



ISLANDS
OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Media Release

13 December 2009

Best Job Island Caretaker celebrates Christmas Queensland-style

Tourism Queensland's Best Job in the World Island Caretaker Ben Southall today welcomed his family to the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef to share a Queensland Christmas during his last two weeks in the job.

Tourism Queensland CEO Anthony Hayes said one of Ben's final tasks was to give the world an insight into Christmas, Queensland-style.

"Ben will treat his parents to a sumptuous Queensland-style seafood Christmas lunch on tropical Hamilton Island in the Whitsundays," Mr Hayes said.

"What better way to make those in the northern hemisphere hunkering down for a cold winter want to come to Queensland than to tempt them with visions of sun, fresh seafood and a Christmas swim."

Mr Hayes said as part of the family reunion, Ben's aunt and uncle were also scheduled to arrive to see where Ben has been living as the Island Caretaker and to see him help Santa deliver presents to island locals by jet-ski.

"And in true Queensland Christmas tradition, he's planning a friendly game of beach cricket," Mr Hayes said.

"I'm sure Ben's friends, family and countrymen will be extremely jealous as they head into a cold northern hemisphere winter."

Mr Hayes said Tourism Queensland had been absolutely blown away by the success of the Best Job in the World campaign.

"Our primary goal was to raise awareness of the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef in Queensland's key international markets and I'm happy to say that to date we have generated more than \$400 million in publicity for Queensland," Mr Hayes said.

"More importantly, I can now confidently say that today the world knows that Queensland has some of the most beautiful islands imaginable.





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"The campaign has made Queensland and the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef household names across the globe and paved the way for further campaigns to convert this phenomenal awareness into travel to Queensland."

Mr Hayes said Tourism Queensland was starting to see early indications of an increase in Queensland's share of visitors from key international markets.

"Our research indicates that Brits and western Europeans have been closely following Ben's adventures as the Island Caretaker and the online nature of the campaign has definitely appealed to the under-30s more than any other," he said.

"The latest International Visitor Survey for the year ending September 2009 shows an increase in visitors from our key UK and European markets, particularly the youth market.

"This is our strongest indication yet that Tourism Queensland's Best Job in the World campaign is influencing young British and European travellers to visit Queensland."

For more information on Ben's Queensland adventures visit – www.islandreefjob.com

Further information

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Photos of Ben enjoying a Christmas lunch with his family will be available for download from www.tq.com.au/imagegallery from 12 noon Queensland time Monday December 14.

