

# The industry experts who will lead way

## WHO'S ON THE PANEL



**LIZ SAVAGE**

Current Cairns Airport board member and former Virgin Australia chief commercial officer.



**ANDREW MCEVOY**

Tourism Australia chief executive with 25 years experience in the tourism industry.



**BRETT GODFREY**

Tourism and Events Queensland chairman and Virgin Australia co-founder.

## GRACE MASON

A HIGH-LEVEL panel of tourism experts will join forces in a bid to guide the Far North industry out of the COVID doldrums.

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk has named Cairns Airport board member and former Virgin commercial boss Liz Savage to chair the panel alongside Tourism Australia chief executive Andrew McEvoy and Tourism and Events Queensland chairman Brett Godfrey.

The trio will work with all sectors of the tourism industry to look at recovery options and develop an action plan for tourism recovery.

"Tourism is a cornerstone of our economy. Ensuring this industry gets back on its feet is vital to rebuilding our economy," the Premier said.

"That's why we've appointed some of the best in the business to deliver a blueprint for the re-

covery of this sector in Queensland."

Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said the plan would look at tourism potential and confidence as the world emerged from the pandemic.

"Before COVID, tourism was a healthy \$25.5bn industry, representing one in 11 jobs in the state and employing 234,000 Queenslanders," he said. "COVID has dented the state's economy and shaken world confidence.

"With vaccines being rolled out in Australia and around the world, the panel will work with industry on a considered and thorough plan for Queensland tourism beyond 2021."

Cairns MP and Assistant Tourism Minister Michael Healy said the Far North industry was starting from a "strong base".

The panel will consider changing customer demand, emerging markets, Queensland

branding, growth areas, rebuilding airline capacity into the state, other transport options, opportunity for new products and experiences, regional visitation and increasing international education.

Ms Savage said futureproofing the Queensland tourism industry was a vital task.

"We are seeing that COVID-19 has changed the way people travel and how they spend their time away. This is the opportunity to make sure Queensland's offerings match what potential visitors will be seeking," she said. "As part of this panel, it's our job to work with industry and government to plot a path forward and encourage industry and business to have their say along the way."

The panel will take industry submissions and hold roundtable events for industry input.

Actions will be identified by the middle of the year with a final plan released early 2022.