of policies and programs to improve engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the labour market. Glenys’s last six years in her career has been in the Mining and Hospitality Industry to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the sectors of employment.

Congratulations to Indigenous Employment Champion, Al Mucci who has been officially appointed in a part-time capacity as Indigenous Relationships Manager for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC). GOLDOC is responsible for the planning, organisation and delivery of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018). A primary focus of Al’s role will be the development of the GC2018 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as it relates to the Gold Coast. The GC2018 RAP will be the first ever delivered by a major event in Australia and the first of its kind in Commonwealth Games history. Al will continue in his role at Dreamworld Corroboree as General Manager Life Sciences and is excited about the development of the theme park’s Stage Two Corroboree plans.
PALM ISLAND OPEN DAY.......Opportunities for economic development

QTIC was represented at the 2nd Palm Island Open Day held on 19 April 2015. Palm Island was host to over 200 visitors who took the opportunity to travel to the island and experience Indigenous culture, including traditional food and lessons in dot painting and basket weaving.

The visitors were treated to a warm Welcome to Country by the traditional owners of Palm Island, the Munbarra people. Mayor of Palm Island Alf Lacey was supported by Scott Stewart MP for Townsville. Cr Lacey said the tourism open days were also a chance to start a new industry on the island, hopefully creating more jobs.

"We've got a very high unemployment rate here on Palm Island," he said. "So developing some industries here on the Island like tourism or aquaculture or things like that brings really very good opportunities for our community.

Organisers hope to hold similar events throughout the year. The next Open day is on 4th September 2015 with tickets on sale now. Tickets can be purchased at [http://www.sealinkqld.com.au/ferry_services_informatio/palm_island_ferry/palm-island-open-day.php](http://www.sealinkqld.com.au/ferry_services_informatio/palm_island_ferry/palm-island-open-day.php)

Australia’s first support network for Indigenous tourism employees launched in Cairns during NAIDOC Week

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) and corporate partner Echo Entertainment Group celebrated the creation of Australia’s first support network for Indigenous employees in the tourism industry in Cairns in July. The launch of the ‘QTIC Indigenous Employee Network - North Queensland Chapter’ coincided with NAIDOC Week. The new employee group is part of a $300,000 partnership between QTIC and Echo Entertainment Group to create and promote Indigenous job and career opportunities via peer mentoring and relationship building across the local community.

Mr Hogg said Echo Entertainment Group was committed to improving sustainable employment for Indigenous Australians in the tourism industry, and would use its membership to actively promote the network to others in Queensland’s growing tourism sector.

NEW CASE STUDIES AVAILABLE

The latest edition of the Tourism Indigenous Employment Champions Network Case Studies has arrived. You can view the latest case studies involving business operators and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff. Download edition 6 at www.qtic.com.au

VALUABLE RESOURCE IS NOW AVAILABLE

Every year the QTIC Directory of Queensland Indigenous Services and Programs is updated to include new funding opportunities and support services aimed at promoting employment and training services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The 2015 version is now available and can be downloaded free of charge from the QTIC website at https://www.qtic.com.au/project-service/tourism-indigenous-employment-champions-network

Upcoming Event 2015

8 October
10 am—3 pm
Deadly Futures Job Placement and Community Event—Brisbane City Town Hall

Calling Volunteer Employer Champions

The Indigenous Tourism Employment Champions Network supports tourism employers to engage and encourage Indigenous employees to be part of the tourism industry.

The network invites you to become a Champion or Supporter today and help enrich our industry with new experiences and perspectives!

If you are an employer and are considering joining the network or would like to know more about supporting the group, please call Rhonda on (07) 3236 1445 or email your interest to champions@qtic.com.au.

Save the Date

The Fifth Annual QTIC Tourism Indigenous Employment Forum, supported by Echo Entertainment Group will be held in the Courtyard Marquee, Treasury Casino & Hotel, Brisbane on Thursday 12 November 2015.

Look out for more details and more stories in the next edition of Champions Connect or visit www.qtic.com.au

Farewell to a QTIC Champion

QTIC General Manager - Business Strategy and Deputy CEO Kim Harrington has decided, after more than nine years with QTIC, that it is time for a new adventure. Kim has made an enormous contribution to the evolution of QTIC and the highly successful QTIC Indigenous Employment Champions Network (now proudly supported by Echo Entertainment Group).

We wish Kim all the best on her new journey.