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MEDIA RELEASE

REGIONAL PASSENGER GROWTH OFFSETS MIXED RESULTS

Queensland Airports Limited welcomed almost 742,300 passengers through its four ports in October, with steady growth in the regions helping to offset reduced capacity along the eastern seaboard.

The result represents a collective decline of 2.7 per cent for the group, which includes the Gold Coast, Townsville, Mount Isa and Longreach airports.

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

| October results | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| | October 2018 | October 2017 | Growth |
| Gold Coast | 577,992 | 593,808 | -2.7% |
| Townsville | 143,169 | 149,110 | -4.0% |
| Mount Isa | 17,815 | 17,172 | 3.7% |
| Longreach | 3,317 | 3,018 | 9.9% |
| Total passengers | 742,293 | 763,108 | -2.7% |

QAL CEO Chris Mills said it was a mixed month for the group, with passenger numbers down at Gold Coast and Townsville, but growth in the regions.

“Our ports at Mount Isa and Longreach performed well during October,” Mr Mills said.

“At Mount Isa, passenger numbers grew by 3.7 per cent, mainly driven by strong performance on Brisbane and Cairns services. Longreach was also busier than normal.”

Townsville recorded a drop of 4 per cent in passenger numbers, with the loss of Tigerair’s Melbourne service continuing to be felt. However, the port’s domestic market was in line with last year’s figures, and if normalised for the withdrawal of Tigerair’s Melbourne service, passenger movements would have grown 4.3 per cent in October.

On the Gold Coast, passenger numbers dipped 2.7 per cent, but aircraft loads continued to climb, passing the 83.6 per cent mark.

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“Gold Coast Airport’s figures reflect ongoing tight management by the airlines of their fleets despite strong demand,” Mr Mills said.

“If you look at domestic capacity on the Gold Coast, capacity dipped slightly by 1.2 per cent, but loads on some airlines were as high as 90 per cent, underlining the continued popularity of the Gold Coast as a destination.

“The latest report from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) shows during September, there was a 2.5 per cent decrease in aircraft movements across Australia compared to September 2017, despite the fact there was a 0.2 per cent increase in passengers flying domestically in Australia during the same month.

“This highlights the fact airlines are really tightening their fleet management, with capacity down on all of Australia’s busiest routes.”

BITRE figures for the month of September 2018 shows capacity on Australia’s top three busiest routes were all down, with Melbourne – Sydney decreasing by 0.3 per cent compared with September 2017. Similarly, capacity was down on the Brisbane – Sydney route (down 1.6 per cent) and Brisbane – Melbourne route (down 1.3 per cent).

The figures come as Gold Coast Airport is gearing up for its busiest time of the year, with Virgin Australia, AirAsia X and Air New Zealand confirming additional capacity for the airport during the holiday period.

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