

MEDIA RELEASE

REGIONAL AIRPORTS RETURNING TO PRE-COVID LEVELS

Passenger numbers at Mount Isa and Longreach airports are approaching pre-COVID-19 levels, as confidence in regional air travel continues to strengthen.

More than 15,600 passengers were welcomed at Mount Isa Airport in April – the highest monthly number since February 2020. The result was 8.6 per cent less than the same month in 2019 and significantly more than the 4,062 passengers who travelled in April last year.

At Longreach Airport, April passenger numbers hit levels not seen since October 2019. The gateway to central western Queensland recorded 3,100 passenger movements in April – significantly higher than the 347 passengers who travelled in the same month last year and 78 fewer passengers than April 2019.

	April 2021 passengers	April 2020 passengers	April 2019 passengers
Mount Isa Airport	15,652	4,062	17,138
Longreach Airport	3,100	347	3,178

Queensland Airports Limited CEO Chris Mills said the passenger numbers were positive for communities in north and central western Queensland.

“These numbers are significant, especially when you consider that this time last year Longreach Airport passenger numbers fell almost 90 per cent and Mount Isa Airport’s numbers dropped by 75 per cent,” he said.

Mr Mills said it was shaping up to be a busy few months for the Longreach region thanks to the expected boom in outback tourism for winter.

“A lot of travellers are taking the opportunity to head out west right now, and the benefits for the local economy are significant,” he said.

“Events like the Outback Queensland Masters and the Outback Food, Wine and Music Festival in Longreach will be an extra drawcard for visitors.”

About 40 flights a week are currently operating between Mount Isa Airport and Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns and towns across regional Queensland. There are nine flights a week between Longreach Airport and Brisbane and Townsville.

Mount Isa and Longreach airports are owned by Queensland Airports Limited, which also owns Gold Coast and Townsville airports. Across the group there were 528,032 passenger movements in April – equating to 73.5 per cent of pre-COVID-19 capacity.

A range of hygiene and communication measures continue to be in place across QAL airports to help keep passengers safe as flight and passenger numbers increase.

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