



DESTINATION  
**GOLDCOAST.**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

13 NOVEMBER 2021

## **PAUL DONOVAN ANNOUNCES INTENTION TO STEP DOWN AS CHAIRMAN OF DESTINATION GOLD COAST**

The Board of Gold Coast Tourism Corporation Limited, trading as Destination Gold Coast, has today (13 November) announced that Mr Paul Donovan has informed the organisation of his intention to stand down after 17 years in the role as Chairman.

Destination Gold Coast Chairman Paul Donovan said citywide collaboration to foster innovation and create opportunities was key to ensure that the Gold Coast realises its full potential.

“The Gold Coast is the best place to live, it is a great place to raise your family, what great schools and universities we’ve got, and the great opportunities future generations have here to develop and realise their true potential,” Mr Donovan said.

“It has been a privilege over the years to work closely with the Board and esteemed professionals of Destination Gold Coast to represent the interests of Gold Coast’s 4,400 tourism businesses and the 35,000 people employed by the sector.”

Destination Gold Coast CEO Patricia O’Callaghan acknowledged Mr Donovan’s unwavering passion for the industry.

“We are grateful to Paul for his outstanding stewardship, tireless dedication to the tourism industry and contribution to the Gold Coast visitor economy during his tenure,” said Ms O’Callaghan.

“Having steered the city’s peak tourism body for close to two decades, Paul has helped to not only raise the profile of the Gold Coast as a must-visit leisure and business events destination, but also advocate for continual development of aviation connectivity and tourism infrastructure from both public and private sectors.

“Visitor numbers have steadily increased under his leadership reaching a peak of 14.2 million visitors, directly generating \$5.9 billion into the local economy in 2019.

“Over this period, Paul was instrumental in growing the China market to become the number one international source market for the Gold Coast and third most popular Australian destination for Chinese visitors prior to COVID-19.

“Paul worked with the Board and guided senior management to develop strategies and plans that saw Gold Coast’s tourism sector bounce back from the lows of the Global Financial Crisis to the highs of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, and more recently, he acted as Executive Chairman in the latter half of 2020 to navigate unprecedented challenges presented by COVID-19.”

Mr Donovan will formally step down after Destination Gold Coast’s Annual General Meeting on 24 November where the Board will elect a new Chair.

Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate commended Mr Donovan for his commitment to the city.

“When we think of fantastic Gold Coasters who have made such an incredible contribution to our city, Paul fits the bill perfectly,” Cr Tate said.

“To him, the role of Chair was never work. His passion for tourism, for the staff at Destination Gold Coast and for the thousands of tourism-related businesses shone through in his energy and enthusiasm.

“I’m sure Paul’s name will pop up again given his love for our city.”

The respected tourism figurehead boasts a long and distinguished career in aviation and tourism with more than 40 years’ experience in senior executive roles. Mr Donovan was named the Gold Coast Citizen of the Year in 2019, he is a member of the City Heart Taskforce, Chair of Events Management Queensland and is Chairman of the Titans NRL Community Club.

**ENDS**

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