

## TOURISM REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMUNIQUE

### Meeting No. 23 – 18 March 2025

*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 Acknowledgement of Country

The Chairperson welcomed the Committee to the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee (TRAC) and delivered an Acknowledgement of Country.

#### Reef Authority update

The Reef Authority provided updates on:

- Reef health
- UNESCO World Heritage
- the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium, and
- caretaker conventions for the agency once the Federal Election is called.

Additional areas of focus for the agency, including Reef restoration, were also identified as topics to bring forward to future Committee meetings for discussion and advice.

#### Member updates

Members discussed a range of industry updates including business trends and operations, with some general concerns raised around current trading conditions and challenges in both the domestic and international markets, and some feedback on site-specific Reef health information. Members identified some emerging issues and opportunities for Reef Authority support at national and international trade events.

Members commended the change in frequency of meetings — from two to three meetings this calendar year.

#### Modernisation of the High Standard Tourism Operator Program

A presentation on the draft framework for the modernisation of the High Standard Tourism Operator (HSTO) Program was provided to the Committee. This included the timeline of development, advice received to date from the Committee and a proposed framework for discussion.

The Committee discussed the proposed framework and expressed support for the approach.

The Reef Authority highlighted that this was the initial testing of the proposed framework and that further detailed feedback would be required from both internal legal, policy and permissions sections along with broad external consultation.

#### Southern Plan of Management

The committee received an update on the development of the Southern Plan of Management and provided advice on preferences for adoption of innovative ways of managing tourism into the future.

#### Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements (TUMRA) program

A presentation on the Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements (TUMRA) program was provided to the Committee. The Committee discussed potential opportunities and challenges and provided advice on the pathways to greater engagement between Traditional Owners with TUMRAs and tourism operators. The Committee emphasised the need to ensure continual engagement between Traditional Owners and Tourism Operators.