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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**DIP IN PASSENGER NUMBERS REFLECTIVE OF NATIONAL TREND**

More than 579,000 passengers passed through Queensland Airports Limited's (QAL) four airports in February 2019.

This represents a 4.7 per cent downturn for the group, with fewer passengers at Gold Coast, Townsville and Longreach airports reflective of a downward trend in passenger numbers across Australia and ongoing capacity constraints by the airlines. However, QAL's fourth port, Mount Isa Airport, bucked the trend to deliver another strong month of growth during February.

A summary of February's results is provided in the table below:

<b>February 2019 results</b>			
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Change</b>
Gold Coast	458,818	480,855	-4.6%
Townsville	102,795	110,964	-7.4%
Mount Isa	15,410	13,759	12.0%
Longreach	2,055	2,209	-7.0%
<b>Total passengers</b>	<b>579,078</b>	<b>607,787</b>	<b>-4.7%</b>

QAL CEO Chris Mills said the lower passenger numbers at Gold Coast Airport were a factor of less airline capacity, but the loads remained strong.

"The number of passengers flying domestically has dipped across Australia in the past two months, reflecting the airlines' ongoing tight management of their fleets," he said.

"Latest figures released by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) show passenger numbers fell 0.2 per cent in January 2019 – the second consecutive monthly decrease. The last time there was a decline was October 2015.

"As a result of this tight management, we are seeing aircraft loads continue to rise, with the average load at Gold Coast Airport increasing to 84.5 per cent during February – among the highest in the country.

...2/

Passenger numbers at Mount Isa Airport continued to go from strength-to-strength, recording a 12 per cent rise in February 2019 -despite the significant flood that impacted North West Queensland.

This builds on a strong year in 2018 when growth was recorded in 11 of the 12 months at Mount Isa.

Passenger numbers dropped at Townsville Airport in February, in a month impacted by the flooding disaster.

ENDS

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