



TOURISM REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMUNIQUE TRAC Meeting No. 26 – In person – 6 May 2026

The current term of the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee (the Committee) was established in 2023 to provide advice to the Marine Park Authority Board, through the Reef Authority, on tourism matters. The Committee is appointed for a three-year term. The independent Chairperson of the Committee is Mr Daniel Gschwind.

Welcome and Apologies

The Chairperson welcomed the Committee to the 26th meeting of the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee (TRAC), acknowledging it as the last meeting of the current term.

Apologies: Ms Jenny Edmondson, Ms Chrissy Grant, Mr Mitchell Murphy, Ms Rachael Klitscher

Proxies: Mr Matt Tempero (Hamilton Island)

Meeting Summary

The Committee received a Reef Authority update, a Reef health update, and presentations on the Science Strategy and Southern Plan of Management. The progress updates were well received and supported by fulsome discussions amongst the Committee.

Discussions on the Southern Plan of Management and Cruise Shipping highlighted a variety of considerations. For the Southern Plan of Management - an innovative spatial planning approach - presenters noted intent to consult industry operators while refining the plan. Feedback will be sought on cruise ship anchorages and refining boundaries of existing cruise ship anchorages. From customer perspectives, the Committee conveyed that both in-water and land-based visits are desired, with ship-bound visits being the least favourable option. The Committee requested regularly briefings while the Southern Plan of Management is being developed.

Committee members provided advice on the development of the Reef Authority Science Strategy with a focus on the science needed for management.

The Assistant Minister for Tourism, Senator the Hon Nita Green, joined the TRAC meeting to discuss fuel shortages and the impacts to Reef tourism operations.

Members provided broad ranging updates from across the industry, covering impacts of the fuel crisis, domestic and international visitation rates and impacts of a challenging summer season.

The Committee highlighted the value of the Reef Health updates.

Reflections on the Term

The Committee reflected on the past three years of the term and raised feedback on successes and areas for improvement going forward.

Positive feedback on the term included success of the face-to-face meeting format and fostering of personal relationships, mix of topics, and blend of formal and informal discussion opportunities. The Committee suggested a mode or platform to communicate between meetings and more regular touchpoints with the IRAC.