



DESTINATION  
**GOLDCOAST.**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## HEARTBREAKING NEW JOB FIGURES FOR GOLD COAST TOURISM

Concerning new research commissioned by the Tourism and Transport Forum shows tourism jobs have been cut by 20 per cent in 12 months - that's one in five jobs in tourism across the Gold Coast.

Destination Gold Coast Chairman Paul Donovan said his heart goes out to the 4,600 tourism businesses suffering during this time.

"We are proudly Australia's favourite holiday destination, but our operators are hanging on by a thread," Mr Donovan said.

"Our local tourism industry relies on people travelling to enjoy what the region has to offer and with more than half of Australia's population under travel restrictions, the impact on the Gold Coast is significant."

Destination Gold Coast CEO Patricia O'Callaghan said the city is in the fight of its life, as mum and dad operators right through to major hoteliers and theme parks struggle to hold on financially and retain a skilled workforce.

"These figures are heartbreaking," said Ms O'Callaghan.

"We know the industry will bounce back once people are able to travel again, but until that happens, the industry is requesting targeted financial support from the Government.

"We appreciate the Government's support to date and the announced \$600 million Business Support Package recently.

"Measures around business hardship grants and financial mechanisms that allow employers to retain skilled staff and keep them connected to the business until economic conditions improve will be critical."

Following 18-months of hardship, tourism employment on the Gold Coast is forecast to drop by another 4,000 full-time and part-time jobs from now until Christmas, with the current travel restrictions.

"As this crisis continues to unfold, the lifeline for our industry will be Government support," said Ms O'Callaghan.

TTF CEO Margy Osmond said the sector is reeling having lost the critical Sydney and Melbourne visitors for the July school holiday period – the third peak holiday period in a row decimated by lockdowns. The outlook for the upcoming September school holidays is looking bleak.

Kate Forrester, who runs family-owned operator Gold Coast Watersports, said her and her husband are nervous about the upcoming school holidays.

“We are currently running at 10 per cent, so the loss to our bottom line is enormous which has led to reducing staff hours just so we can retain our skilled jet ski tour guides, parasail and jet boat captains,” Ms Forrester said.

“As a business owner, we are clinging on to see the light at the end of the tunnel, but at the end of the day we need urgent support to keep afloat.”

#### **KEY FINDINGS:**

- There are 20,094 full and part-time direct tourism jobs on the Gold Coast, which is down 20% (12 months to June 2021).
- Tourism employment on the Gold Coast is forecasted to drop by a further 20% (or 4,000 jobs) from June to December 2021 due to state lockdowns and ongoing international border closures.
- Total estimated drop in direct sector jobs since 2019-20 financial year end is 36%.

#### **ENDS**

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