

Message from the Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport
The Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe MP

Welcome to the Great Barrier Reef Festival, a wonderful opportunity to immerse yourself in The Whitsunday's local culture and community, and hopefully explore some of the superb tourism experiences on offer here.

The impacts of the pandemic have provided incredible challenges, but thanks to the hard work of Queenslanders our state was one of the first to put in place a COVID Safe Event Framework which paved the way for events such as this one to take place.

The Queensland Government is proud to support the Great Barrier Reef Festival, through Tourism and Events Queensland's Destination Events Program and it is a feature on our *It's Live! in Queensland* events calendar. Events are an important part of our state's economic recovery from the pandemic because they attract visitors to the region which stimulates the local economy and supports local jobs. Events are also an important opportunity for communities, friends, families and visitors to come together, creating community pride and reconnecting us.

Congratulations to the event organisers and all those involved in organising this event – may it be a successful one.

If you are visiting for the event, I encourage you to make some time to explore the diverse tourism experiences on offer in this beautiful region.

The Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe MP, Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport.