

# Access, accommodation, tours keys for tourism

There are three main legs to the development of the viable tourism industry in the Torres Strait, according to John McIntyre, Director Destination Development, Tourism Tropical North Queensland.

"They are access, accommodation and tours/attraction," he said.

Mr McIntyre was speaking at a function organised by the Torres Strait Tourism Steering Committee at the Jardine Resort Motel.

Regarding access, Mr McIntyre said:

The Torres Strait has good (and hopefully soon to be greatly increased) air access;

The increasingly regularity of the cruise ships (such as Captain Cook Cruises) to T.I. and surrounds is a good indication of that the consumer likes the product and that the cruise industry is willing to meet these demands; and

Road access (in the dry season) is solid and hopefully will increase due to initiatives being implemented in the Cape. Torres operators need to make these consumers aware of the easy access across to TI before they leave home so that they can allow time in their itineraries.

On the issue of accommodation, he said: "The existing accommodation in the area is good and is a strong foundation for the growth of overnighters. The potential new styles of accommodation under consideration will widen the choices available to consumers and increase capacity."

On tours and attractions, the tours available too are of high quality and are getting great reviews from visitors.

But Mr McIntyre pointed out the problem at

present is that there is not a lot of connection between access, accommodation and tours which make it difficult for visitors and the tourism trade to put together cohesive and cost effective packages.

"The bringing together of all the tourism players on the region with the suppliers and supporters from Cairns is a very positive step to start growing real business in the region.

"The Cape York and Torres Strait Tourism strategy is starting to act as a catalyst to co-ordinate Government support for tourism and the recent restructuring of the Queensland Government to create the new high-profile Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry seems to indicate that the State Government is serious about growing and supporting business in regional areas.

"The key issue now is to get all players working together to support the development of a Torres specific action plan that looks seriously at what sort of industry the Torres Strait community wants."

Mr McIntyre referred to a quotation that stated "tourism can either cook your food or burn your house down".

"The community really needs to:

- Look at what are the best options for tourism development in the area;

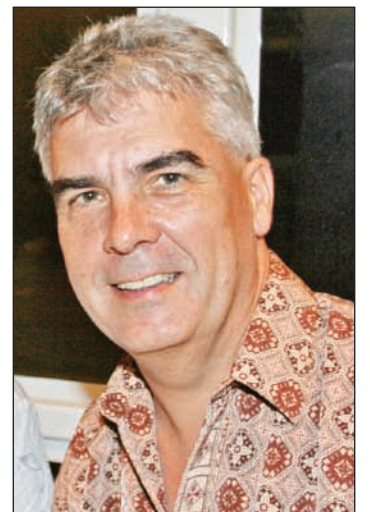
- Work with the trade and local operators to remove obstacles for this development;

- And encourage local people to invest in the training and skills required to ensure that the benefits flowing from such an industry really benefits local people and businesses.

Mr McIntyre also congratulated Gab Titui Cultural Centre for winning the Queensland Tourism Awards and being inducted into the Hall of Fame.

"This is a great achievement and recognition should go to all involved.

"The networking function was very useful venue to bring together key operators from the Straits to work collaboratively to build a sustainable tourism industry in the region."



## The Torres Shire Tourism Steering Committee achievements for 2007:

- Tourism signage for local attractions;
- Cruise ship arrivals;
- PKA markets;
- TTNQ supply of brochures;
- Aboriginal Tourism Australia visit;
- Torres Shire, member of TTNQ;
- Tourist Information Centre at Torres Shire reception;
- Linkages for the Torres Shire Council website;
- Thursday and Horn Island Brochures;
- Things to do pamphlet for Torres Shire;
- Tourist slogan competition;
- Tourist customer service training;
- Queensland Country Expo participation;
- Discover Thursday and Horn Island booklet;
- Proposed sister city with Kushimoto, Japan;
- Volunteers greeters;
- Tourism development action plan;
- Tourism slogan: Torres Strait - Australia's Hidden Treasure;
- Torres Strait Tourism Television promotion campaign;
- FNQ calendar promotion;
- Conduct a tourism survey.

## Goals for 2008:

- Tourism development action plan;
- Conduct tourism survey;
- Television promotion;
- Close liaison with TSRA, TSIRC, NPARC;
- Cape York and Torres Strait tourism action plan;
- Develop new brochure, video;
- Information kiosks;
- Networking function;
- Promotion;
- Membership;
- Community events;
- Visual display;
- John McIntyre travelled courtesy of QantasLink.