



MEDIA RELEASE **STRICTLY EMBARGOED until 10:30pm Friday 8 November 2019**
8 November 2019

Success for the Sunshine Coast as it Hosts the Queensland Tourism Awards

Sunshine Coast tourism operators have taken out an impressive 11 accolades at this year's Queensland Tourism Awards, with Australia Zoo proving a favourite – securing three Awards.

Crowd favourite Australia Zoo took out the *RACQ People's Choice Award for Experiences and Services*, in addition to Silver in the *Major Tourist Attractions* category and the *Young Achievers Award* for Robert Irwin's remarkable contribution to the industry at such a young age.

This year, the Sunshine Coast hosted the annual tourism Awards at the newly constructed \$10 million Sunshine Coast Convention Centre at Novotel Twin Waters Resort, where more than 900 guests gathered to celebrate the achievements of Queensland's best tourism operators.

A total of 83 Awards, including 26 Gold, 25 Silver, 24 Bronze, four highly commended and two individual Awards were awarded across 28 categories, as well as two *RACQ People's Choice Awards*.

See attached a complete list of this year's 2019 Queensland Tourism Awards winners.

QTIC Chief Executive Daniel Gschwind said the 35th annual Queensland Tourism Awards had brought together an outstanding selection of operators that truly reflected the diverse range of the State's quality tourism offerings.

"This year's entrants, across the 28 business, event and individual categories, demonstrate the extraordinary dedication and innovation of tourism operators across the State – all of whom are helping the Queensland tourism industry to thrive," Mr Gschwind said.

More than 27.2 million international and domestic visitors flocked to the Sunshine State in the year ending June 2019, with 17.6 million of those tourists being intrastate visitors, which is an 11.9 per cent increase on the previous year's intrastate visitation.

"Thanks to these visitors, the Queensland tourism industry's contribution to the State's gross product has been boosted to \$27.2 billion and these visitation results continue to support more than 237,000 jobs across all regions of Queensland.

"For many of our Queensland operators, this year's severe weather events has had a serious impact on their businesses, so these Awards are a reflection of the resilience and resourcefulness of all the operators and their staff in the industry."



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Tourism Industry Development Minister Kate Jones said the Queensland Tourism Awards provided an opportunity to celebrate the effort that goes into making the Sunshine State a favourite with domestic and international tourists.

“Congratulations to all Sunshine Coast winners and entrants, their contribution not only supports their local economy, but contributes to the backbone of Queensland’s \$27.2 billion tourism industry,” Ms Jones said.

“The Palaszczuk Government is committed to championing local tourism operators and Sunshine Coast operators are a shining example of why the industry continues to grow.”

Queensland Airports Limited CEO Chris Mills congratulated Sunshine Coast tourism operators for showcasing the diverse array of tourism offerings in their region at this year’s Queensland Tourism Awards.

“We are seeing an ongoing refresh of tourism product and the development and delivery of new offerings, which is essential for the success of the sector domestically and internationally. Well done to those operators who were recognised as part of the Awards tonight,” Mr Mills said.

“As the owner of the aviation gateways to the Gold Coast, Townsville, Mount Isa and Longreach, we are acutely aware of the importance of excellence in the sector for us, the business sector and communities across the state.”

Each year, the Queensland Tourism Awards are judged by a panel of industry experts who volunteer their services to assess submissions and travel across Queensland to experience firsthand the amenities and services of the nominated operators.

Queensland’s Gold Award winners will gain automatic entry into the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards, which will be held in Canberra on Friday 6 March 2020. Next year the Queensland Tourism Awards will be held at Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on Friday 13 November 2020.

– ENDS –

Sunshine Coast winners include:

Individual Award	Robert Irwin - Australia Zoo	<i>Young Achievers Award</i>
Gold Awards	Noosa Triathlon Multi Sport Festival	<i>Major Festivals and Events</i>
	Habitat Noosa	<i>New Tourism Business</i>

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	Queensland Air Museum	<i>Outstanding Contribution by a Volunteer or Volunteer Group</i>
Silver Awards	Australia Zoo	<i>Major Tourist Attractions</i>
	The Country House at Hunchy	<i>Hosted Accommodation</i>
	RACV Noosa Resort	<i>Self-Contained Accommodation</i>
	Mary Valley Rattler	<i>New Tourism Business</i>
Bronze Awards	Noosa Beach House Restaurant & Bar	<i>Tourism Restaurants and Catering Services</i>
	Bli Bli House Riverside Retreat	<i>Hosted Accommodation</i>
RACQ People's Choice Award	Australia Zoo	<i>Experience & Services</i>

Notes for Media:

- Media are asked to refrain from contacting award recipients **until after 10:30pm on Friday 8 November 2019.**
- A full list of Queensland Tourism Awards winners is attached.

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QUEENSLAND
TOURISM INDUSTRY
COUNCIL

Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) is the peak industry body for tourism in Queensland representing more than 3,000 members. QTIC is a private sector, membership-based organisation which, since 2001, has worked to influence and shape the state's tourism business environment that directly contributes \$27.2 billion to the Queensland's economy and employs more than 237,000 Queenslanders.

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