

Cairns and Far North Queensland Centres of Enterprise

Aviation Services

Industry Action Plan



Images from Cairns Aviation Skills Centre (CASC) *Women in Aviation* project

PROGRESS REPORT

June 2009

Dear stakeholder

The Cairns and Far North Queensland aviation industry is working in partnership with the Queensland Government to cement the region as a centre for aviation services in the Asia-Pacific. Under the *Centres of Enterprise* initiative we are working together to take advantage of industry opportunities, build on regional strengths and foster reliance and competitiveness in the face of global financial instability.

The recent downturn in tourism due to the global financial crisis, withdrawal of Qantas and the swine flu pandemic has affected many of the region's aviation operations, particularly charter operations. Yet despite this, the industry has remained stable with continued investment and reinvestment and increased utilisation of the region's aviation training capability.

The Aviation Services Industry Action Plan addresses three areas of opportunity:

- Raising the domestic and international profile of the region's aviation industry
- Growing critical mass to strengthen the sector, and
- Increasing competitiveness by building industry capacity and capability.

This document provides a snapshot of some of the regional achievements under the Action Plan. These outcomes demonstrate the benefits of collectively focusing our efforts around regional strengths. The document also outlines the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation's (DEEDI) key priorities for the next six months with the aim of working with industry to grow the aviation services sector.

A snapshot of regional achievements

Business and Industry Development

- Flightline Engineering Services is expanding operations with a new avionics centre employing five engineers and establishing a state-of-the-art wire marking facility
- Hawker Pacific's accreditation in Bombardier Aerospace's Q400 Series is allowing access to new markets, such as Korea. The company is also recruiting for its Townsville operation after winning a five year defence contract
- Australian Avionics has expanded its operations by opening two satellite service centres in Dubai and Sydney as well as entering into two new service centre agreements with Ametek and Universal for work on regional aircraft.
- Cairns based Heli Charters Australia has recently expanded to include a smaller operation located on Horn Island servicing the Torres Straits.

Building capacity and capability

- Cairns Aviation Skills Centre (CASC) is now offering CASA engineering exams onsite and licence conversion exams on-line resulting in significant cost savings for firms
- There has been an increase in industry utilisation of CASC to deliver specialised training including new engineering licensing systems, medical training and emergency procedures.
- The \$200M upgrade of the Cairns Airport is on track. Cairns is the first Australian airport to operate all terminals with new bar-coded boarding passes technology providing significant cost savings
- An Aviation Industry Careers and Skills Forum will be held in Cairns on 20 Aug. For more information contact Deborah Maguire at DEEDI Cairns Centre on 07 4048 1189

Progress under the Action Plan

- Local capability has been showcased nationally and internationally at:
 - 2009 Avalon Airshow where new industry contacts were made (March)
 - Routes Asia 2009 in Hyderabad where Cairns Airport and TTNQ representatives met with potential new carriers (Feb)
- The *Women in Aviation* project has proved to be a highly successful collaboration between industry, trainers, employers and government. The regional initiative was picked up by Aviation Australia and promoted nationally in Aviation Business magazine and at the Aviation Careers Expo (Aug 2009). Collateral is available from www.aviationcairns.com.au
- DEEDI/Advance Cairns funded *Regional Freight Study* is completed. Advance Cairns, in partnership with Cairns Ports, FNQROC and Cairns Chamber of Commerce, will progress a key recommendation investigating the feasibility of consolidating freight in the TNQ region and inbound/outbound freight options
- Cairns Chamber of Commerce has signed an MOU with the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce to pursue business opportunities within the mining and industrial resource industry sectors. A delegation to PNG is planned for November 2009
- Tourism Queensland has created a new Cairns based tourism director position to promote the Tropics and Great Barrier Reef as a destination and undertake route development activities

Raising the national and international profile

- The region's profile as a training destination is being raised with the delivery of Bahrain's Gulf Air advance training for engineers and the use of CASC by PNG students for Cert IV training. Gulf Air has made a commitment that all further "on the job" training is to be conducted in Cairns

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation – key priorities for the next six months

- Work in partnership with the Tablelands Regional Council to drive growth of the Mareeba Airport and guide investment attraction activities
- Establish and progress the business case to develop regional composites capability in training and repair/maintenance for advance aerospace composites
- Increase access to business opportunities from major PNG resource projects for small to medium sized regional aviation firms
- Assess, build on and promote the region's maintenance and training capabilities for the 30-72 seat aircraft, in particular the Q Series (Dash 8)
- Development of capability in existing firms through delivery of Workforce Skills Development Action Plan