

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday June 11, 2018

Mackay submits formal bid for Qantas Group Pilot Training Academy

The Queensland Government last week lodged Mackay's formal bid to be the preferred Australian regional city to host the \$20 million Qantas Group Pilot Training Academy.

Chief Executive Officer of Greater Whitsunday Alliance Mr Garry Scanlan said Mackay produced a strong, collaborative bid supported by both Member for Mackay Julieanne Gilbert MP and Federal Member for Dawson George Christensen MP, which meets all of Qantas' requirements.

"The Mackay bid highlights our region's strengths not just from a technical perspective, but also from a community inclusiveness and education point of view," said Mr Scanlan

"We are very excited to have a genuine collaboration with Mackay Airport, Mackay Regional Council, CQUniversity and Regional Development Australia in our bid. This collaboration shows our region's genuine appetite to attract Qantas to the city."

Mr Scanlan said the bid document highlighted some of Mackay's key strengths and builds a compelling case for locating the Qantas Group Pilot Training Academy here.

"From a facilities perspective, both Mackay Airport and CQUniversity have the capacity to easily meet the criteria set out by Qantas, which is a huge positive.

"Importantly, during the first year of operation and after an initial construction investment of \$20 million, we estimate this facility will contribute around \$32 million to our local economy. As pilot numbers increase over subsequent years, that cash injection will continue to grow," said Mr Scanlan.

General Manager of Mackay Airport Mr Rob Porter said the bid was a well-rounded offering which is sure to impress Qantas.

"One of our region's key strengths is our connectivity to Brisbane through 80 weekly flights. Plus, we have fantastic lifestyle attributes and a growing education sector. Mackay really offers the complete solution for Qantas," said Mr Porter.

"Additionally, there is a looming worldwide shortage of pilots and demand for Australian trained pilots is especially high. This really is an amazing opportunity for Mackay to capitalise on a future growth industry."

Greater Whitsunday Alliance will launch a social media campaign to encourage the broader Mackay community to get behind our bid on Wednesday using the #mackaywantsyouqantas hashtag.

Greater Whitsunday Alliance is the region's peak, independent economic development body committed to making the Mackay, Isaac, Whitsunday region strong for generations.

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For more information please contact Kylie Porter on 0417 705 245.