



## MEDIA RELEASE

11 February 2009

### QUEENSLAND AIRPORTS WELCOMES VIRGIN BLUE'S GOLD COAST-TOWNSVILLE SERVICE

Queensland Airports Limited (QAL) welcomes the news from Virgin Blue that it will commence once daily flights between two of its ports, Gold Coast and Townsville.

Townsville in particular will reap enormous benefit from today's announcement with Virgin confirming four new routes to the region direct from Canberra, Rockhampton, Cairns and the Gold Coast from Monday 6 April 2009.

Townsville Airport General Manager, Kevin Gill said this announcement is welcomed news for the North Queensland region.

"With Townsville named in four of the five new direct Virgin routes it really demonstrates the strength of this region both from an inbound and outbound perspective.

"This is also a great opportunity for both our Gold Coast and Townsville teams to work co-operatively and benefit from the increase in tourist numbers both ports will receive.

"Townsville Airport was the first regional centre Virgin Blue launched services to in 2001 and we will now also be the first airport to be directly connected by Virgin Blue to three regional centres.

"As one of Australia's premier tourist destinations, the Gold Coast service provides an exciting new travel option for Townsville residents to take advantage of," Mr Gill said.

Gold Coast Airport Chief Operating Officer, Mr Paul Donovan, said the commencement of services would provide key benefits to both regions.

"This service is great news for Queensland tourism generally, in the face of these currently challenging times.

"The announcement follows extensive market research by our business development team over a significant period of time and we applaud Virgin Blue's commitment," Mr Donovan said.

The new Virgin Blue routes will be serviced by its executive-style EMBRAER E-Jets, offering a two by two seating configuration.

Virgin has released special online sale fares for each of the routes, which go on sale from today until 17 February, for travel from the first day of nonstop service until 25 June.

Townsville-Gold Coast	\$99* one-way on the internet
Townsville-Cairns	\$69* one-way on the internet
Townsville-Rockhampton	\$69* one-way on the internet
Canberra - Townsville	\$149* one-way on the internet

ENDS

Media enquiries:

Elissa Keenan, General Manager Corporate Affairs ph: 5589 1196 Mb: 0448 866 049

Melissa Pearce, Communications Coordinator ph: 5589 1107 Mb: 0437 331 557