



MEDIA RELEASE

Sunshine Coast to celebrate 50th anniversary with Australia's largest convention of travel writers

Australia's peak travel journalism organisation – the Australian Society of Travel Writers (ASTW) – will hold their national convention and awards event on the Sunshine Coast in August 2017, to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the official naming of the region*.

The Sunshine Coast's success in winning the bid was announced at the completion of the 2016 ASTW AGM & Awards event being held in Cape Town, South Africa, over the weekend. Previous ASTW AGMs have been held in many of the world's premier city and resort locations including Shanghai, Bangkok, Seoul, Saigon, Cairns, Sydney and Uluru.

The Sunshine Coast will host the gala event on the weekend of 18 – 20 August 2017, and will involve pre and post famill programs to showcase the diversity and richness of the region's attractions.

Some 100 of Australia's leading travel writers, photographers, broadcasters and bloggers are expected to attend the event, along with a further 50 to 80 travel industry representatives.

The annual general meeting and awards night will be held at the Novotel Twin Waters Resort, and sponsors include Visit Sunshine Coast, Sunshine Coast Council and Tourism and Events Queensland. Tourism operators from across the region will be invited to participate in the event and famill program.

Commenting on the successful bid, Visit Sunshine Coast CEO, Simon Latchford, said that hosting the Australian Society of Travel Writers annual event would put the spotlight on the region's remarkable diversity of attractions.

"We know that many of the writers have been to the Sunshine Coast in the past, but the region's tourism has matured dramatically in recent times and it will provide a great opportunity to show that we also have outstanding attractions beyond the coast, with the Glass House Mountains, Hinterland and Gympie regions all having great stories to tell," said Mr Latchford.

Sunshine Coast Mayor, Mark Jamieson, said: "Hosting this convention on the Sunshine Coast provides the perfect platform to showcase our region during our milestone 50th Anniversary year.

"I'm sure those travel writers who have never previously been to our beautiful part of the world are going to be very impressed with what they see and experience, and those who are returning here will no doubt be relishing that opportunity."

**The Sunshine Coast name was first mooted in 1958 by real estate interests, but the region's official name remained as the 'Near North Coast' until November 1966, when the Landsborough, Maroochy and Noosa councils agreed to the 'Sunshine Coast' name. On August 1, 1967, 'Sunshine Coast' was accepted by the Queensland Place Names*

Board, marking the day the Sunshine Coast formally came into existence. A series of festivals and community events will be held in 2017 to commemorate the anniversary.

About the Australian Society of Travel Writers

Comprising more than 300 members, the Australian Society of Travel Writers (ASTW) has been the peak travel writing body in the country for more than 30 years. Members include writers, photographers, editors, radio and television presenters, filmmakers and public relations representatives who are professionally engaged to produce articles, reviews, photographs, stories and social media commentary on national and international travel destinations and experiences.

Working for or supplying information to magazines, newspapers, travel books, guides, websites, radio and television programs, blogs, iPhone and iPad applications, ASTW members are highly sought after and do provide unprecedented media coverage.

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About Business Events Sunshine Coast (BESC)

BESC is the convention bureau for the Sunshine Coast. It sits as a dedicated unit within Visit Sunshine Coast, the regional tourism organisation for the Sunshine Coast. BESC is a not-for-profit, membership based organisation and their role is to promote the Sunshine Coast as a viable destination for conferences, meetings and incentive programs.

www.businesseventssunshinecoast.com