

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media release

December 17, 2013

Report confirms demand for flights north from Sunshine Coast

Sunshine Coast Council, in partnership with Regional Development Australia Sunshine Coast, recently engaged KPMG Demographics led by Bernard Salt to explore the Long Distance Commuter Workforce (LDC) based at the Sunshine Coast.

“Sunshine Coast Airport has previously undertaken a number of surveys that indicated there was strong demand for flights north from the Sunshine Coast,” Mayor Mark Jamieson said.

“In fact, more Sunshine Coast workers commute regularly up north than go to Brisbane to work.

“The report confirmed that in South East Queensland the Sunshine Coast is one of the top providers of long-distance commuter workers into the Bowen and Surat Basins. In fact, LDC worker numbers for the Sunshine Coast have grown by 62% from 2006 to 2011, much higher than the Australia-wide average of 37%.

“Sunshine Coast has a highly mobile workforce compared to other Queensland regions, with primary destinations for our long distance commuter market including Mackay, Gladstone, Moranbah, Emerald, Roma and Rockhampton,” Mayor Jamieson said.

Economic Development (aviation) portfolio councillor Stephen Robinson said the report provided the opportunity to further develop links to the north to connect Sunshine Coast businesses into the major resource centres of Queensland, connect families and provide a holiday option for regional Queenslanders.

“The report identified that Sunshine Coast’s extended catchment was more than 7000 long distance commuters, with 1164 travelling to their Bowen Basin workplace.

“In addition to the strong Bowen Basin demand, there are 484 workers commuting to the Surat Basin annually.

“This report is the most substantial study of the LDC market on the Sunshine Coast and will make compelling reading for those stakeholders servicing the needs of this important workforce sector. It provides a sound basis for flights north out of Sunshine Coast Airport.”

Regional Development Australia Sunshine Coast chair Max Standage said investment in local infrastructure including the Sunshine Coast Airport was one of the top five priorities for the region.

“This report provides further evidence of the size, demand and changing nature of our region’s workforce, and the impact on our future infrastructure requirements such as the Sunshine Coast Airport,” Professor Standage said.

Ends

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Fast Facts

- Sunshine Coast LDC's working in Brisbane 1553 (approx. 20% of all LDC's)
- Sunshine Coast LDC's working in Northern Areas 1983 includes Bowen Basin, Surat Basin, Mackay, Gladstone and Rockhampton
- 1164 LDC's travel to the Bowen Basin for work
- 484 LDC's travel to the Surat Basin for work

- Sunshine Coast LDC workers in 2006 were 4354
- Sunshine Coast LDC workers in 2011 were 7049
- Balance of LDC workers spread throughout Australia

- From 2006 to 2011 LDC's on the Sunshine Coast grew by 62%
- From 2006 to 2011 LDC's Australia-wide grew by 37%

- Since 2006 the proportion of LDC workers compared to resident workforce grew to 4.3%, far higher than Australia-wide at 2.1%. (excluding the Brisbane drive market, the Sunshine Coast LDC's represent a substantial 3.3% of the resident workforce population)