

Transformation Region

Mackay Isaac Whitsunday

**A COVID-19
regional
response**



The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region is one of the true economic powerhouse regions in Queensland and Australia.

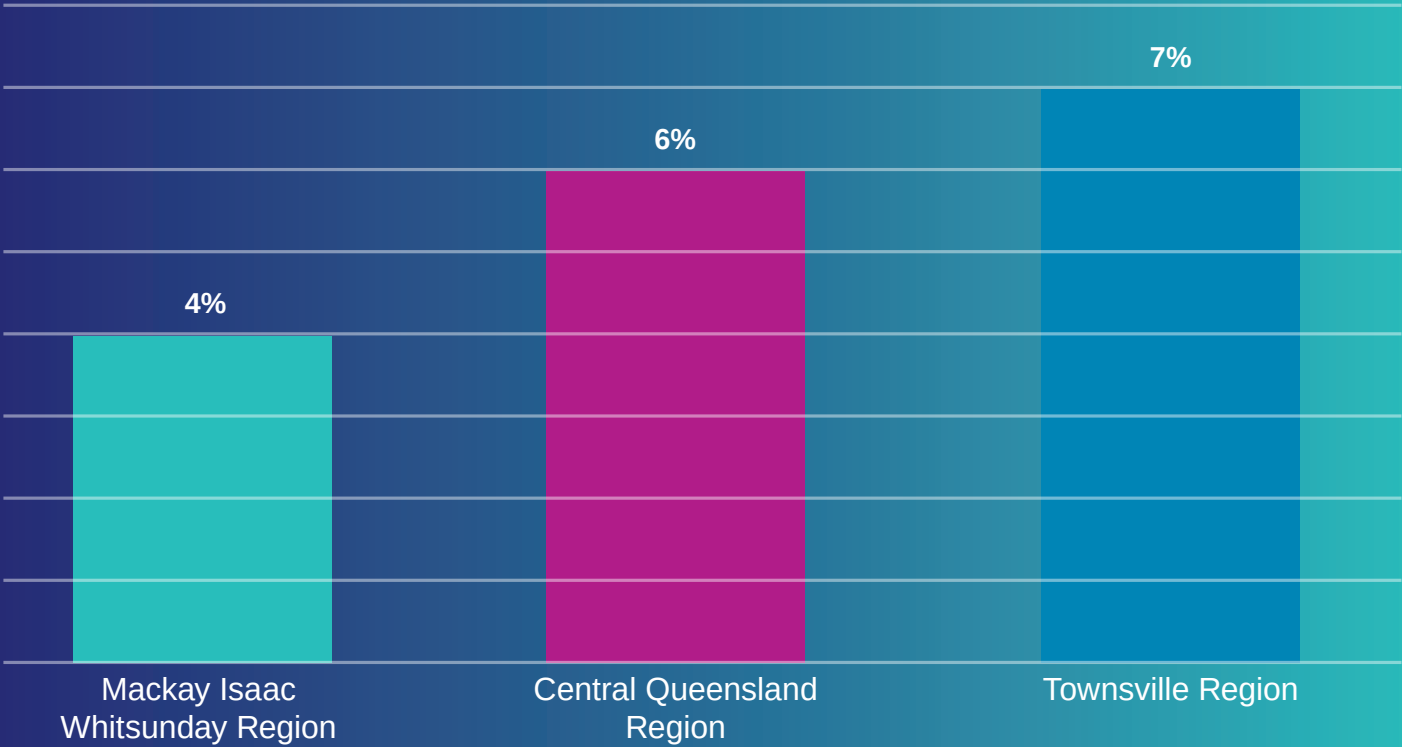
Our economy is driven by the mining, METS, agriculture and tourism sectors. As a region of just over 170,000 people, in a 'good' year, we contribute more than \$22B to the national economy.

Over the past five years, the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has consistently received a smaller portion of Queensland Government budget expenditure allocations on productivity enhancing infrastructure than the comparable regions of Central Queensland and Townsville.

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has also received a proportionally lower allocation of infrastructure spend across key socio-economic metrics, with the most notable shortfalls recorded in terms of infrastructure expenditure against jobs in the region and infrastructure expenditure as a proportion of Gross Regional Product (GRP).



Queensland Budget - Infrastructure Expenditure Allocation as a Proportion of Gross Regional Product, Selected Region 2019-2020.



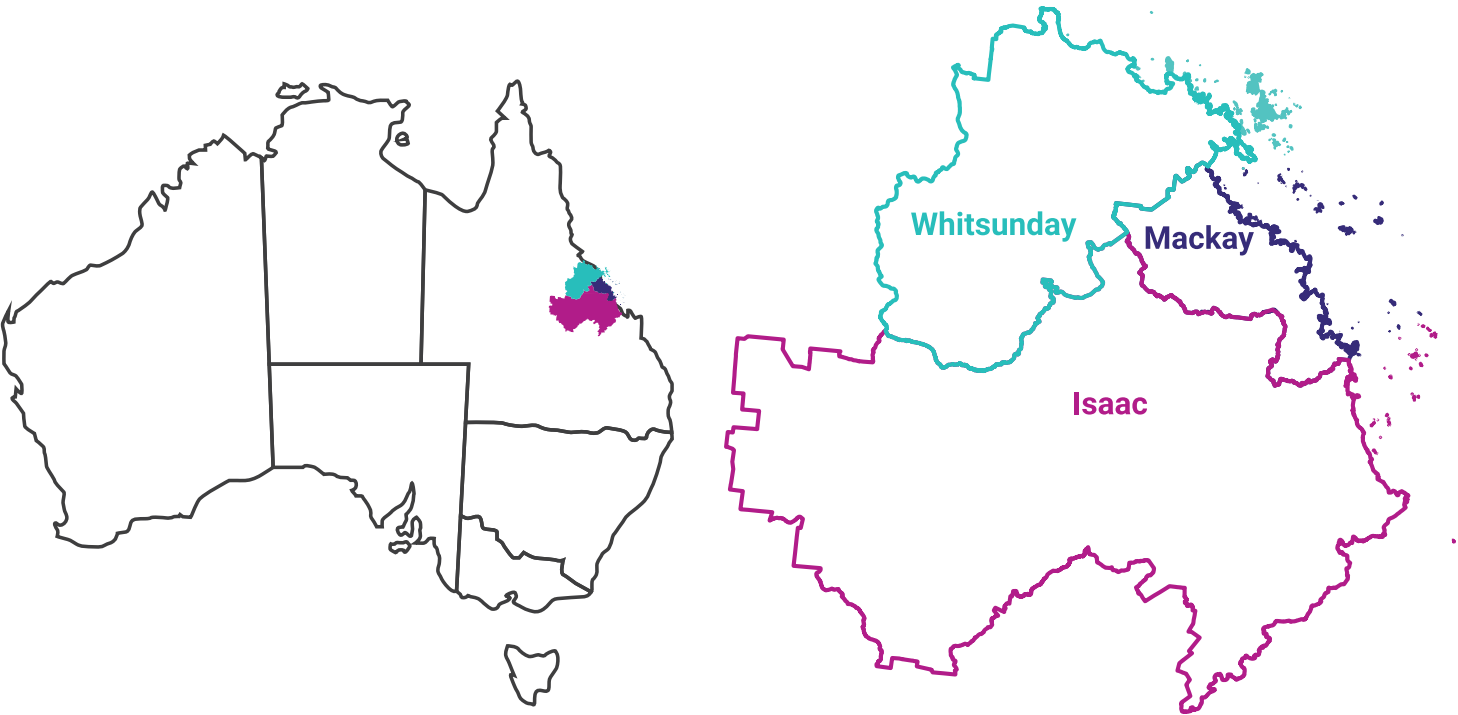
Source: <https://budgetmap.treasury.qld.gov.au/#/rap>

As we recover from the impacts of COVID-19, this region is **seeking investment in vital infrastructure and job-creating, future-focused projects** to ensure we keep our eye firmly focused on Queensland and Australia’s bottom line.

The message from Mackay Isaac Whitsunday is simple: **invest so that we lead the economic response for Queensland and Australia.**

This Transformation Region COVID-19 regional response document is a collaboration between the Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors, Mackay Regional Council, Isaac Regional Council, Whitsunday Regional Council and Greater Whitsunday Alliance and also features the valuable contribution of Regional Development Australia Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (RDA MIW).

Greater Whitsunday region spans 90,354 km²



The total number of people usually in residence in Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) zones in all Age cohorts on Census Night 2016 was

169,693

COVID-19 Impacts

Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has experienced significant impacts from COVID-19, particularly in the Whitsunday region, one of Australia’s premium tourism exports. Research conducted on behalf of Mackay Isaac Whitsunday by economic and demographic specialists REMPLAN found that 86% of businesses have experienced direct impacts as a result of COVID-19. The median revenue impact is -45%, however Whitsunday businesses report a median revenue impact of a staggering -77%. There can be no doubt that this region, despite our strong essential-industry workforce, is experiencing pain and requires investment for projects now.

COVID-19 Business Impacts MIW Region

LGA	Revenue		Staffing		Customers	
	Average impact	Median impact	Average impact	Median impact	Average impact	Median impact
Mackay	-32.89%	-30.00%	-20.17%	0.00%	-36.40%	-40.00%
Isaac	-21.13%	-30.00%	-26.46%	-27.50%	-31.71%	-46.00%
Whitsunday	-49.52%	-77.48%	-33.78%	-30.00%	-47.75%	-75.00%
Total	-34.51%	-45.83%	-26.80%	-19.17%	-38.62%	-53.67%

Source: REMPLAN. Data current as of 1.06.2020



Vital Infrastructure

Vital infrastructure isn't just a title. It's the foundational base needed to keep the wheel of economy moving and the community supported.

SUPPLY CHAIN ENHANCING ROAD INVESTMENT: Mackay Port Access Road and Peak Downs Highway



The Mackay Port Access Road (otherwise known as Ring Road Stage 2 and 3) connects the Ring Road at the Bruce Highway junction to Harbour Road and the Port of Mackay, providing significant supply chain efficiencies to the region.

This route also removes heavy vehicles from residential roads between the Port of Mackay and the Bruce Highway.

Whilst planning has commenced on this project, the Queensland Government's Mackay Isaac Whitsunday Regional Transport Plan (2018) states this project is not required for another 10-15 years.

The Federal Government has committed \$280M for the Mackay Port Access Road project. The Queensland Government has committed \$70M to this project.

Peak Downs Highway is listed as a State Controlled Local Road of Regional Significance and serves as a critical east-west transport link between Clermont, Moranbah and Mackay.

There are three main project areas on the Peak Downs Highway, including widening sections between Mackay and Nebo and widening sections between Nebo and Clermont. Additionally, replacement of eight narrow bridges is also required to assist in the movement of freight and create a safer road network.

Location

Mackay
Isaac
Whitsunday

Investment

Mackay Port Access Road - \$350M committed. Requires accelerated delivery.
Peak Downs Highway - \$50M required.

Regional Impact

The Mackay Port Access Road is a key component of the region's freight and transport network by directly connecting the Port of Mackay with both the Bruce Highway and the Peak Downs Highway (via the Ring Road). This project will provide long-term positive job scenarios for the region through significant supply chain efficiencies.

The Peak Downs Highway is one of the most valuable supply chain routes in Queensland and is estimated to contribute some \$7B of GRP annually. Continued investment in the Peak Downs Highway has direct economic impacts across regional supply chains, and significant safety implications.

Project Status

Mackay Port Access Road - \$350M committed. Requires accelerated delivery.
Peak Downs Highway - \$50M required.

Moranbah Hospital



Clinical capacity in the Bowen Basin catchment area requires a significant investment to respond to the growing population and an expanding mining sector. The recent Grosvenor Mine emergency highlights how important in-situ medical facilities are.

Mackay Hospital and Health Services are seeking funding for development of a business case to recognise and plan for expansion of critical health and medical service delivery in the Bowen Basin. The business case is priority work which is required to support a Clinical Services Plan, essential to secure investment.

Isaac Regional Council supports collaborative advocacy with Mackay Hospital and Health Service to the State Government to secure funding for the Moranbah Hospital Upgrade Business Case.

Location

Isaac

Investment

The investment required for the business case is circa \$1.5M.

Regional Impact

Development of a business case is a critical step in ensuring that the workforces and community of the Bowen Basin have access to quality medical care. Funding this project has significant long-term benefits for the Isaac region.

Project Status

Investment needed for business case development.

Black Spot Funding



Mackay Isaac Whitsunday has 238 identified mobile blackspots across the region, and 15 of these have received funding over the last five funding rounds through the Mobile Black Spot Program.

Mackay Isaac Whitsunday seeks the opportunity to work with the Department of Transport, Infrastructure, Regional Development and Communications to prioritise regional black spot funding in key supply chain areas such as the Peak Downs Highway and the Bruce Highway.

Location

Mackay

Isaac

Whitsunday

Investment

To be determined.

Regional Impact

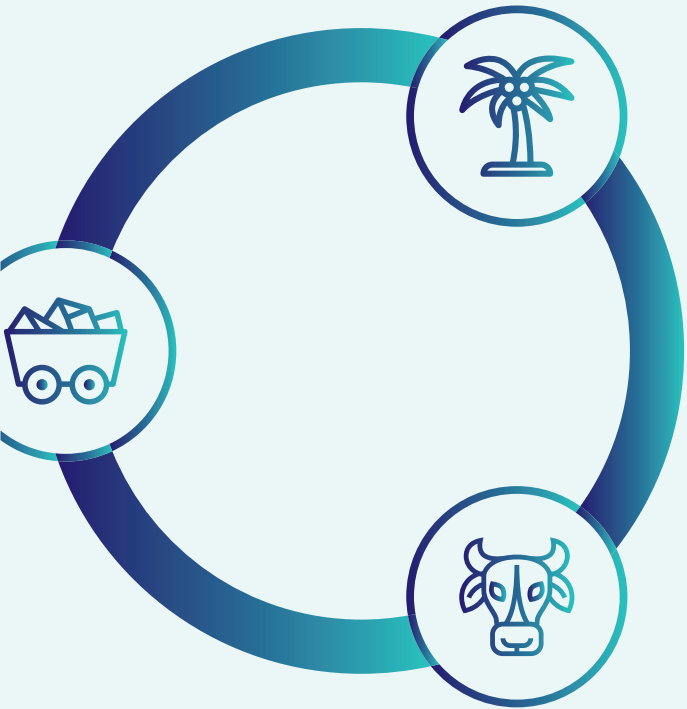
The Peak Downs Highway is one of the most valuable supply chain routes in Queensland and is estimated to contribute some \$7B of GRP annually, and yet there are 14 identified black spot areas.

The northern section of the Bruce Highway services more than 5500 vehicles per day, 24% of which are classified as heavy vehicles.

Improvements to mobile coverage and digital connectivity not only has significant supply chain enhancing and safety implications for the region, but also allows other industries in the region to access vital digital infrastructure that enables them in utilising new technology to aid productivity, particularly in the agriculture sector.

Project Status

Accelerated investment options required.



Supporting Key Industries

Tourism

Tourism is a backbone industry of the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region. To protect the sector from future impacts of global tourism trends, the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region sees it as vital to focus on long-term job creation opportunities through the development of strong adventure and event-focused tourism facilities. These facilities will capitalise on the strength of a strong domestic, adventure-driven consumer.

Research tells us that event tourism has been acknowledged as helping destinations gain a better tourism image, become more competitive, and bring a stream of economic opportunities such as business development and job creation (Boo and Busser, 2006; Getz, 2007). Additionally, sport and event tourism is associated with a higher yield from event tourists (Jago, 2003). Mackay Isaac Whitsunday is well placed to capitalise on these trends, with additional investment.

BOOSTED REGIONAL TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

An adventure tourism experience like no other, one that is unique to the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region. The Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail Project Stage One and the Whitsunday Mountain Bike Trails Program will deliver further on nature-based experiences for domestic and international visitors. Incorporating the Isaac Trail Network with the Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail gives visitors an immersive journey of discovery.

Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Project – Stage One

The Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail Project ultimately comprises of a 100km network of single direction mountain bike trail spanning from Eungella to Finch Hatton in the Pioneer Valley, with Stage One delivering the trail head infrastructure and associated Finch Hatton tracks.

The 27 trails will navigate through Australia's longest stretch of lush subtropical rainforest of the Eungella National Park and Crediton State Forest, and will provide visitors with over three days of world-class riding experiences.

Location

Mackay

Investment

\$8M.

Regional Impact

Ultimately, the Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail project will create 10 FTE jobs during construction and offer 110 ongoing jobs.

This project is estimated to attract 31,000 unique visitors per year.

This project aligns to the Queensland Government's 2018 Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy.

Project Status

Investment Ready.

Whitsunday Mountain Bike Trails Program

The Whitsunday Mountain Bike Trails Program aims to deliver nature-based experiences for domestic and international visitors to the region.

This project will deliver a track upgrade, signage and a shelter/water station at the Great Walk (Conway Circuit).

Location

Whitsunday

Investment

\$1.8M.

Regional Impact

The Whitsunday Trails project will create 10 FTE jobs during construction and offer 34 ongoing jobs.

This project is estimated to attract 13,200 unique visitors per year.

Whitsunday Trails links to the Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail and provides a complete regional offering to effectively attract adventure tourists to the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region.

Project Status

Investment Needed.



Isaac Trail Network

There is an opportunity to develop a series of trails leading from Mackay and Whitsunday Council areas through to the Isaac region and further onto neighbouring regional councils. The trails would highlight historic, tourism and industry features of the region including indigenous culture, gold fields and the serenity of natural lakes and dams, like Lake Elphinstone and Theresa Creek Dam.

An example trail would be from Eungella to Nebo to enable visitors to make a convenient one to three day journey to experience the existing tourism product in Eungella, augmented by Eungella Dam, the bygone goldmining era at Mt Britton, explorers trail of discovery of the region from the inland rather than by sea, the heritage and rural town appeal of Nebo and on to the range of geological attractions and emerging Isaac outback experiences. Further trails to be considered in the development of the Master Plan.

Location

Isaac

Mackay

Whitsunday

Investment

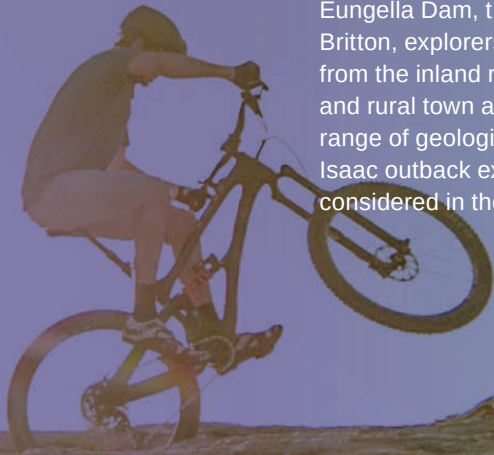
\$150,000 for development of a master plan for the Isaac Trail Network.

Regional Impact

The Isaac Trail Network has the potential to connect seamlessly to the Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail Project and provide an additional adventure tourism offering in the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region.

Project Status

Investment Needed.



Transformation Region

Mackay Isaac Whitsunday

- Australian-significant supply chain protection and safety enhancement
- Substantially improved medical response and care capabilities for Bowen Basin mining sector
- Industry enhancement and increased opportunities with consistent connectivity
- Job creation – short and long term
- Overall contribution to strengthening and stability of regional and national economies

- Industry diversification – mine safety knowledge export capability and additional revenue generation
- Industry expansion – building on well-established high performing sectors (eg tourism development – adventure tourism, eco tourism, sporting and events tourism etc)
- Job creation – short and long term
- Contribution to strengthening and stability of regional key industries

- Industry establishment – aerospace (will also significantly feed into established sectors, such as tourism and construction)
- Industry expansion – building on well-established high performing sectors (eg agriculture development – agtech, biofutures)
- Environmental impacts – improved waste management, re-purposing into valuable commodity
- Job creation – short and long term
- Contribution to strengthening and stability of future growth sectors and opportunities

INVESTMENT NEEDED



Moranbah Hospital



Whitsunday Mountain Bike Trails Program *(Tourism)*



Isaac Trail Network *(Tourism)*



Mining Heritage and Interpretative Visitor Centre *(Tourism)*



Whitsunday Marine Centre of Excellence *(Tourism)*



Mine Safety Rescue Centre *(Mining and METS)*



Launch Whitsundays



Regional Waste to Energy Strategy



AgTech Hub

INVESTMENT READY



Mackay Port Access Road and Peak Downs Highway



Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Project – Stage One *(Tourism)*



Harrup Park Country Club - Great Barrier Reef Arena and Events Precinct *(Tourism)*



Reef Restoration Project *(Tourism)*



Clermont Saleyards and Showgrounds Stage 2 Revitalisation *(Agriculture)*

ACCELERATED INVESTMENT



Black Spot Funding



Vital Infrastructure



Supporting Key Industries



Enabling Future Growth

Mining Heritage and Interpretive Visitor Centre

To build on the importance of mining in the Isaac region and for the state and national economies, an opportunity presents for a Mining Heritage and Interpretive Visitor Centre to complement the proposed Mines Safety and Rescue Centre (page 19).

The Mining Heritage and Interpretive Visitor Centre in Moranbah will be located adjacent to the proposed relocated Mines Rescue Station and training facility in 2021.

Location

Isaac

Investment

\$50,000 for concept development.

Regional Impact

The centre will provide a vital community connection link and will celebrate the mining heritage of the region, including Council programs and events, and other communities of interest including, for example, potentially the Miner's Memorial Committee.

Project Status

Investment Needed.

Harrup Park Country Club - Great Barrier Reef Arena and Events Precinct

Not-for-profit organisation Harrup Park Country Club is seeking an additional \$10M (in addition to committed federal funds) from the Queensland Government to realise their vision of building the Great Barrier Reef Arena and Events Precinct in Mackay.

The arena will attract more major cricket events, including BBL, WBBL, Sheffield Shield, and other international matches as well as a number of AFL matches every year. In addition, the arena will provide a venue for large scale community, entertainment and cultural events, thereby cementing our sport and event tourism credentials.

Location

Mackay

Investment

\$10M.

Regional Impact

The Great Barrier Reef Arena project will create 10 FTE jobs during construction and will offer 43 ongoing jobs.

This project is estimated to inject more than \$6.1M into the Mackay region annually and contribute \$4.4M in Gross Regional Product.

Project Status

Investment Ready.

Reef Restoration Project



The objective of this project is to assist the Whitsunday tourism industry in building on existing underwater art and reef restoration projects and scale up collaborations, knowledge and actions in the challenging climate of COVID-19.

The Reef Restoration Project will be a key regional activity in the process of assisting the recovery and building the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef in the Whitsunday region.

Location

Whitsunday

Investment

\$2.8M.

Regional Impact

The Reef Restoration coral gardening project will provide 24 ongoing jobs and offer up to 50,000 participants (tourists and residents) the opportunity to participate in reef restoration workshops and activities.

This will be the largest participatory coral gardening/reef restoration project in the Great Barrier Reef and Australia.

Project Status

Investment Ready.

Whitsunday Marine Centre of Excellence



Located adjacent to the existing Bowen Marina, the Whitsunday Marine Centre of Excellence will establish a world class marina, shipyard and educational facility.

Key features include trunk utilities, marine structures and buildings, pontoons and a number of lift structures up to 700 tonne to service a range of vessels from the smallest cruisers up to the largest superyachts. Currently a high-level concept, and with stakeholders across the private sector and all levels of government, this project has the ability to impact transformational change for the greater Whitsunday region.

Location

Whitsunday

Investment

\$120m.

Regional Impact

The Whitsunday Marine Centre of Excellence will provide a major economic boost to the region, creating over 1000 jobs during construction and operation as well as developing the region's marine, tourism and education capabilities to promote future growth. The project aligns with the Queensland Government 2018-2023 Superyacht Strategy to enhance the attraction of the high value superyacht market to the region.

Project Status

Investment Needed.

Agriculture

Agriculture contributes more than \$1.6B in economic output to Mackay Isaac Whitsunday and, despite the challenges that a global pandemic meant, has been able to consistently perform on behalf of our state and nation. The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region produces 5% of Australia’s beef cattle and upgrade of facilities to produce the sale and process of stock, particularly those travelling from the Gulf, is critical in ensuring the growth of this key sector.



Clermont
Saleyards and
Showgrounds Stage
2 Revitalisation

The Isaac region is home to the second largest cattle herd in Queensland. Whilst the Clermont Saleyards temporarily hosts 65,000 cattle a year, only 12,000 head are sold through the facility due to lack of infrastructure and technology.

This means that the economic leakage from the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region is considerable and, with investment, can create significant additional GRP.

 Location

Isaac

 Investment

\$2.95M.

 Regional Impact

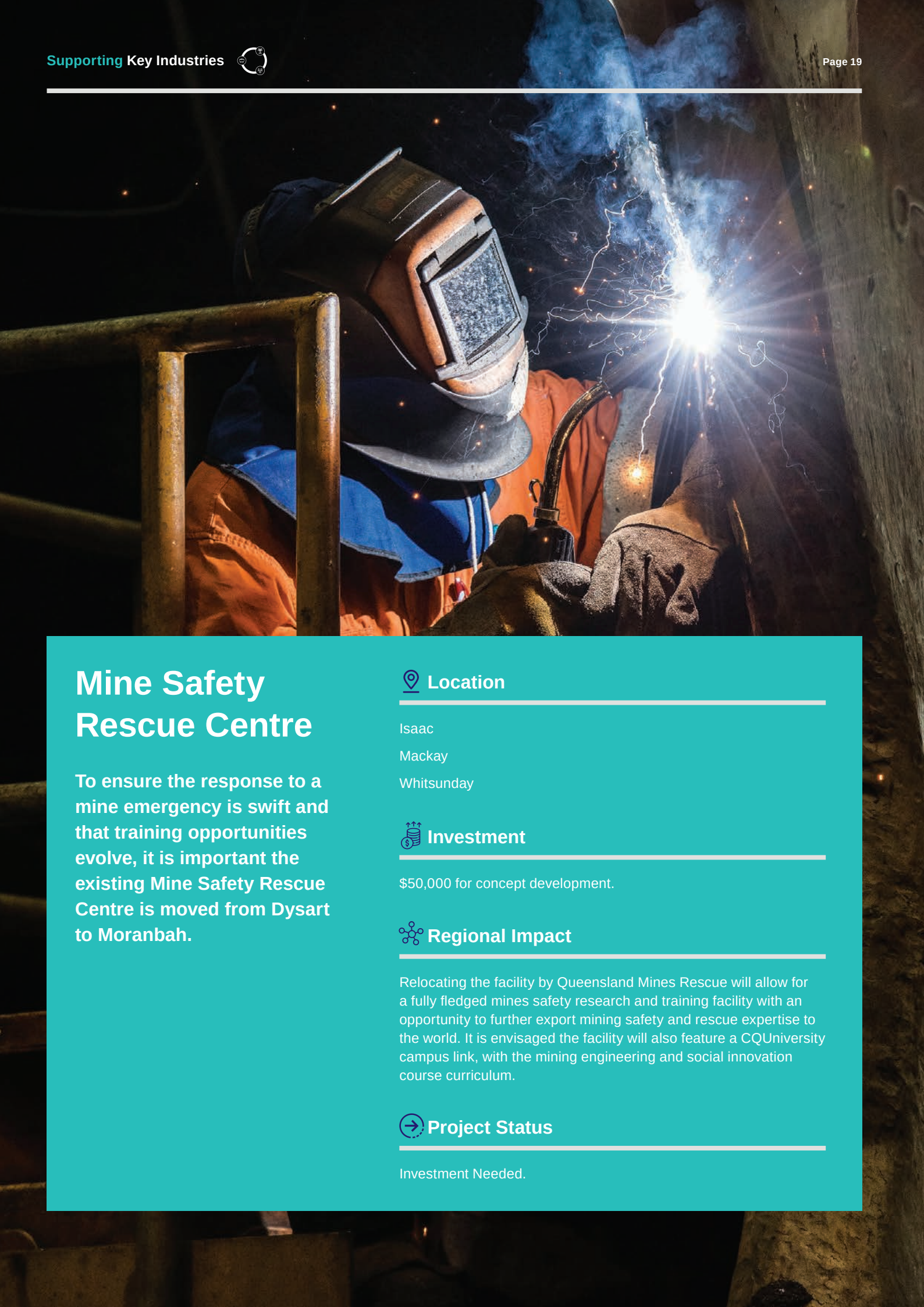
The Clermont Saleyards and Showgrounds Revitalisation Project will create eight FTE jobs during construction and significant additional GRP for the Isaac region.

 Project Status

Investment Ready.

Mining and METS

Mining and METS is the cornerstone pillar of the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday economy. These sectors alone are estimated to contribute some \$24B in economic output. As home to a world-class mining industry, our region also boasts a leading METS and mining health and safety sector, which not only improves the safety and efficiency outcomes of the Australian mining sector but also has the potential to create new export markets in safety.



Mine Safety
Rescue Centre

To ensure the response to a mine emergency is swift and that training opportunities evolve, it is important the existing Mine Safety Rescue Centre is moved from Dysart to Moranbah.

 Location

Isaac
Mackay
Whitsunday

 Investment

\$50,000 for concept development.

 Regional Impact

Relocating the facility by Queensland Mines Rescue will allow for a fully fledged mines safety research and training facility with an opportunity to further export mining safety and rescue expertise to the world. It is envisaged the facility will also feature a CQUniversity campus link, with the mining engineering and social innovation course curriculum.

 Project Status

Investment Needed.



Enabling Future Growth

Mackay Isaac Whitsunday has a strong, diverse industry base and a depth of technical knowledge and experience. This region is committed to leveraging these strengths and parlaying them into establishing new industries which will enable future economic and, more importantly, jobs growth.

Launch Whitsundays



In line with the Queensland and Australian Government’s space strategies, Abbot Point, north of Bowen, is ideally located (climate, aperture, air traffic) for the establishment of a commercial space launch site.

Key outputs from an investment in a Launch Whitsundays feasibility study and business case would include:

- Master Plan for a satellite launch facility at Abbot Point
- Investment Prospectus and assessment of regional benefits
- Information and promotion material
- Environmental Management Plan

The aerospace sector has a strong alignment to the technical skills base found in METS, which is strongly represented across Mackay Isaac Whitsunday.

Location

Whitsunday

Investment

\$250,000 for development of a Launch Whitsundays feasibility study and business case.

Regional Impact

A launch complex will directly support hundreds of operational jobs related to launch operations, as well as indirectly create up to a thousand positions in local, regional and state industries such as construction, transportation, materials and commodities, education, IT services, hospitality and tourism.

Project Status

Investment Needed.

Regional Waste to Energy Strategy



Waste to energy opportunities are a vital focus area for the region, particularly in light of the Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy.

Mackay Isaac Whitsunday are committed to developing a coordinated response to alternative waste strategies, utilising each local government area's waste stream.

 **Location**

Mackay
Isaac
Whitsunday

 **Investment**

\$250,000 required for development of a collaborative Mackay Isaac Whitsunday Regional Waste to Energy Strategy.

 **Regional Impact**

The investment opportunity for new bioenergy and energy from waste products in Australia is estimated to be between \$3.5B and \$5B annually, with the potential to avoid up to 9 million tonnes of CO² emissions each year.

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region collaboratively has significant waste feedstock and a strong desire to focus on bio-energy production in the future.

 **Project Status**

Investment Needed.

AgTech Hub

To ensure the regional sector continues to grow and respond to an evolving climate, we are seeking to transform and expand its cropping and agriculture bio-futures products, services and markets via a diversified agribusiness sector and supply chain.

To support this, greater emphasis needs to be placed on research, development and engagement of the sector through a regional AgTech Hub.

The AgTech Hub will be a home for:

- Collaborative partnerships
- Agribusiness education and research



 **Location**

Mackay
Isaac
Whitsunday

 **Investment**

\$200,000 required for development of a collaborative Mackay Isaac Whitsunday AgTech Hub feasibility and business case.

 **Regional Impact**

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region contributes a gross value total of \$1.393B to the Queensland and Australian economy, equating to 9.9% and 2.3% of Queensland and Australia's gross value for rural production (Source ABS: 2018).

Growing this contribution further will rely on a renewed focus on research and development.

 **Project Status**

Investment Needed.



www.greaterwhitsundayalliance.com.au