

MEDIA RELEASE

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“Mackay hosts one of Australia’s leading mining sector exhibitions”

The northern Queensland city of Mackay has once again hosted one of Australia’s most significant regional mining industry exhibitions, being the *Queensland Mining and Engineering Exhibition* (QME). This biennial event, which was held at the *Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre* (MECC) and the Mackay Showgrounds, attracted thousands of attendees and more than 600 exhibitors.

The multi-award winning MECC was kept busy during QME hosting various events and networking functions, which included 500 guests attending the *Queensland Mining Contractor Awards Gala Dinner*. The MECC is the largest convention and banqueting facility between Cairns and Brisbane. Located just minutes from the CBD, it includes a 1090 seat theatre, two plenary halls seating up to 1500 theatre-style, four meeting rooms and a range of breakout rooms. More than six quality hotels offering 4.5 star accommodation are located within a two kilometre radius of the MECC.

Mackay is perfectly positioned at the centre of one of the fastest growing regions in Queensland and as such, offers a quality and depth of Business Events infrastructure infrequently found outside capital cities. Paul Baker, Director of REEDMININGEVENTS, who organised QME, acknowledged the success of this year’s event.

“The power of face-to-face business and the opportunity to conduct business in such a manner cannot be underestimated, which is why *QME 2014* received highly positive feedback from our exhibiting suppliers and numerous attendees,” he said. “There has been a noticeable increase in the capacity and quality of accommodation available in and around Mackay. With the recent introduction of new hotels, there will be even greater opportunities for the region to support business events, conferences and tradeshow.”

New accommodation developments continue to add to the Business Events portfolio. These include the 115 room *Quest on Gordon*, whilst the 138 room *Oaks Rivermarque Apartments* is expected to open shortly. QME delegates were amongst the first guests to occupy the new boutique-style 57 room *Potters Oceanside Hotel*, whilst plans are also under way for new hotel developments at the *Harrup Park Country Club* and at Mackay Airport.

Mackay has an estimated inventory of more than 1500 rooms of 3.5 star standard and above and with the general softening of mining sector demand, there is ready availability and a warm welcome for Business Events.

Mackay Mayor Deirdre Comerford commented on this, saying “Not only do event organisers have the benefit of Mackay’s welcoming climate, but they have the accessibility of a central location along the Queensland coast, and now, the ease of having over 500 quality rooms within walking distance of the convention centre.”

Stephen Schwer, General Manager of *Mackay Tourism* confirmed that the QME event had been an outstanding success for Mackay and highlighted the city’s capability to host large events. “This is one of the signature events for our destination, being held here every two years. Our *Visitor Information Centre* handled a large number of bookings and

Civic Precinct Alfred Street | PO Box 1080
Mackay QLD 4740 | Australia
P + 61 7 4961 9761 | F + 61 7 4961 9778
mackayecc@mackay.qld.gov.au www.mackayecc.com.au

made sure that Mackay not only met the accommodation demands of this large event but ensured that our QME visitors enjoyed the relaxed and friendly experience in our region that we believe is our destination's point of difference."

The final word came from Jodie Currie, Director, *Bowen Basin Mining Club*, who said, "I cannot thank the MECC enough for the outstanding job on the *Qld Mining Contractor Awards* night. The decorations and catering from *Grinders* was nothing short of spectacular. The technical team did an outstanding job and they were a pleasure to work with. Nothing is too much trouble for any department of the MECC and I cannot recommend it enough. Having hosted events across Queensland, the MECC is certainly at the top of the list. We will be back again soon!"

For more information on the MECC and Mackay, visit www.mackayecc.com.au

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For further information, contact:

Nicky Hansen
Sales & Business Development
Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre
Phone: 07 4961 9761
Email: nicky.hansen@mackay.qld.gov.au
Website: mackayecc.com.au