



17 December 2019

Christmas comes early for Reef HQ Aquarium

Reef HQ Aquarium, the world's largest living coral reef aquarium, has received \$26.9 million in the Government's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook budget review.

CEO for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Josh Thomas said the Authority welcomed the opportunity to upgrade infrastructure at the 32-year old facility which has received more than 4 million visitors since opening in 1987.

"We're pleased that the Australian Government is investing in the National Education Centre for the Great Barrier Reef, which will benefit greatly from the maintenance and refurbishment of our facility," Mr Thomas said.

"This is a welcome investment in the Far North Queensland economy, tourism and educational services. The refresh of Reef HQ will ensure the award-winning coral exhibit continues to attract significant tourist numbers to the region.

"Many of Reef HQ's tanks and facilities will be upgraded, along with our famous Turtle Hospital.

"Works are planned over four years, with particular focus being given to minimising periods of closure and ensuring the safety of staff and visitors during construction.

"Even if Reef HQ Aquarium closes for a short period of time, our precious animals and their life support systems will of course be maintained," Mr Thomas said.

Federal Member for Herbert Phillip Thompson said he was delighted to have been able to secure the funding ahead of Christmas.

"Reef HQ is one of Townsville's most famous and beloved attractions, and I've been working closely with CEO Josh Thomas to ensure it's here to stay for many decades to come," Mr Thompson said.

"This upgrade not only secures Reef HQ's future, but creates local employment opportunities too.

"I can't wait to see the many improvements that are on the way."

More detailed information will be available early in 2020.

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