

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

27 June 2019

### **“A GREAT TIME TO CONVENE IN MACKAY”**

The Mackay Region will be participating at the *Convene Q* trade show, which is to be held for the first time at the *Royal International Convention Centre* in Brisbane in mid-July. This will be the fifth year that Mackay has participated at the show and happens as the award-winning *Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre* (MECC) heads into a new period of environmental sustainability, with an extensive solar installation well underway on its rooftops.

As part of a \$20 million *Mackay Regional Council* city-wide initiative, a 70w solar plant is being placed on the MECC's Auditorium roof and a 100w plant installed atop the convention centre. As well as being environmentally-friendly, this solar initiative is estimated to provide a return on investment for the Centre within four years.

The local economy is also buoyant, with Mackay currently the strongest regional economic performer in northern Australia and North Queensland. The flow-on effects are evident, with Mackay attracting strong conference growth, across a range of diverse sectors.

2020 is looking particularly strong for the MECC. Coming events include an inaugural combined conference for Rotary Districts 9550 and 9570 in May, which is expected to attract approximately 400 delegates from throughout north eastern Australia and from as far afield as Timor Leste.

Later that month, an estimated 350 delegates will attend the *Association of School Business Administrators (Qld) Conference*. It will be the first time that the conference has been staged in North Queensland, highlighting Mackay's strong destination appeal, depth of infrastructure, centrality and ease of access.

In September 2020, the *Bowen Basin Symposium* is expected to attract 600 national and international mining sector geologists to Mackay. The Symposium is only held once every 5 years and as testimony to the MECC's capacity and capability, this is the second time the event has been held at the convention centre.

Nicky Hansen, Sales & Business Development Coordinator with the MECC acknowledged the convention centre was delighted to attract these conferences and mentioned some of the influencing reasons.

*“Mackay has a wonderful climate, enjoys excellent aviation access, has an extensive range of accommodation and great outdoor venues for offsite business event functions,”* she said. *“Strong local support also includes our city's Invest Mackay Events and Conferences Funding Program. We're hoping to meet with planners on the Mackay Region Stand (Stand #55) at Convene Q and convince them of the benefits of taking their events to a regional location which offers great results and something extra special.”*

For more information on the MECC and the Mackay region, visit [www.mackayecc.com.au](http://www.mackayecc.com.au)

**ABOUT THE MACKAY ENTERTAINMENT AND CONVENTION CENTRE:**

The MECC has multiple spaces including a 1090-seat auditorium and two plenary halls with capacity to seat 1500 delegates theatre-style or 800 guests banquet style. In addition, there are four meeting rooms, a 100-seat studio space, two foyers, and a selection of break-out rooms. The Convention Centre Precinct also includes the contemporary *Artspace* regional art gallery, expansive Civic Lawns and the Mackay City Library. All offer additional break-out meeting rooms and alternative function options.

**ABOUT MACKAY:**

The Mackay Region sits halfway between Brisbane and Cairns in Queensland, offering a relaxed regional city, serviced by 65+ weekly flights. The 1000 seat MECC convention centre is enhanced by a portfolio of more than 1000 rooms within walking distance, along with amazing rooftop venues with panoramic views of the blue-water river and ocean. The Mackay Region's growth is fuelled by the boom in the mining industry in the Bowen Basin, resurgence in agribusiness, growth in tourism and an emerging marine sector. It is the largest sugar-producing area in Australia and nearly a third of Queensland's export goods originate from the Mackay region.

*For further information, contact:*

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**The Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre**



**The MECC's Auditorium seats 1090 delegates**