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## QAL GROUP AIRPORTS RECORD STRONGEST APRIL ON RECORD

Queensland Airports Limited (QAL) has recorded its strongest April ever for passenger numbers, boosted by the timing of Easter and school holidays and supported by an uplift in international passengers on the Gold Coast and in Townsville.

While Easter timing assisted April's numbers, the combined March and April results were also up on the previous year.

QAL, which owns and operates Gold Coast, Townsville, Mount Isa and Longreach airports, recorded seven per cent growth across its ports in April 2017 compared to the prior year.

Results were particularly strong on the Gold Coast, where passengers grew 7.5 per cent, and in Townsville which delivered 6.4 per cent more passengers than the same month in 2016.

Results for the past two years are summarised below:

	April 2017	April 2016	Growth
<b>Gold Coast Passengers</b>			
Domestic (+Regional)	464,530	433,843	7.1%
International	94,776	86,488	9.6%
Total Passengers	559,306	520,331	7.5%
<b>Townsville, Mount Isa &amp; Longreach Passengers</b>			
Townsville	135,113	126,993	6.4%
Mount Isa	14,337	14,093	1.7%
Longreach	2,437	3,038	-19.8%*
<b>Total Passengers</b>	<b>711,193</b>	<b>664,455</b>	<b>7.0%</b>

*\*Decline in Longreach is exacerbated by an adjustment in the way its passenger movements are recorded.*

It follows a record 8.2 million passenger movements across Gold Coast, Townsville, Mount Isa and Longreach airports in the 2016 calendar year, which represented growth of 5.3 per cent on 2015.

QAL CEO Chris Mills said strong passenger numbers during the school holidays and Easter reflected the strength of leisure markets across QAL's ports.

"The Gold Coast continues to show why it is the destination of choice for Australians and international visitors alike. The seven per cent growth in domestic traffic came from a number of markets, in

particular Melbourne. Internationally we saw close to 10 per cent growth in international passengers, assisted by Hong Kong Airlines increasing capacity and the addition of more services to Kuala Lumpur with AirAsia X," he said.

"It was also good to see Townsville's strong numbers with a 6.4 per cent increase in passengers, boosted by significant growth on the Sydney route in particular.

"Mount Isa, where conditions are have been more challenging for some time, saw modest growth of 1.7 per cent. We've now seen three consecutive months of growth in Mount Isa, arresting the sustained decline recorded since the resources boom ended.

"There was a decline in Longreach, however it is largely to do with a change in the way in which transit passenger numbers are recorded."

In Townsville, numbers were boosted by Air Niugini's introduction of services to Port Moresby, which commenced a bi-weekly service in late March. In June Tigerair will commence services to and from Melbourne, and the response from the market to these new services has been very positive.

QAL continues to roll out its capital investment program across all ports, including Project LIFT on the Gold Coast and Project ALIVE in Townsville.

Civil construction work continues on Project LIFT, and work on a \$10 million expansion of the apron at Townsville Airport commenced in April.

A new car park incorporating solar panels on shade structures has recently opened at Mount Isa Airport, and a number of other improvements will be made over coming months to enhance the user experience.

QAL is an Australian owned, Queensland based regional airport specialist group with a vision to engage customers, connect communities and provide exceptional experiences.

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