

Our **DYNAMIC**
Fraser Coast

2031 AVIATION STRATEGY



FRASER COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL 2031 AVIATION STRATEGY

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

The 2031 Aviation Strategy outlines the key goals and future direction of the Fraser Coast's airports.

The Fraser Coast continues to be one of the fastest growing local government areas in Australia. The region has immense capacity to attract, establish and support aviation related industry.



The Aviation Strategy will also feed into the Fraser Coast 2031: Sustainable Growth Strategy which is currently being developed. Fraser Coast 2031 will provide a vision for the Fraser Coast based on community aspirations and a strategic framework for the sustainable growth of the Fraser Coast to 2031.

In developing the Aviation Strategy, intentional parallels have been developed with the Fraser Coast Regional Council's Economic Development Strategy 2009-2013, which reflect the aviation industry's important role within the wider Fraser Coast economy.

One of the major focuses for the Council is to optimise the use of its assets. The ownership of two airports has created many challenges for Council, but more importantly it has created opportunities for growth in the aviation sector. This strategy along with the supporting master plans provides a catalyst for structured growth of the aviation industry.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Kruger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Mick Kruger

OVERVIEW

The aviation industry is a major contributor towards growing prosperity, expanding opportunity and building communities. The industry supports business, tourism, exporters and creates jobs, reduces the cost of trade and opens up new market opportunities.

Aviation in general continues to face a variety of challenges, with all levels of Government involved to an extent with industry protection and control. From the recently released National Aviation Policy White Paper "Flight Path to the Future", to the Queensland Aviation Sector Plan, it is evident that the drive for economic growth within the industry is tempered by the need to protect the community in order to achieve sustainable, positive environments.

With support from industry stakeholders, the Fraser Coast Regional Council will facilitate ongoing development and implementation of this Aviation Strategy to drive and guide the growth in air services and the establishment of a more buoyant aviation industry leading to new and increased jobs and investment.

The aviation industry includes many facets such as air transport, aircraft maintenance, aviation education and airport infrastructure. The Fraser Coast is ideally suited to accommodate an expanding aviation industry with an anticipated dramatic increase in population, a robust tourism industry, good weather and low terrain and two existing airports. The existing aviation industry also provides the foundation for and access to a skilled workforce which greatly enhances the potential for the industry's expansion and future employment growth in coming years.



VISION

With amalgamation forming the Fraser Coast Regional Council from March 2008, the previously identified vision statements from the two pre-existing local governments which owned aerodrome sites (Hervey Bay & Maryborough City Council's) were reassessed, together with wider regional visioning previously undertaken by the Queensland Government, in determining the recommended vision statement for Fraser Coast Airports.

The *Draft Maryborough Airport Master Plan 2006*, articulated the following vision:

"To provide for a diversity of activities that will help to maintain a sustainable Airport for Maryborough in the future, which maximises revenue streams and creates a welcoming environment for aviation activities and businesses."

Underpinning this vision statement were a number of key objectives which were to:

- *"Support the growth of a regional and general aviation traffic maintenance cluster;*
- *Establish an aviation business precinct;*
- *Establish an airport precinct incorporating residential accommodation;*
- *Designate land for non-aviation commercial and/or retail uses; and*
- *Retain the existing sealed and grass runways."*

The Draft Hervey Bay Airport Master Plan 2006, did not articulate a single vision statement, however did identify a number of key objectives which were to:

- *"Ensure the continued safe operation of aircraft at the airport;*
- *Develop the airport in a manner that is acceptable to regulators, airport users and the surrounding community; and*
- *Maximise commercial opportunities on the airport that are compatible with long term aviation requirements and surrounding land use planning."*

The recommended vision for Fraser Coast Airports is:

"To provide safe, secure and efficient airports which support the quality of life, sustainability and economic development of our region."

THEMES

The 2031 Aviation Strategy will leverage and focus the Council's resources on the following broad themes drawn from the Fraser Coast Regional Council Economic Development Strategy 2009-2013:

1. Tourism and Marketing
2. Plan, Create and Foster Precincts
3. Business Attraction and Retention
4. Infrastructure
5. Lifestyle, Health and Recreation
6. Knowledge Management and Education

Each of these themes has a series of objectives and actions associated with it and links to Council's vision. The Council will lead some of these objectives, working within limited funding means, and for others will support key agencies and organisations to achieve their aims.

THEME ONE: TOURISM AND MARKETING

Tourism is a major economic generator in the Fraser Coast region, particularly in Hervey Bay. Fraser Coast Tourism Region (FCTR) statistics show that in the five years to 2008, the Fraser Coast experienced increases in overall visitor numbers, domestic day visitors and international visitors. While drive tourism is currently the largest sector, fly tourism forms an important component of the overall market.

A Destination Visitor Survey entitled "Effects of improved aviation access to the Fraser Coast" released by Tourism Australia in March 2009 identified that in comparison to drive visitors, fly visitors into the Fraser Coast were:

- more likely to live in NSW (59% vs 12%) or Victoria (15% vs 6%)
- be under the age of 45 (46% vs 33%)
- have a higher (\$52,000 p/a +) household income (58% vs 42%)
- stay longer on the Fraser Coast
- have longer overnight stays on Fraser Island

The Survey identified the opportunity to visit Fraser Island (37%), the desire to experience a close / personal encounter with whales (28%) and the chance to visit family within the region (32%) were the key motivations for fly visitors to the Fraser Coast. The likelihood of repeat visits was identified as relatively high among all visitors, with 62% of both fly and drive visitors likely to return within the next 12 months, and 61% of fly visitors and 71% of drive visitors likely to return within the next three years. The Survey concluded that there was confidence that growth and success would continue for both tourism and non-tourism related businesses as a direct result of the increased number of fly visitors to the Fraser Coast.

Council and the Fraser Coast South Burnett Regional Tourism Office (FCSBRTO) are pursuing a number of initiatives to keep our regional visitor offerings fresh. Council will continue to partner with the FCSBRTO and other key organisations and government to achieve the Tourism Opportunities Plan (TOP) to increase the region's destination appeal and tourism growth.

As outlined in the Economic Development Strategy 2009-2013, Council's Tourism and Marketing Portfolio is actively pursuing regional and intra-regional marketing initiatives to ensure the region is clearly identified and understood in key target markets as a vibrant and progressive emergent region supported by a spirited community. Fraser Coast Airports feature consistently within these initiatives and will be the focus of increasingly targeted marketing presentations to airlines and other commercial partners.

Council recognises that improving the Fraser Coast's air links and capacity are vital components in expanding tourism, export, investment and economic growth within the region. The addition of new and more frequent domestic and regional flights, either direct or connecting into existing routes, will give the Fraser Coast increased ability to exploit lucrative inbound tourism markets, improve freight capacity and competitiveness, and improve accessibility for business and investment.

As a member of Aviation Wide Bay Burnett (AWBB), Council is positioned to leverage off the strategies and activities identified in the AWBB Marketing Plan, which aims to promote the region as a premier location for aviation investment as well as to develop and grow regional businesses.

THEME ONE: TOURISM AND MARKETING ACTION PLAN

Objective 1.1 Seek to establish methods of maximising the value, both public and financial, from the events that Council stages and supports.

Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Pursue the objectives of FCRC’s Regional Events Strategy to increase the draw for fly visitors via airline and charter services, particularly in identified off-peak months where excess capacity exists.	FCRC	On-going
2. Consider the potential for an increase in size and frequency of aviation-related events such as fly-ins and air shows and the potential for niche positioning for events.	FCRC	On-going

Objective 1.2 Pursue numerous tourism & aviation industry support initiatives.

Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Focus on fostering links with airlines and charter services to ensure relationships remain strong.	FCRC	On-going
2. Seek to attract additional services / carriers on existing and new targeted routes to service the Fraser Coast and to continue to foster growth in passenger numbers across all key segments.	FCRC	On-going
3. Support the initiatives identified in the AWBB Marketing Activity Plan aimed at promoting the region.	FCRC AWBB DEEDI	On-going
4. Continue to build and develop strategic alliances with key stakeholders to facilitate tourism and promote the Fraser Coast as a desirable place to visit and live.	FCRC FCSBRTO Tourism Qld	On-going



THEME TWO: PLAN, CREATE AND FOSTER PRECINCTS

Within the existing airport sites at Maryborough and Hervey Bay, precincts will be identified in the updated master plans based on maximising economic value and creating a beneficial resource mix. Such precincts may include aviation and non-aviation business activity, freight, charter, airpark and aero-medical services.

In relation to a potential regional airport site, the Economic Development Strategy 2009-2013 outlines that the Churchill Mines Road area has been identified by the Department of Employment, Education, Development and Innovation (DEEDI) as a pivotal land parcel that may have potential for a variety of uses alongside preservation and conservation of the area’s natural attributes. The outcomes of the planning study currently being undertaken by DEEDI in relation to this site will have tremendous impact on the future long term economic development potential of the region if it is identified as suitable for a new airport.

THEME TWO: PLAN, CREATE AND FOSTER PRECINCTS ACTION PLAN

Objective 2.1	Ensure that the planning framework for the airports provides for and sustains economic growth consistent with the outcomes of the Fraser Coast 2031: Sustainable Growth Strategy.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Lead the review and update of the previous draft master plans incorporating identified precincts to reflect the optimum commercial / community mix of activity within both sites.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	2010/11

Objective 2.2	Facilitate placemaking as a significant driver of community and economic development.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Remain an integral participant in the Queensland State Government initiative to investigate unconstrained land with a view to future precinct possibilities (including a regional / international airport site).	CEO	2010/11



THEME THREE: BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

Encouraging and attracting investment and jobs in the Fraser Coast will increase our competitiveness and be a driver of growth. Additional activity in the aviation industry will not only provide employment benefits, additional investment and trade for local suppliers, but will also influence decisions of other business to locate or relocate in to the Fraser Coast.

The Queensland Government has recognised the Wide Bay Burnett aviation industry as a Centre of Enterprise (COE) for key industry opportunities. The COE is a strong partnership between the region’s business, community and government stakeholders, which aims to increase competitive performance, business and investment attraction, skills and workforce development. This is an initiative already well connected with FCRC and should remain an important conduit to industry.

As outlined in the AWBB Marketing Plan 2008, the region is well positioned to take advantage of continued global demand for advanced aviation manufactured products, training and services. With lower overall operating costs in comparison to the major metropolitan areas, in addition to the availability of suitable industrial land, significant potential exists for the region to attract and retain new industry.

Targeted aviation-related activities for the region may include aircraft production & retrofitting, corporate fleet basing, aviation education, parts supply and distribution, research and development, freight distribution and maintenance and repair services. In establishing an appropriate mix of businesses within the two sites, emphasis should be placed on creating comprehensive supply chain linkages.

The Fraser Coast must maintain its status as the regional hub for air services by retaining established airlines, encouraging new competitors to come in (airlines, charter and fly-in fly-out operations) and by stimulating new air routes to new destinations. We seek to create an environment that is conducive to the growth of the aviation industry by ensuring infrastructure and support services meet the needs of industry.

THEME THREE: BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND RETENTION ACTION PLAN

Objective 3.1	Broaden the economic base and provide increased employment opportunities by further developing existing businesses and encouraging new industries and businesses to the region.	
Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Promote the Fraser Coast as a desirable place to work, invest and do business via marketing and promotion initiatives, brochures and websites.	FCRC	On-going
2. Maintain strong links with DEEDI initiatives and its Regional Leadership group of major existing business leaders to retain existing businesses and industry.	Manager Economic Development	On-going
3. Actively encourage and support the growth and expansion of existing businesses by assisting with information, referral to other layers of government, funding sources, etc.	Manager Economic Development	On-going
4. Promote aviation and the region’s capacity to attract and establish new aviation related business by identifying and facilitating aviation development and investment opportunities, including corporate fleet basing, freight uplift and fly-in fly-out operations.	Manager Economic Development	On-going

Objective 3.1	Broaden the economic base and provide increased employment opportunities by further developing existing businesses and encouraging new industries and businesses to the region.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
5. Promote the region's suitability and capacity for defence force basing and increased utilisation.	FCRC	On-going
6. Develop and maintain competitive airline incentive programs to attract new airlines & services and provide continued inducement to grow passenger numbers.	FCRC	On-going
7. Provide high-quality analytical research to underpin marketing approaches.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	On-going
8. Provide airline executives with high-impact decision-making tools.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	On-going
9. Periodically undertake programmed surveying of airline passengers to enable monitoring of customer satisfaction and other key performance indicators (and inform research provided for airline decision-making).	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	On-going

Objective 3.2	Foster closer ties with identified sectors such as agriculture and fishing.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Work with major companies & peak associations within the sectors and local communities to get a clear understanding of the sector's needs and how the aviation industry may be able to facilitate their needs.	Manager Economic Development DPIF DEEDI	On-going

Objective 3.3	Determine the economic benefit generated by aviation services within the region and forecast the potential impact of increased activity.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Facilitate an economic benefit analysis including the impact on the region of airline and charter services, general and recreational aviation, and other key segments. The analysis should establish direct and indirect flows to employment, business activity and investment, development and tourism.	FCRC CEDE	2010/11
2. Use the results of the economic benefit analysis to forecast potential impacts of future increases in activity and develop & implement a plan to market Fraser Coast Airports as economic assets for the region.	FCRC CEDE	2010/11

THEME FOUR: INFRASTRUCTURE

As mentioned previously in this document, the Queensland Government has established a COE for aviation in this region. DEEDI has identified that the long term, sustainable development of the aviation industry depends on the provision of appropriate infrastructure. The Fraser Coast must ensure it has the necessary aviation infrastructure and operational capacity to accommodate new services to intrastate, interstate and potential international markets and to encourage aviation-related industry to flourish. Options for entering into public private partnerships should be considered in developing cooperative responses to market developments.

The goal defined in the Economic Development Strategy 2009-2013 is to retain Hervey Bay as the primary hub for regional air services. Council has identified the need to undertake planning for a new airport now, as the need for a larger facility is expected to continue to emerge as the region's rapid growth continues. A required footprint in the range of 1,000 to 2,000 hectares, as well as a number of other development planning factors, has been identified in the 2009 Wide Bay Burnett Aviation Infrastructure Requirements Study in relation to the future regional airport.

The Infrastructure Requirements Study also recommended that Council give due consideration to the progressive relocation of non commercial general aviation activity at Hervey Bay to Maryborough to increase the utilisation of Maryborough Airport and free up Hervey Bay Airport for further RPT services as passenger demand expands in the future.

The FCRC will identify areas (within the master planning precincts) for hangar development at each site to support existing businesses and aircraft owners and to assist in accommodating expected future demand. In defining precincts available for the establishment of private hangarage however, there is a recognised need to be conscious of the opportunity cost associated with constraining land to enable individual aircraft owners convenient storage and access to their aircraft, where the public will forgo future employment opportunities and increased transportation options. This will be reflected in the mix of precincts adopted in the master plans for both sites.

Land and facilities constrained for community leasing were identified in the 2006 Draft Maryborough Airport Master Plan as an area Council should review to identify existing tenures which could potentially be downsized or relocated off site as development of the commercial airport asset is undertaken.

Analysis will also be required to ascertain the most appropriate business entity to take the Fraser Coast Airports forward to 2031. Within whichever structure is adopted, continued focus will be required to identify new revenue opportunities in both passenger-dependent and non-passenger-dependent business activities. Concurrently, potential to maintain competitive cost structures and continually improve the financial position of the airports will remain important in maximising community benefit.

THEME FOUR: INFRASTRUCTURE ACTION PLAN

Objective 4.1	To maximise and facilitate economic growth and investment activities through the coordinated planning, funding and provision of key 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Identify the infrastructure required to meet the needs of existing and future aviation related industry and which is capable of retaining and attracting high quality air services.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	On-going
2. Review the status of existing leases and tenancy arrangements at both sites to ascertain those requiring advertisement for tender (in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act</i>) within the short term.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	Mar 2010
3. Examine the previous draft master plans to determine suitable undeveloped areas available to be surveyed and advertised for commercial lease within the short term.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	April 2010
4. Undertake a review of community leasing on both sites to determine the appropriateness for these to continue in future.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	2010/11
5. Investigate, assess and present options to Council on alternate business structures for ongoing operation of Fraser Coast Airports, considering full privatisation, public-private partnerships, or other corporate structures.	FCRC	2011/12
6. Evaluate and implement other business opportunities that diversify the airports revenue stream, achieve the required financial returns, leverage the airports talent base and are consistent with the airports vision.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	On-going
7. Implement initiatives to reduce or contain the growth of operating expenses.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	On-going
8. Develop and periodically review, a comprehensive asset management plan for each site to ensure the long-term sustainability of key infrastructure.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	2011/12

THEME FIVE: LIFESTYLE, HEALTH AND RECREATION

A significant aspect of the Fraser Coast's appeal for residential and business investment is its liveability and the diversity of lifestyle options. The Fraser Coast currently has a key opportunity, with two operational airports, to develop a defined mix of commercial and general aviation across the two sites to maximise the potential and sustainability of both. Of particular current interest is the potential for the region to service the growing fly-in fly-out workforce employed in the resources sector and the opportunity to increase resident population and economic growth as a result.

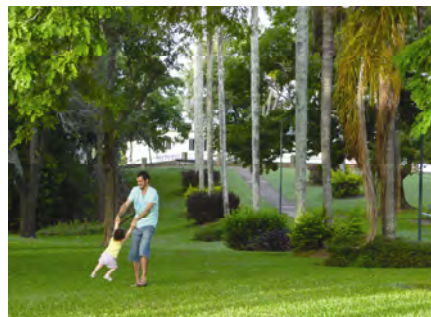
Potential also exists to broaden the mix of general aviation activity within the region. The Wide Bay Burnett Aviation Infrastructure Requirements Study 2009 categorises the general aviation sector as follows:

- Private flying
- Business flying (transporting company personnel)
- Flying training
- Aerial work (survey, search and rescue, ambulance, etc)
- Agricultural aviation
- Test and ferry (for maintenance purposes)
- Charter (hire for non-scheduled services)
- Sport and recreational flying (gliders, etc)

The AWBB Marketing Plan 2008 identifies that *"the Australian general aviation industry is in transition, with some sections of general aviation growing while others are in decline with some individual businesses struggling to remain viable"*. The Plan goes further to outline that while the traditional general aviation environment is facing increased challenges, the recreational section of this industry continues to grow.

Consideration should be given to determine if the recreational flying offering within the Fraser Coast may potentially extend to ballooning, gliding, etc, which currently have very minimal presence in the region.

The role of major sports, arts & cultural and convention centre facilities in drawing fly visitation to the region should also not be underestimated. While the feasibility and development of these will be progressed through the broader activities of the Economic Development Strategy, airline and industry partners will be keenly observing our progress in creating and sustaining facilities of this nature.



THEME FIVE: LIFESTYLE, HEALTH AND RECREATION ACTION PLAN

Objective 5.1	Plan for communities designed to enhance and protect our lifestyle and that reflect our diverse communities' health, sport and recreation needs.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Facilitate and support efforts to attract sports competitions at a regional, state and national level in order to generate increased fly passenger demand.	Marketing and Tourism Unit Sport groups	On-going
2. Use the internet as a central facet of the community communications strategy on issues such as noise and safety. Actions include publication of relevant statistics & information and maintenance of airport website content.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	On-going
3. Develop Noise Abatement Procedures for Fraser Coast Airports designed to protect the amenity of surrounding areas	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	2010/11

Objective 5.2	Plan for infrastructure which meets the lifestyle needs of the community and which can be an enabler of community and economic development.
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Strategies and Actions	Who	Milestone
1. Undertake a feasibility assessment for a major outdoor, multi-sports stadium or other facilities that would provide for local residents and their families and also attract competitions and perhaps elite teams for training, creating additional fly visitation demand.	Community & Development Services	2010/11
2. Undertake a feasibility assessment for a multi-purpose convention centre that would cater for current and future demand and drive additional fly visitation.	Community & Development Services	2010/11
3. Where possible support the effort to create a motor sports complex on the Fraser Coast, as another potential draw for fly visitation.	FCRC Other govt agencies	On-going
4. Promote the Fraser Coast as a liveability centre capable of servicing the fly-in fly-out workforce and actively target key industry participants who may partner to provide services to this sector.	Manager Economic Development	Sept 2010
5. Assess the potential for the region to support a more diverse mix of recreational activities (such as ballooning, gliding, etc) and where these may be accommodated within the defined aviation precincts at both sites.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports	2011

THEME SIX: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

It is broadly accepted that knowledge is fundamental to economic growth.

Council can support the development and growth of aviation industry capabilities within the region by establishing and maintaining close relationships with local aviation companies and by facilitating business to business networking to identify areas of common interest.

Advocacy is seen as an essential element for future growth. The Fraser Coast is already home to a number of commercial aviation companies and by partnering with these organisations and presenting a single strategic voice and common point of contact for aviation in the Fraser Coast, the region will prosper.

The AWBB Marketing Plan 2008 noted that skill and labour shortages are affecting the aviation industry within the region, with considerable time, money and resources required to develop expertise in the sector.

THEME SIX: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

Objective 6.1	Facilitate a region which develops smart business networks, partnerships and alliances.
Strategies and Actions	Who Milestone
1. Maintain strong advocacy at all levels, including State and Commonwealth, to ensure the future prosperity of the region and to obtain high level support for the aspirations of our local community, business and industry.	Manager Economic Development On-going
2. Promote aviation education and related courses offered by USQ, TAFE, DEEDI and other educational institutions, and encourage greater links, research projects, delivery modes and partnerships with these institutions.	Manager Economic Development Manager Fraser Coast Airports On-going
Objective 6.2	Increase our effort to provide regular information and knowledge sharing to existing and prospective business and investors.
Strategies and Actions	Who Milestone
1. Use the internet as a central facet of the business communications strategy. Actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of e-newsletters to key activity sectors. • Maintenance of databases. • Collation of statistics and information materials for business • Maintenance of, and support for, FCRC linked websites 	Manager Economic Development Manager Fraser Coast Airports 2010/11
2. Actively participate in forms of communication that market the region's aviation services to the wider market specific to investment attraction and employment generation opportunities.	Manager Economic Development DEEDI RDA Industry On-going
3. Maintain regular consultation with key airport operators and participants.	Manager Fraser Coast Airports On-going

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The 2031 Aviation Strategy provides a broad framework for actions over the life of the strategy. In order that this Strategy remains relevant, it is important to build in an ongoing monitoring and review requirement.

Monitoring and evaluation are important in ensuring that Council is perceived to be sustaining its competitive advantages for existing businesses and as a means of attracting new businesses.

The Fraser Coast Airports directorate is responsible for the overall implementation of this plan and will monitor and report on progress each 6 months with an annual review of strategies and actions reported to Council.

The key expected outcomes on which the strategy will be assessed are:

- Effective delivery of initiatives outlined in the action programs;
- An increase in business establishments and employment at the airports; and
- Retention and support of existing businesses at the airports.



Feedback

If you have a comment or question about this strategy, here's how to contact us:

Write: Fraser Coast Airports
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Resources

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