

## Media Alert

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30 September, 2014

### **Ports North a strong performer for Far North Queensland**

Ports North continues to build on its performance in Far North Queensland, reporting a profit of more than \$7 million for the 2013-14 financial year.

Following the tabling of the port authority's annual report in State Parliament last night, Chairman Brett Moller said the result reflected a strong overall effort in a recovering economic climate.

"We have had a solid performance throughout the year, with trade volume increasing, particularly in Cape Flattery and Mourilyan; property revenue growth staying ahead of inflation; our Marina revenue increasing; and our operating costs kept tightly contained," he said.

"While there were some down- as well as up-swings, overall profit rose by more than \$1.1m compared to the previous financial year.

"This is very good news for the region," Mr Moller added. "Ports North's ports are critical to the FNQ economy representing \$1.8 billion gross value added and 17 per cent of the gross regional product."

Some 4.85 million tonnes of cargo, including sugar, molasses, silica sand, zinc, fuel, fertiliser, log product, livestock and general cargo made its way through Far North Queensland's ports bound for domestic and international markets.

More than 820,000 reef and cruise tourists use Ports North facilities each year, and the ports support almost 20,000 people in employment across maritime services - from cargo and trade shipping and on shore shipping maintenance services, to cruise berths and foreshore property ownership.

"Each and every one of these products and passengers is a reminder of the essential role played by Ports North in the life and prosperity of Far North Queensland," Mr Moller said.

"And we are building on this by continuing to examine and develop new ways to expand the opportunities for Cairns and the region."

Some key highlights for the 2013-14 year included:

- Securing a commercial lease for a 400,000 tonne per annum magnetite export operation through the Port of Mourilyan
- Continued progress on the Cairns Shipping Development Project to deepen and widen the shipping channel into Trinity Inlet to cater for larger vessels

- Transfer of the port pilots to Ports North
- Sponsorship for major events including: the Australian Tourism Exchange, Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, Ironman Cairns and Cairns Amateurs Carnival

Mr Moller said Ports North had maintained an important environmental steward role. The annual report noted Ports North is subject to 17 pieces of legislation under Commonwealth and State Governments, as well as government agency audits.

“We continue to be a leader in monitoring the Great Barrier Reef and by sponsoring projects which protect, and help us to understand, our stunning natural asset as well as the port environment,” Mr Moller said.

Over the past financial year Ports North has:

- Continued its funding support to the Crown of Thorns Starfish Control Program;
- Continued long-term sea grass monitoring;
- Introduced a sediment quality analysis plan;
- Maintained Trinity inlet water quality analysis;
- Monitored biosecurity and marine pests;

Under the CSDP project:

- Introduced surveys on corals, macro algae, benthic macro invertebrates and migratory wader birds and their habitats.  
*NB: The coral surveys conducted in December 2013 are the most recent detailed studies of corals along the coastline in the Cairns area since the Trinity Inlet Management Program studies in the mid-1990s.*

Mr Moller said Ports North looked forward to another successful year, including finalisation of the CSDP Environmental Impact Study.

Further information on the annual report is available at [www.portsnorth.com.au](http://www.portsnorth.com.au)

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