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MEDIA RELEASE

AUGUST RECORD FOR QAL GROUP

Queensland Airports Limited has set a new August record for passenger movements across its four ports – the Gold Coast, Townsville, Mount Isa and Longreach – with 709,006 people welcomed and farewelled in the month.

While the group recorded collective growth of 1.3 per cent, its regional airports reported the strongest increases, with 7.9 and 7.6 per cent growth in Mount Isa and Longreach respectively. Gold Coast Airport also recorded its busiest August ever.

A summary of August results is provided in the table below:

August results			
	August 2018	August 2017	Growth
Gold Coast	536,083	528,080	1.5%
Townsville	149,985	150,730	-0.5%
Mount Isa	19,631	18,198	7.9%
Longreach	3,307	3,074	7.6%
Total passengers	709,006	700,082	1.3%

QAL CEO Chris Mills said the overall result was positive given the reduced airline capacity.

“Despite fewer available seats, passenger numbers are remaining largely consistent with expectations due to higher aircraft loads,” Mr Mills said.

“On the Gold Coast we are already seeing some increased capacity for the upcoming Christmas peak, which is promising and points to another busy holiday period.”

Tigerair Australia will permanently recommence its Gold Coast to Hobart service from October 30 year-round, injecting 50,000 seats between the destinations each year.

Virgin Australia will also add a seasonal service between the Gold Coast and Perth during the December-January holiday peak. The airline has added 27,000 seats between the Gold Coast and Auckland, Canberra, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney in the same timeframe.

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International capacity is also set for a boost, with AirAsia X planning to operate an additional 18 return services between the Gold Coast and Kuala Lumpur, delivering more than 13,000 additional visitor seats in and out of the region. Daily services will ramp up to 11 per week from mid-December to mid-January.

Mr Mills said growth at Townsville Airport had steadied after some strong months, with a 0.5 per cent decline in August.

He pointed out that if the cancelled services were taken out of the equation, on a like-for-like basis, Townsville Airport's passenger numbers had grown by more than six per cent, which was positive for North Queensland and demonstrated the underlying strength in the market.

"It is promising to see a steady result this month, despite the loss of Tigerair's Melbourne and Jetstar's Bali services," he said.

"Townsville's fundamentals remain strong and we continue to see increasing loads on current services."

Continuing strength in Queensland's resources industry has delivered Mount Isa Airport its 19th consecutive month of passenger growth, while Longreach also recorded a strong result in August.

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