

Sunshine Coast  
Events Board Annual Report  
2019/20

Delivering the Sunshine Coast  
Major Events Strategy 2018-2027



Our region.  
**Healthy. Smart. Creative.**

Edition November 2020

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### **Acknowledgements**

Council wishes to thank all contributors and stakeholders involved in the development of this document.

### **Disclaimer**

Information contained in this document is based on available information at the time of writing. All figures and diagrams are indicative only and should be referred to as such.

While the Sunshine Coast Regional Council has exercised reasonable care in preparing this document it does not warrant or represent that it is accurate or complete. Council or its officers accept no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting in reliance upon any material contained in this document.

All images displayed in this publication were taken prior to the implementation of COVID-19 restrictions.

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the traditional Country of the Kabi Kabi Peoples and the Jinibara Peoples of the coastal plains and hinterlands of the Sunshine Coast and recognise that these have always been and continue to be places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Cover image: Sir Elton John Farewell Yellow Brick Road Concert.

Current page: Ironman 70.3 Sunshine Coast.







The Curated Plate Culinary Festival.



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**Maya Gurry**  
Chairperson

## Chairperson's address

As we entered the 2019/20 year, no one could have predicted that the events industry's greatest test of resilience was only months away – not only for our local promoters and supply chain, but for the national and international industry.

The Sunshine Coast's outstanding track record since the Board's inception six years ago has seen the region host 311 sponsored major events, generating an estimated \$437 million in economic impact and supporting more than 4,800 jobs; and this was set to continue on an upward trajectory in 2019/20.

Before COVID-19 redefined the norm in March this year, the Sunshine Coast was well on track to host the greatest number of events in its history, with 74 scheduled events expecting to attract a record number of 181,439 visitors to the region.

Despite the last quarter of our annual calendar being heavily impacted by the onset of the global pandemic, which resulted in the cancellation and postponement of 20 events, the Sunshine Coast still successfully hosted 54 events in 2019/20 which generated nearly \$70 million in economic activity and a return on investment of 1:30.

In addition, the media coverage achieved by these events reached a total audience of more than 53 million across the year with a commercial value of \$21.67 million, firmly positioning the Sunshine Coast as a premier events and tourism destination.

Highlights include hosting international superstar Sir Elton John in two Farewell Yellow Brick Road concerts delivering more than \$3 million in economic impact for the region. The Sunshine Coast also welcomed the inaugural Curated Plate food and lifestyle festival which generated \$3.94 million spend and generated \$6.3 million in PR value.

The region also secured a new event with an established and significant following in Buskers by the Lake; and Sunshine Coast Council was offered the first right of refusal to host the 2020 Qantas Tourism Awards in March 2021 – an exceptional opportunity to showcase our beautiful region's natural assets and events capability to those in the industry.

Therefore, on reflection, there is still much to celebrate about 2019/20 which is a wonderful testament to our exiting Chairperson, Ralph Devlin AM QC, who retired in December 2019 having reached his maximum six-year term allowable under our Charter.

I would like to personally thank Ralph for his tireless commitment to the establishment and ongoing success of this Board. We could not have had a more qualified or passionate ambassador at the helm in the formative years and the level of respect the Board has garnered over this time is largely thanks to his leadership and vision.

In other structural changes, I would also like to thank inaugural Board member Andrew Lofthouse for his valuable contribution as he reached his tenure limit at the end of 2019, as well as exiting Working Group member Bill Darby.

In turn we welcomed new Board members John Williams, Paul Smith and Councillor Terry Landsberg.

I would like to thank all Board and Working Group members for their ongoing commitment to delivering on our Strategy, particularly in recent months. In addition to considering 21 major event sponsorship applications during the year – all of which were supported and subsequently endorsed by Council – the significant impact of COVID-19 saw the Board meet weekly between March and June to address challenging times for our industry.

This was at a time when many Board members were themselves facing challenges in regards to COVID-19. The generosity of their time and their valuable input is much appreciated and testament to the calibre of our Board members and their commitment to our region.

I would also like to acknowledge the great contribution of Visit Sunshine Coast in supporting the promotion of our annual calendar. As we move into an uncertain future in regards to out-of-region visitation, destination marketing will be of even greater importance.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to Mayor Mark Jamieson, his Councillors and the very capable team at Sunshine Coast Council who continue to provide unwavering support and investment into events which attract much-needed economic benefit to our region. Thank you for placing your trust and confidence in our Board.

While there are no doubt challenging times ahead for an industry that relies on gatherings – whether to celebrate, to compete, to learn, to be inspired or simply to connect with like-minded people – there is no shortage of innovation and agility on display. Whether in the online space, through new product offerings or by investing in future events post COVID-19.

In the interim, the Board will continue to seek out opportunities that retain our position as one of Australia's premier regional events destinations.

In 2019/20 the Sunshine Coast funded 54 major events, attracting over 136,000 visitors to the region



Top: NRL Women's State of Origin launch.  
Bottom: Queensland Tourism Awards.



**Cr Jason O'Pray**  
Portfolio Councillor  
for the Economy

## Foreword

The 2019/2020 financial year was certainly full of challenges and successes for Sunshine Coast major events. During the first nine months we saw numerous highly successful event partnerships, as visitation, marketing and regional profile reached a series of all-time highs across many events.

Obviously the onset and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the latter part of the financial year had a huge immediate effect on the events and tourism industries across the Sunshine Coast and indeed around the world. Council, our Events Board and a large range of external providers and supporters have continued to provide the highest level of support for many businesses affected by the cancellations or suspensions of local events.

The resilience and loyalty of our event owners and the wider local industry during the most challenging of times should be celebrated as a great strength of our regional teams, and we join with you in hoping for a return to full opportunity and outcomes for us all soon. Locals and tourists alike are clearly looking forward to the return of their favourite events and popular reasons for a trip to the Sunshine Coast.

The last few years has seen strong growth in the region in the spread and national profile of our sponsored major events – incorporating new, large audience events in professional and participation sport, local food and beverage, and arts and culture.

At Council and at the Sunshine Coast Events Board, we are consistently assessing the outcomes achieved from the events we invest in and support, and seek new and evolving opportunities to further benefit our region's businesses, accommodation providers and general public.

We are pleased once again to provide the annual report for the Sunshine Coast's Major Events Sponsorship Program, which outlines in depth the achievements and challenges of the program in 2019/20. Council gives specific thanks to the Events Board and our broad industry of suppliers and supporters of the program for all of your work in a challenging year.

We look forward to working with you in 2020/21 as we hopefully return to more normal conditions post COVID-19.



'The last few years has seen strong growth in the region in the spread and national profile of our sponsored major events'



Top: Sunshine Coast Lightning; Middle left to right: Caloundra Music Festival, Credit: Jeff Fitzpatrick; QTIC Destination IQ  
Bottom left to right: Ironman 70.3; Suncoast Spinners Tournament; Sir Elton John Farewell Yellow Brick Road Concert



Sunshine Coast Marathon.



## The Board

Since its inception in 2014, the role of the Sunshine Coast Events Board ('the Board') has been to oversee the implementation of the Sunshine Coast Major Events Strategy and provide strategic advice to Council on related issues and collaborative opportunities to support the region's investment in major events.

The Board has no delegated powers of authority – it provides recommendations to Council. The reputation of the region as a leading Australian major event destination has resulted in continuous growth in the number and range of major events in the portfolio.

### Board Membership

The Charter for the Board prescribes that the membership must include and be limited to nine individuals representing the community, business, Tourism and Events Queensland, Visit Sunshine Coast and Council, led by an independent Chairperson.

This was a year of major change for the Board. After six continuous years at the helm, in December 2019 Ralph Devlin AM QC, Chairperson since the Board's inception, retired, having reached his maximum 6-year term allowable under the Charter. Andrew Lofthouse, an inaugural Board member, also reached his tenure limit and retired.

Following an external recruitment and selection process, two new members were appointed to fill the vacancies:

- **John Williams** – Brings great business experience as Chief Executive, EON Group incorporating 92.7 Mix FM and 91.9 Sea FM and a passion for the Sunshine Coast. His contribution includes providing strategic advice and insight on how the Board best engages the active support of the local community, business/industry and stakeholders, and
- **Paul Smith** – a former Board member with a good understanding of the role of the Board, who articulated a clear view on opportunities for process improvement, brought promoter experience and insight to the Board.

**Maya Gurry**, a community representative on the Board since July 2016, was appointed as the new Chairperson in January 2020. In her three years as a Sunshine Coast Events Board member, Maya made a significant contribution across all elements of the Board's operations – being a highly active contributor to discussion and analysis during Board meetings. She has also made highly valuable additional inputs into strategic planning, such as the development of the Sunshine Coast Major Events Strategy 2018-2027.



**Ralph Devlin  
AM QC**

Chairperson  
(Retired  
December 2019)



**Maya Gurry**

Community  
representative  
(Appointed  
Chairperson  
January 2020)



**Brenda LaPorte**

Deputy  
Chairperson  
Tourism  
and Events  
Queensland  
Representative



**Andrew  
Lofthouse**

Community  
representative  
(Retired  
December 2019)



**Kim McCosker**

Community  
representative



**Scott Hoskins**

Business  
representative



**John Williams**

Business  
representative  
(Appointed  
January 2020)



**Paul Smith**

Business  
Representative  
(Appointed  
January 2020)



**David Ryan**

Chairman of Visit  
Sunshine Coast



**Simon Latchford**

Chief Executive  
Officer of Visit  
Sunshine Coast  
(Resigned  
May 2020)



**Cr Jason O'Pray**

Council  
representative

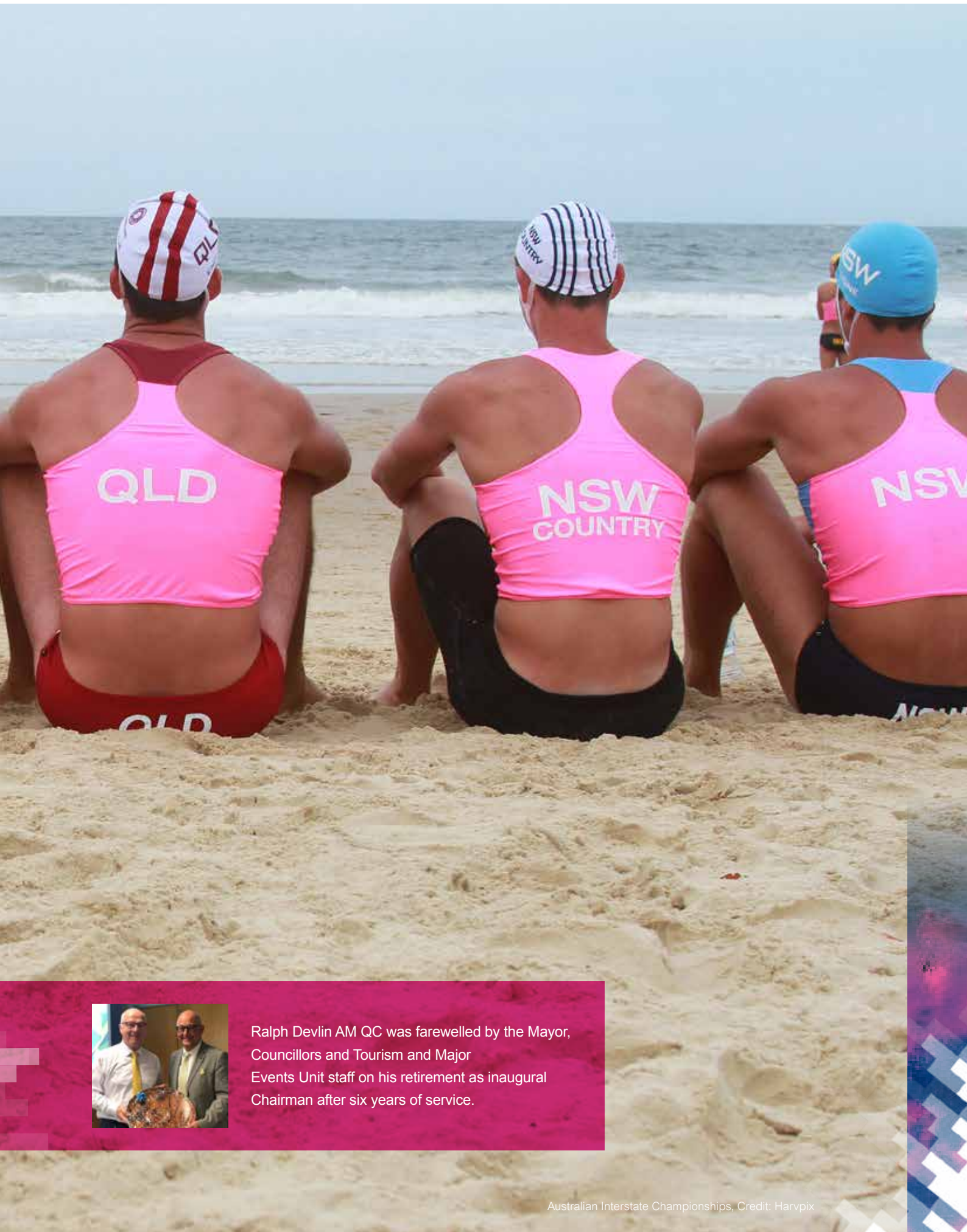


**Cr Terry  
Landsberg**

Council  
representative  
(Appointed June  
2020)

Following the 2020 local government elections, Council took the opportunity to refine the Council Portfolio System to achieve greater alignment with the strategic priorities of Council and the core responsibilities that it is required to discharge. As a consequence, Councillor Jason O'Pray and Councillor Terry Landsberg were assigned the Portfolio for the Economy, encompassing Economic Development; Innovation; Tourism, Events and Sport. In June 2020 Cr O'Pray's position was once again extended and Cr Landsberg was appointed as Council's newest representative on the Board.

Visit Council's website for **Board Member biographies**.



Ralph Devlin AM QC was farewelled by the Mayor, Councillors and Tourism and Major Events Unit staff on his retirement as inaugural Chairman after six years of service.

Australian Interstate Championships, Credit: Harvpix



Mooloolaba Triathlon

## Working Groups

The Board is supported by two working groups established to address particular issues and provide evidence-based specialist advice.

### Existing Portfolio Working Group

The role of the Existing Portfolio Working Group is to develop retaining/future proofing plans, retain existing major events and maximise their value by advocating to/educating community and business groups, leveraging with business groups and tourism operators, and identify infrastructure/investment needs.



**Ralph Devlin**  
AM QC  
Chairperson  
Retired Dec 2019



**Brenda LaPorte**  
Appointed  
Chairperson  
Feb 2020



**Simon Latchford**  
Resigned  
May 2020



**John Williams**  
Appointed  
Feb 2020



**Fraser Green\***



**Stacey Buckley\***  
Transferred  
to New Major  
Events Working  
Group Feb 2020



**Lenny Vance\***

\*Non-Board member representatives of the Working Group who were appointed through an external recruitment process.

## New Major Events Working Group

The role of the New Major Events Working Group is to identify opportunities to secure new major events, and review and comment on sponsorship applications for new events.



**Maya Gurry**  
Chairperson to  
Jan 2020



**Paul Smith**  
Appointed  
Chairperson  
Jan 2020



**Ralph Devlin**  
AM QC  
Retired Dec 2019



**Scott Hoskins**  
Appointed  
Jan 2020



**Cr Terry  
Landsberg**  
Appointed  
Jun 2020



**Bill Darby\***  
Retired Dec 2019



**Courtney  
Geritz\***  
Resigned  
Jan 2020



**Natalie Jarrott\***  
Resigned  
Aug 2019



**Stacey Buckley\***  
Transferred from  
Existing Portfolio  
Working Group  
Feb 2020

\*Non-Board member representatives of the Working Group who were appointed through an external professional recruitment process.





National Youth Touch Football Championships.

## Board Meetings

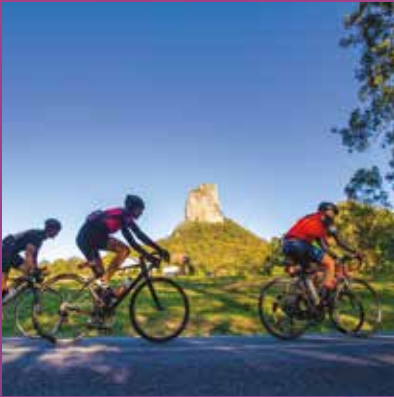
In a typical year the Board meets approximately every eight weeks, with the working groups coming together in the preceding two weeks. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, scheduled face-to-face meetings were suspended and replaced with weekly teleconferences to provide key updates and advice around COVID-19 and the 2020 major events calendar.

Given the uncertainty at the time, it was agreed as a general rule that Council should not be considering sponsorship applications before July 2020. Contract renewals were managed on a case-by-case basis, depending upon the implications of COVID-19 on the current event contract.

Before face-to-face meetings ceased in March 2020, Board members acquainted themselves with various venues within the region, gathering for meetings at Mantra Mooloolaba, Maroochy RSL, Twin Waters Golf Club and Sunshine Coast Convention Centre.

A Strategy Workshop was held in July 2019 where members were provided with presentations on the Major Events Strategy one year on; sponsorship funding and budgeting; SpendMapp, Temporary Event Permits and Visit Sunshine Coast's major event support. A discussion on the roles of the Board, Working Groups and the Events Unit and what changes might need to be considered led to the working groups making a more formal contribution to the Board's decision making; Board sessions becoming more time-efficient; strategic considerations occupying more Board meeting time; and duplication of advocacy/presentation process was substantially reduced.

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, scheduled face-to-face meetings were suspended and replaced with weekly teleconferences.



Top: Velothon Sunshine Coast.  
Middle: Surfing Queensland Series.  
Bottom: Big Pineapple Craft Beer and Cider Festival.

The following table shows member attendance at Board and working group meetings throughout 2019/20.

Meeting Attendance	Sunshine Coast Events Board (including weekly teleconferences)	Existing Portfolio Working Group	New Major Events Working Group
Ralph Devlin AM QC	4/4	2/3	2/3
Maya Gurry	18/19	-	4/4
Brenda LaPorte	19/19	2/4	-
Andrew Lofthouse	4/4	-	-
Kim McCosker	15/19	-	-
Scott Hoskins	7/19	-	-
Paul Smith	12/15	-	3/4
John Williams	12/15	-	-
David Ryan	17/19	-	-
Simon Latchford	11/14	4/4	-
Cr Jason O'Pray	11/19	-	-
Cr Terry Landsberg	0/1	-	-
Fraser Green	-	3/4	-
Stacey Buckley	-	4/4	-
Lenny Vance	-	2/4	-
Bill Darby	-	-	2/3
Courtney Geritz	-	-	1/3
Natalie Jarrott	-	-	1/1



Top: Queensland Oztag Senior State Cup.  
 Middle: Australian Cycling Academy – Taj Jones winning the 2nd stage of Le Tour de Langkawi.  
 Bottom: IVF World Distance Championships.



Despite the cancellation and postponement of 20 events, the 54 events that went ahead in 2019/20 generated \$70 million in economic activity and a return on investment of 1:30

## The Report

The Sunshine Coast Events Board is required to report progress on the implementation of the Sunshine Coast Major Events Strategy 2018-2027 to Council on an annual basis.

Implementation of the Strategy is measured against a suite of Key Performance Indicators which were developed to monitor the achievement of the overall objectives of the Strategy.

	Target 2018/19	Actual 2018/19	Target 2019/20	Actual 2019/20
Estimated economic return on regional investment in major events	\$70.0 million	\$67.8 million	\$74.0 million	\$70.0 million
Return on Investment (ROI) to the region as a consequence of Council's investment	1:30	1:31	1:32	1:30
Value of local spend by event managers	\$4.2 million	\$4.9 million	\$4.5 million	\$4.2 million
Number of participants and supporters from outside the region	140,000	141,552	150,000	136,469
Estimated number of total jobs supported	800	753	821	790
Number of:				
• Major events in portfolio	60	63	60	54
• Major events retained (net)	42	47	42	36
• New major events and regional events sourced and secured	18	16	18	8
• Business events				10

### Notes

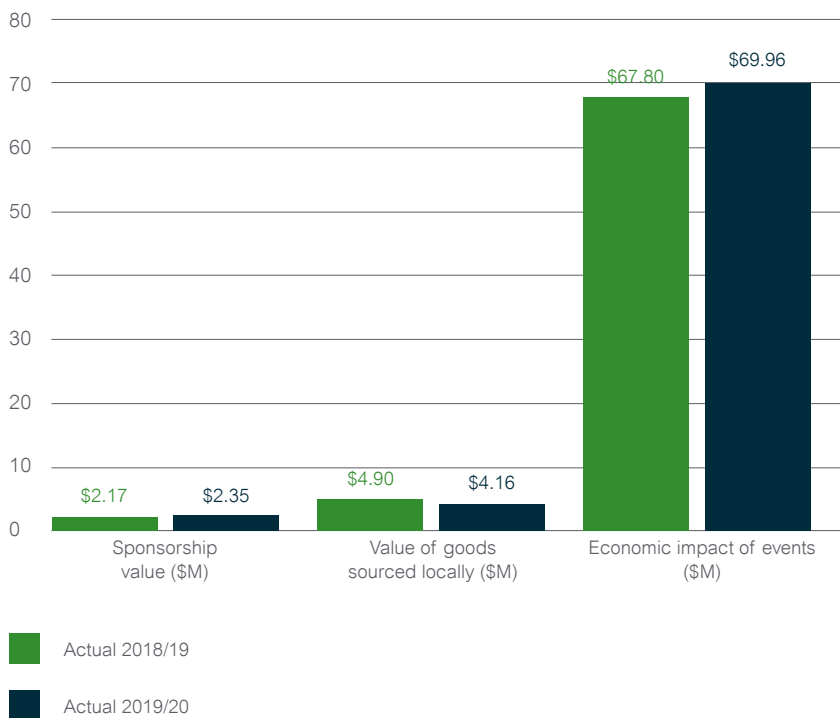
1. The estimated economic benefit includes the Caloundra Music Festival and the value of goods and services sourced locally.
2. The major event outcomes for 2019/20 have been calculated from event acquittal reports where available. In the absence of an acquittal report, the result has been assessed against sponsorship application data or past performance.

In addition to the economic benefits, the Major Events Sponsorship Program delivers for the region by attracting, supporting and leveraging events that:

- 1 Maximise the Sunshine Coast as a destination and increase the region's appeal to potential visitors
- 2 Showcase the Sunshine Coast as a destination and increase the region's appeal to potential visitors
- 3 Use the audience reach of major events to promote the Sunshine Coast within target audiences
- 4 Spread the impacts and benefits as widely as possible across the region and the calendar year
- 5 Promote and engage the region's high value industries, and
- 6 Are in keeping with Sunshine Coast community values and Council's vision to be Australia's most sustainable region – healthy, smart, creative.

Had it not been for the impact of COVID-19 restrictions in March 2020, the region was on track to host the greatest number of events in its history in 2019/20 – 74 events with a record number of visitors at 181,439.

### Results from Council's investment in major events





Mooloolaba Swim Festival.



Netfest.



## The Impact of COVID-19

It is clear that 2019/20 has been an unprecedented year in the challenges and impacts faced by the economy Australia-wide, and in particular our large tourism and event industries. Until the first COVID-19 lockdown was implemented across the country in March 2020, the year had progressed positively for the vast majority of providers and suppliers across our region. Tourism numbers continued to grow, and our events calendar was rising in profile and economic returns were increasing across each calendar year.

The rapid decline in the visitation and event opportunities in the region post the first lockdown period created an enormous and instant impact on many local workers, facilities and companies. From a multiple year boom period in many areas, we were quickly forced into a phase of cancellations and lost income.

The impact on many of Council's supported major events was immediate and dramatic – with particular issues for a number of sponsored events that were forced into cancellations and participant or attendee refunds at very short notice, often after expending significant unrecoverable funds on the delivery of their event.

From this point onwards, the priorities of Council's Major Events Unit and the Events Board were to:

- Ensure appropriate use of Council ratepayers' money in the sponsorship of major events, striking the most appropriate balance between return on investment and the desire to support event businesses and products
- Preserve partnerships and future delivery with high profile, large return, national events
- Preserve partnerships and future delivery with locally delivered events
- Ensure specific messaging and marketing impact from event programs targeted to the region's current tourism status and key targets
- Track and support local businesses in maintaining event operations and increasing their capacity to provide direct services and drive direct income from high profile visiting events.

This work will remain to be a focus and priority for the 2020/21 financial year and continue until the full economic recovery of the region post COVID-19.

The restrictions imposed by the Queensland Government on mass gatherings in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic meant that all events scheduled between 13 March and 30 June 2020 were either postponed or cancelled. The Tourism and Major Events Unit has worked closely with all affected organisers to assist where possible in maintaining the presence within the region of key events into the future.

The following table shows the projected losses for the region in the 2019/20 financial year:

	<b>Projected losses to the region due to COVID-19</b>
<b>Estimated economic return on regional investment in major events</b>	\$17 million
<b>Return on Investment (ROI) to the region as a consequence of Council's investment</b>	1:39
<b>Value of local spend by event managers</b>	\$1.1 million
<b>Number of participants and supporters from outside the region</b>	41,955
<b>Number of:</b>	
• Major events in portfolio	20
• Major events retained (net)	15
• New major events and regional events sourced and secured	4
• Business events	1



# NUTRI-GRAIN IRON X

A REVOLUTION IN IRON RACING



Nutri-Grain Iron X, Credit: Harvpix.

# Achievements

## Major Events Sponsorship Program



The Board considered 21 major event sponsorship applications during the year: all were supported and subsequently endorsed by Council, with 5 of the 21 being contracted across multiple years.

Projects supported were:

- Australian Tourism Awards Gala Evening 2020
- AFL International Cup 2020
- Barbershop Harmony Australia (BHA) Regional Convention 2020
- Blackall 100 2020
- Buskers by the Lake 2020
- Golden Oldies Cricket & Netball Festival 2022
- Maleny Wood Expo 2020-2022
- Maximum Adventure Race Series 2020
- Mooloolaba SUP Festival 2020
- National Youth Championships (Touch Football) 2021-2023
- NRL Women's State of Origin 2020
- Over 60s Cricket World Cup 2020
- QCOSS State Conference 2019
- Queensland Churches Soccer Association State Titles 2020
- Queensland Oztag Championships (4 events per annum) 2020/21-2022/23
- RoboRAVE Australia 2020 (proceeded without sponsorship)
- SCX 2020
- Sunshine Coast MultiSport Festival 2020
- Surfing Queensland 2020 Series (10 events per annum) 2020-2022
- Timewarp Festival 2020-2022
- Wallaroos v USA (Women's 15-a-side International Rugby Match) 2020



Top: PAC Australia Conference and Performing Arts Exchange, Credit: PAC Australia-Alex Sibbison.  
Middle: Caloundra Triathlon.  
Bottom: Knitfest.

The 21 sponsorship applications supported comprised 67 individual events, of which:

- 53 were existing events retained,
- 12 were new events attracted to the region, and
- 2 were business events

## Benefits from Un-sponsored Events

Two events were attracted to the Sunshine Coast Stadium which did not require sponsorship funding, however the Tourism and Major Events Unit was actively involved in securing them for the region:

- **National Youth Rugby 7s Tournament, Nov/Dec 2019**  
(following meetings with Rugby Australia instigated by the Unit, hosting families in April and further site visits/meetings in August).

### **Estimated 719 attendees**

(239 players, 400 family/friends, 80 support staff),

**2,157 visitor nights** and

**economic impact of \$405,516**

- **Queensland Schools Sports Secondary Rugby League Tournament 2020**  
(following attendance at a Queensland Rugby League function in Brisbane and meeting with Board members).

### **Estimated 1,455 attendees**

(450 players, 900 family/friends, 105 support staff),

**5,280 visitor nights** and

**economic impact of \$992,640.**



## The Curated Plate

'First, I think that this initiative marks a turning point in our region for relationships between government, tourism, corporations and local businesses. At every stage of execution, our experience was one of a valued contributor to a long term process of community building and social and economic development. Sunshine Coast Council and Visit Sunshine Coast must be commended for their vision and commitment to bringing together so many stakeholders and then having the systems and processes in place to deliver on the offer.'

Montville Coffee and  
Sunshine Coast Coffee  
Roasters Guild

'I'm very impressed with the Stadium, it's a fantastic venue which is evident in the two incredible nights Elton just performed.'

MICHAEL CHUGG, PROMOTER AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF CHUGG ENTERTAINMENT

## Sir Elton John *Farewell Yellow Brick Road* Concerts / MARCH 2020

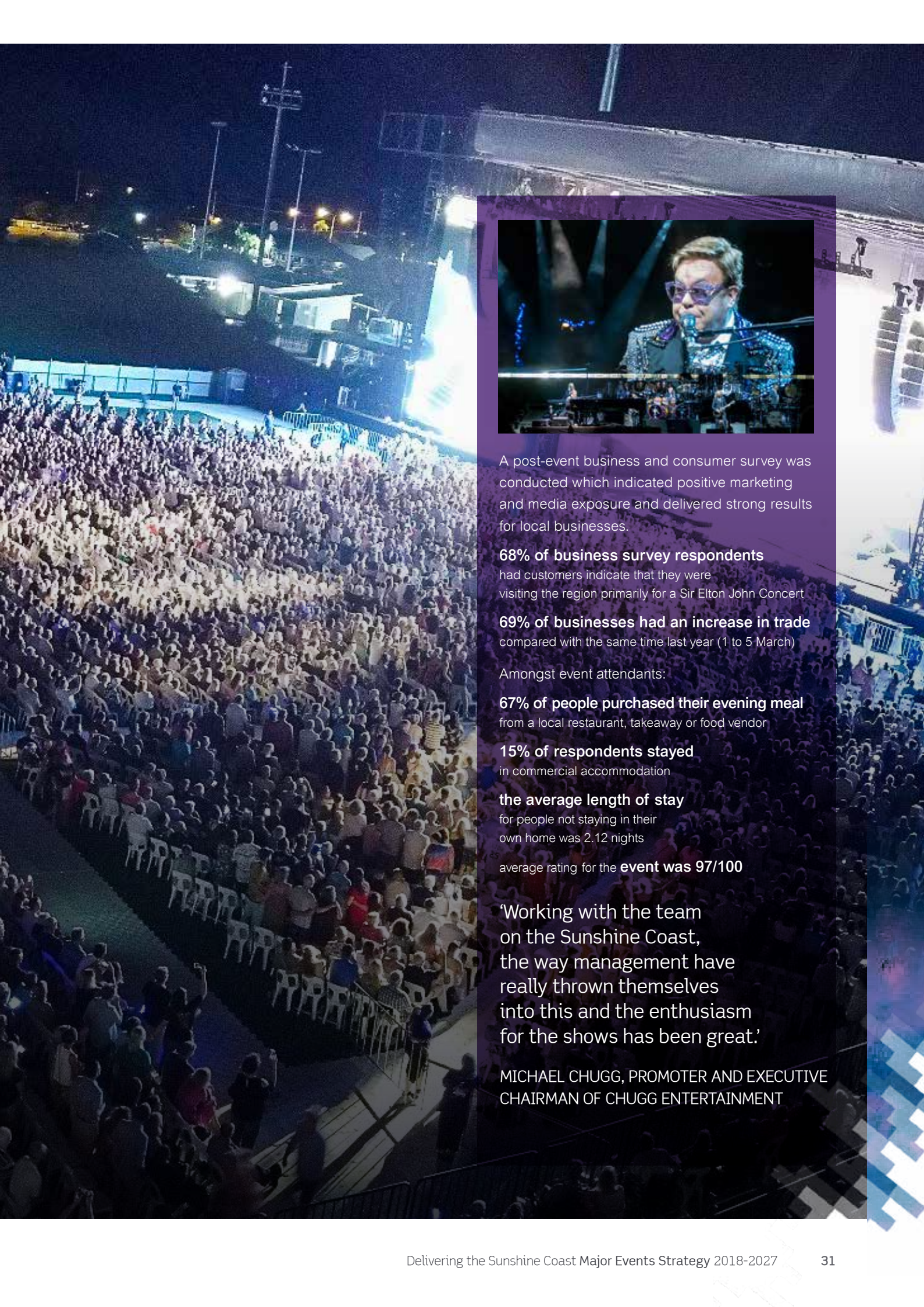
The Tourism and Major Events Unit, supported by the Events Board worked closely with Sunshine Coast Stadium to jointly secure a sponsorship and venue deal with Chugg Entertainment for two Sir Elton John concerts in March 2020. This was an incredible once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the community to have one of the world's most famous and celebrated musical superstars perform live. This was the highest profile musical event to ever be staged on the Sunshine Coast.

The Sunshine Coast Stadium concerts were the 177th and 178th on Sir Elton John's global *Farewell Yellow Brick Road* tour that began in September 2018, and was one of the last opportunities for fans to see Sir Elton in Australia before the end of his world tour. As circumstances would have it, the region was lucky to host the events prior to the COVID-19 restrictions being implemented.

More than 31,000 people attended over the two events (including over 15,000 visitors from outside of the region), resulting in a Sunshine Coast Stadium record crowd of just under 16,000 for the opening concert on 3 March 2020.

Not only did the two concerts provide a timely boost to the local economy in what is traditionally a quiet period between Christmas and Easter holidays, but the enormous promotional and visitation benefits to the region and the potential to secure other international acts in the future will be felt for many years to come.

*Sir Elton John Farewell Yellow Brick Road Concert.*



A post-event business and consumer survey was conducted which indicated positive marketing and media exposure and delivered strong results for local businesses.

**68% of business survey respondents** had customers indicate that they were visiting the region primarily for a Sir Elton John Concert

**69% of businesses had an increase in trade** compared with the same time last year (1 to 5 March)

Amongst event attendants:

**67% of people purchased their evening meal** from a local restaurant, takeaway or food vendor

**15% of respondents stayed** in commercial accommodation

**the average length of stay** for people not staying in their own home was 2.12 nights

average rating for the **event was 97/100**

'Working with the team on the Sunshine Coast, the way management have really thrown themselves into this and the enthusiasm for the shows has been great.'

MICHAEL CHUGG, PROMOTER AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF CHUGG ENTERTAINMENT



53 million people learnt more about the attractions of the Sunshine Coast by watching, reading or following the marketing and promotion of our sponsored major events

Mooloolaba Triathlon.



## Showcasing the Region through Major Events

Council's 2018-2027 Major Events Strategy included a specific focus on increasing the strategic outcomes being pursued through the sponsorship of major events. Direct and immediate economic impact through the hosting of events remains highly important, however, as we evolve the status and audience of the events we are able to attract we can also increase focus on the marketing and longer term promotional benefits achieved. The focus on event outcomes and regional benefits brought through successful sponsorships now more strongly includes the wider audiences and direct messaging we can achieve with our event partners.

A clear goal of the Strategy is to continue to increase the size of the audience who view, read or follow our hosted major events without being in attendance – a highly targeted market to promote to directly the attractions of the region in tourism, investment or relocation.

For the past two years, detailed data on the marketing and promotional reach of our sponsored events has been collected through Isentia – a professional media monitoring service operating specifically for this purpose. We have seen a significant growth in the total reach of Sunshine Coast messaging across Australia, creating a huge range of opportunities for the region to specifically promote itself at a much lower cost than direct advertising.

### Audience and marketing value of regional promotion through major events\*

Measure	2018/19	2019/20
Number of events measured	31	37**
Print/broadcast items delivered (press, TV, radio)	1,649	2,575
Digital items delivered	2,031	3,460
Total audience reach	31 million	53 million
Commercial advertising value equivalent	\$5,300,000	\$21,673,000

\*Note that measurement is by financial year, not by event (many events have marketing impact that cross the financial year dates).

\*\*In 2019/20 it was intended to measure every event. Cancellations and postponements from COVID-19 reduced the number of completed and measured events. Note the 2019/20 figures include data on eight business events for the first time, which have a much lower marketing reach than public major events.

The data for 2019/20 shows a considerable increase of both audience reach and commercial value from the previous year. This has been achieved through a greater focus on maximising the messaging and regional promotion opportunities of the sponsored events, and also by securing higher profile, national reach events such as the Curated Plate, NRL and Sir Elton John concerts. The value of the promotion and reach of the regional marketing activity for the year is nearly four times greater than 2018/19, despite the loss of a number of high profile events due to COVID-19.

'It was a real privilege for the Blackall 100 to have the Ultramarathon Man, Dean Karnazes attend our event in October 2019.

In conjunction with Council's events team we were able to create A Night with Dean. Dean not only expressed how fantastic and professional the event was, he also indicated of his intention to return some day. The exposure we received from Dean, which still continues 10 months after the event is amazing. This year's event is a sell out and has contributed immensely to the Hinterland economy.

We are really grateful for the effort and passion the events team provides to our event and I would like to acknowledge their part in contributing to the growth of our event.'

BRETT STANDRING, EVENTS AND  
MARKETING DIRECTOR, RUN QUEENSLAND

## Blackall 100 / OCTOBER 2019

The Blackall 100 ultra-running event was supported by Council for the second time in October 2019. The event, held in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast, draws a highly specific and loyal group of participants and spectators and has experienced rapid participant and marketing growth over the last two years.

After the success of the inaugural 2019 event, Council's Tourism and Major Events Unit assisted the organisers in expanding the reach and audience for the event through the inclusion of the high profile and unique international athlete, Dean Karnazes, who had never before competed in Australia. Dean has a huge international personal audience, and drew significant additional numbers of participants and visitors to the region through his participation at the event.

Key event statistics	2018	2019
Number of event visitors from outside of the Sunshine Coast region	1,156	1,537
Average length of stay by visitors	1.3 nights	2.3 nights
Number of visitor nights directly generated	1,558	3,074

These results demonstrate a close to 50% increase in key economic measurements from 2018 – 2019 for a small, but highly professional event.



Dean Karnazes, Blackall 100.



Wayne Bennett Business Breakfast.

## Industry and Engagement

To gain a greater understanding of events, gather market intelligence, host potential event owners and rights holders and identify future opportunities, Board members and/or Council's Economic Development team hosted or attended the following events during the year:

- Australian Cycling Academy – Singapore event in September – promotional corporate ride and networking function
- Australian Cycling Academy's Big Kart Track Criterium
- Conversations with Tourism and Events Queensland on Indigenous cultural content
- Destination IQ – Queensland Indigenous Tourism Forum (Queensland Tourism Industry Council event on the Sunshine Coast)
- Destination Q Forum (Tourism and Events Queensland industry event on the Sunshine Coast)
- Destination Q Events Conference in Cloncurry
- Night Noodle Markets with Fairfax/Nine, Tourism and Events Queensland and Visit Sunshine Coast.
- Panel discussion Maximising Event Results and launch of 2020 Events Calendar at the Major Events Networking Night (organised by Tourism and Major Events Unit)
- Queensland Tourism Awards (Queensland Tourism Industry Council event on the Sunshine Coast)
- Regional Events Conference in Dubbo
- Sunshine Coast Arts Foundation launch
- Sunshine Coast Sports Federation Annual Sports Awards
- Wayne Bennett Business Breakfast (organised by Tourism and Major Events Unit in conjunction with South Sydney Rabbitohs)



Major event projects have an audience reach of more than 53 million – already exceeding 2027 goals

Mooloolaba Triathlon.

# Sunshine Coast Major Events Strategy 2018-2027

Developed by Council in close consultation with the Sunshine Coast Events Board and informed through valuable contributions from the tourism and events industry and key regional partners, the Sunshine Coast Major Events Strategy 2018-2027 provides a ten year framework which seeks to maximise the value of major events to the economy and to the region.

The Strategy can be viewed by visiting Council's website.

Key targets outlined in the plan endorsed in 2018 are:

Strategy goals for 2018	Actual results 2019/20	Strategy goals for 2027
Direct economic impact from major events program averages \$70 million per annum	Direct economic impact from major events program \$70 million, partially affected by COVID.	Direct economic impact from the major events program averages \$105 million per annum
Major event projects have an audience reach of 16 million views	Major event projects have an audience reach of more than 53 million – already exceeding 2027 goals	Major event projects have an audience reach of 40 million views
Sunshine Coast destination preference at 5.7%*	Not yet assessed	Sunshine Coast destination preference at 6.8% (20% increase from 2018 level)
38 event proposals considered in 2017 by Sunshine Coast Events Board	21 major event proposals considered in 2019/20 by Sunshine Coast Events Board (covering 67 individual events)	Industry reputation as a premier event destination drives a 50% increase in enquiries and proposals for quality event projects above 2017 levels
96% of Sunshine Coast residents agree that events attract tourists and raise the profile of the region** – impacts noted in specific areas	Not yet assessed	The Sunshine Coast community continues to support and see the value of major events – maintain over 90% agreement

\*Source – Roy Morgan National Holiday Market Report 2016/17. Destination preference is the percentage of national survey respondents who indicate they would like to travel to the region in the next two years

\*\*Source – TEQ social indicators research 2017

■ Already exceeding goals      ■ On the way to achieving goals despite COVID-19 effect

## Priorities for 2020/2021

### Economic Resurgence Plan – July 2020 – June 2021



<b>Objective</b>	To shore up a comprehensive and diverse “healthy, smart and creative” events calendar for 2020/21 that showcases the region to a large volume of potential future visitors; as well as fast tracks the recommencement of visitation to the region and distributes the benefits of visitation widely across communities and industries.
<b>Why</b>	The frameworks set out within the Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013-2033 and the Major Events Strategy 2018-2027 remain relevant to driving visitation and economic benefit in a post COVID-19 context. It is however, acknowledged that for the balance of 2020 and potentially all of 2021, targeted actions not contemplated during the development of these strategies will be vital to the overall tourism resurgence of the Sunshine Coast.
<b>How</b>	By working flexibly with event operators, embracing innovative event delivery approaches and refocusing the measures and targets under the Major Events Sponsorship Program to ensure that delivery aligns to COVID-19 relaxation opportunities and positions the region for rapid rebound.
<b>Immediate Focus</b>	The immediate focus is to support and enable the adaption of existing sponsored events that have had to be postponed, so these are able to be delivered at the earliest time that relaxations allow and the associated destination content is on message and directed to target visitor markets.
<b>Impacts</b>	<p>Prevention of existing major events being ‘poached’ by other regions (leakage)</p> <p>Driving immediate visitation back into the region and stimulating a pipeline of future visitors as soon as relaxations allow</p> <p>Injecting significant levels of new money into the largest possible number of local businesses affected by COVID-19</p> <p>Fast tracking the timeline for tourism resurgence and restoration of normal trading levels</p> <p>Bolstering event attendance and improving event viability by encouraging local participation in major events.</p>

Top: Sunshine Coast Winter Bowls Carnival.  
 Middle: AFL Queensland Schools Cup.  
 Bottom: ASICS Sports Medicine Conference.



Pathways	COVID-19 response	With whom	By when
<p>Showcase the region's strengths to maintain our reputation as the regional destination of choice for national and international events and prevent the loss of events to other regions.</p>	<p>Preserve investment in strategic partnerships for national scale events.</p> <p>Work towards the retention and leveraging of at least 50 events during the 2020/21 financial year.</p> <p>Review all current marketing and promotional benefits established under existing sponsorship contracts and redesigning these to best fit a post COVID-19 context.</p>	<p>Visit Sunshine Coast Sunshine Coast Events Board Event Industry</p>	<p>Ongoing to 30 Dec 2021</p>
<p>Spreading the word to drive immediate visitation back into the region and stimulate a pipeline of future visitors.</p>	<p>Use national audiences for high profile events to promote key Sunshine Coast economic messaging.</p> <p>Develop a suite of marketing assets that can be used to promote key Council economic initiatives to major event audiences.</p>	<p>Visit Sunshine Coast Council Comms, Marketing and Design Event Industry</p>	<p>Ongoing to 30 Dec 2021 30 June 2020</p>
<p>Drive maximum return to inject significant levels of new money into the widest number of businesses affected by COVID-19.</p>	<p>Identify and quantify all returns on investment that are relevant to a tourism and major events industry resurgence and expand the assessment framework to reflect these.</p> <p>Work with contracted event owners to maximise opportunities for additional regional and business promotions to participants and wider event audiences.</p>	<p>Chambers of Commerce Sunshine Coast Events Board Tourism and Events Queensland</p>	<p>30 June 2020 Ongoing to 30 Dec 2021</p>
<p>Embrace best practice to fast track the resurgence timeline and restore normal trading levels.</p>	<p>Track global practices in the event industry and embrace event sponsorship and delivery approaches and practices that support industry resilience and timely resurgence.</p>	<p>Sunshine Coast Events Board Tourism and Events Queensland Contact and date share with similar regions</p>	<p>Ongoing to 30 Sep 2020</p>
<p>Create industry demand to ensure a solid level of supply and choice of event content during the resurgence period.</p>	<p>Use event sponsorship to attract events at a scale that matches even small-scale reductions in restrictions, as a way of restarting and re-establishing industry supply chains. Prioritise the distribution of economic benefits across the local government area for event locations and supply chain opportunities.</p>	<p>Event Industry Chambers of Commerce Venues and Operators</p>	<p>Ongoing to 30 Jun 2021</p>
<p>Engage the community to increase the numbers of people participating in events and thereby increasing the viability of events.</p>	<p>Encourage locals to celebrate the return of events of all types, both as a chance to reconnect with family, friends and community, but also as a direct and simple way to support local businesses. Develop a suite of communications and marketing assets to promote the return of events to the region, and the benefits of locals supporting the activities.</p>	<p>Chambers of Commerce Council Media and Comms teams</p>	<p>Ongoing to 30 Dec 2020</p>



For further information  
visit the following websites

**Sunshine Coast Major Events Strategy 2018-2027**

**Sunshine Coast Events Board**

**Sunshine Coast Major Events Sponsorship Program**

**Events Sunshine Coast**

**Sunshine Coast Economic Resurgence Plan July 2020-June 2021**

**Sunshine Coast Council**








Sunshine Coast Lightning.



 **Sunshine Coast**<sup>™</sup> COUNCIL | Our region.  
**Healthy. Smart. Creative.**

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