

Gateway to the World



COFFS HARBOUR
REGIONAL AIRPORT



- 42 flights a week to Sydney (Virgin Blue and QantasLink)
- 16 flights a week to Brisbane (Brindabella)
- Weekly direct flight to Melbourne (Saturdays, Virgin Blue)
- New Airport Lounge
- Pilot Training School
- Upgraded Security
- Friendly Service

Proudly produced by the
Coffs Coast

Independent



MAYOR'S MESSAGE



The development of Coffs Harbour Regional Airport is acknowledged as the driving force behind the area's economic growth in recent years.

With more than 320,000 passengers using the facility every year, it can rightly claim to be one of NSW's largest and busiest regional airports.

Achieving that status has been the result of the vision of former Coffs Harbour City Councillors and the airport's staff.

In 1992, planning began to upgrade the airport terminal and runway. Stage

One of the project was the widening of the main runway to give it greater operational flexibility and to cater for future aircraft.

At the end of 1999, work began on the \$4 million terminal expansion to meet the expected growth in passenger numbers. The new expanded terminal became operational in November 2000.

The latest development – the new passenger lounge – is just the latest stage of that vision.

With seating for 64 passengers,

internet stations, wireless broadband and a flat screen television, the lounge provides the comfort and facilities that tourists and business flyers expect and need.

Keeping pace with developments is key to the airport's success.

The Coffs Coast has grown hugely in popularity as a holiday hotspot in recent years. Similarly, Coffs Harbour is increasingly being recognised as the destination of choice for national and regional conferences and sporting events.

Many of those coming to the Coffs Coast are using the airport, as are more and more residents travelling elsewhere.

Being able to provide them with the comfort they would normally only associate with a metropolitan airport hub, will ensure that Coffs Harbour Regional Airport remains the key economic driver it has always been.

Keith Rhoades AFSM
Mayor, City of Coffs Harbour



COFFS HARBOUR REGIONAL AIRPORT

If you're a regular flyer, you'll understand why Coffs Harbour's airport is widely acknowledged as one of the finest regional airport facilities in Australia.

This special supplement was put together to make the entire Coffs Coast community aware of all the great facilities we have at our airport – a facility we can all be proud of.

What makes the airport so special is a combination of good infrastructure, the wide variety of facilities available, strong leadership, the staff who run the airport so professionally, the airlines who make the Coffs Coast so accessible and all the wonderful and friendly people working at the various businesses located at our airport.

Coffs Harbour City Council has owned and operated our regional airport since 1984, when the Commonwealth Department of Transport transferred ownership under the

Airport Local Ownership Plan. As part of that agreement, the airport was upgraded to F28 jet standard in 1986.

Council became responsible for all the development and operational costs of the airport when the Commonwealth discontinued the Airport Local Ownership Plan in 1991.

The main runway was upgraded to Boeing 767 standard in 1999 and a further upgrade of the terminal building was completed the following year.

Our airport is well used, with traveller numbers increasing every year. In the 2007-08 financial year, 323,000 passengers passed through the gates and the airport handled 26,362 aircraft movements.

With a main runway length of 2080m and a width of 45m, the airport is capable of handling most jet aircraft types up to the likes of a wide body Boeing 767.

"Not many people are aware of the fact that the Coffs

Harbour Regional Airport runway is actually longer and wider than those at the Sunshine Coast and Mackay airports, which handle two-and-a-half to three times as many passengers per year," says Airport Manager, Dennis Martin.

"In fact, our runway was even longer than the Gold Coast's runway until theirs was upgraded in March 2007, and the Gold Coast handles more than 4 million passengers a year."

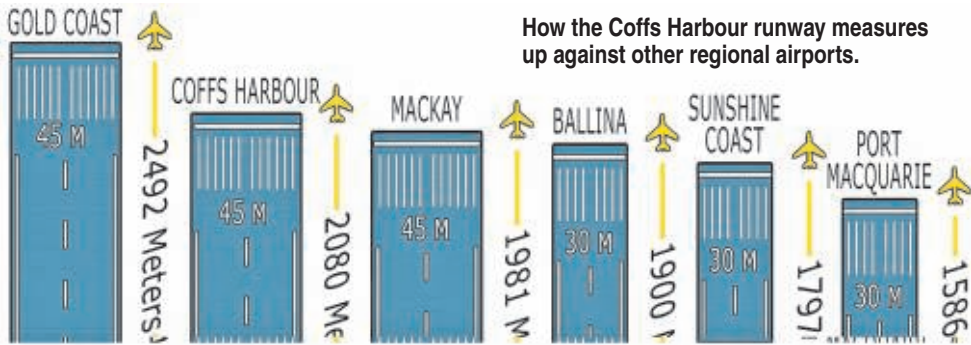
The modern terminal building is fully air-conditioned and provides comfortable customer facilities along with state-of-the-art baggage handling and security systems.

With the infrastructure and facilities to handle up to a million passengers a year, the Coffs Harbour Regional Airport could well be the catalyst for stimulating future growth on the Coffs Coast and even more generally, the NSW North Coast.



AIRPORT MANAGEMENT STAFF

>> These are the people who ensure the smooth running of our Coffs Harbour Regional Airport. Pictured (back from left) is Mark Fitton, Operations Officer; Boris Svrznjak, Airport Reporting Officer; Terry Cooper, Airport Reporting Officer; Anton Veugen, Compliance Officer; and (seated) Melissa Schultz, Administration Officer; Dennis Martin, Airport Manager. Missing is Guy Vidler, Airport Reporting Officer. The Coffs Harbour Regional Airport operates as a business unit of Coffs Harbour City Council. While council sets policy and direction for the airport, the Airport Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the airport.





COUNCIL GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE



Coffs Harbour Regional Airport is the city's major gateway for the thousands of tourists and business people who come to the area every year.

Since 1992, significant financial and human resources have been invested in the planning and development of the airport and this facility is now a crucial business asset for the city of Coffs Harbour. It is also of key strategic importance to the surrounding regions.

The visitors that use the airport –

and the many millions of dollars they inject into the Coffs Coast's economy – are directly behind a huge percentage of the rapid growth of the city, which is now seen as one of the Mid North Coast's key regional centres.

That is why ensuring that the airport continues to expand and offer the range of facilities that both airlines and passengers demand – and expect – is vital for its continued success in the future.

The recent fierce competition in

the airline industry, which has seen rapid expansion of companies and a hunt for new routes and markets, has been of direct benefit to Coffs Harbour Regional Airport – and the city.

The airport is currently serviced by three carriers – Qantas, Virgin Blue and Brindabella Airlines – and has the capacity to handle aircraft up to the size of a 240-seat Boeing 767.

The airport has seen important changes in recent years, changes that have given the city of Coffs Harbour

an edge over its neighbours.

Coffs Harbour City Council has never underestimated the airport's importance to the health of its local economy and we will continue to work towards ensuring it remains at the forefront of NSW's regional airports.

Stephen Sawtell
General Manager
Coffs Harbour City Council



LOUNGE UPGRADE

On July 1, 2009, Coffs Harbour City Council officially opened a new lounge for passengers and visitors to the terminal, in addition to the existing two departure lounges and the Biggles coffee lounge. The new lounge seats 64 people and includes internet facilities, a work station and a 40" flat-screen television.

WHAT'S THAT IN YOUR BAG?

When watching your carry-on bag go through the X-ray machine at the airport, have you ever received an alarmed look followed by a friendly smile by the security officer?

Well, it's possible that for an instant there they saw a prohibited or dangerous item in your bag that you certainly didn't pack.

How is that possible?

Chris Assigal, of M&C Services, the security operators at Coffs Harbour Airport since 2001, explains.

"We use hi-tech screening equipment that actually trains and tests our alertness by randomly showing banned items inside bags on our screens sometimes," says Chris.

"We don't know if they're real

until we press a button, which will make them disappear when they're not really there."

The security company, which Chris runs together with Mark Bohan, currently has 14 staff who handle all passenger and baggage screening at our airport in shifts of six at a time.

"We focus a lot on staff training and all our officers are well trained to handle conflict situations," says Chris.

"We understand flying can be stressful and we are also well aware that we are a tourist destination, so we always greet people with a smile and really try to make everyone feel welcome and at ease."

The smiles don't impact the high

security standards applied by the company, which adheres to strict federal legislation to ensure nothing that isn't supposed to be there gets into the 'sterile area', as they call the departure lounge, apron and aircraft.

Trying to keep up with changing airline regulations can be a challenge for passengers.

Two of the most common items to be confiscated are scissors, which are given to local charities, and cigarette lighters.

"One lighter in your pocket is allowed, but we once found 17 in one handbag," says Chris.

To avoid surprises, read up on what you can bring on domestic and international flights by visiting <http://travelsecure.infrastructure.gov.au>



>> Security officers screen all passengers, carry-on bags and check-in luggage for dangerous and prohibited items.



STATE-OF-THE-ART SECURITY

Our airport features state-of-the-art passenger and baggage screening facilities. Coffs Harbour City Council recently completed a \$1.4 million upgrade of the terminal to accommodate new checked baggage screening facilities as required by the Australian Government from December 1, 2008, for all airports receiving jet services.





BRINDABELLA AIRLINES

Brindabella Airlines has been providing daily flights between Coffs Harbour and Brisbane since it took over the route from Sunshine Express Airlines in 2006.

It operates a same-day return flight from Monday to Friday at a time that is convenient for both Coffs Coast and Brisbane residents.

In the current schedule, there's a flight from Coffs Harbour at 8am each weekday, arriving in Brisbane at 9am. The return flight leaves Brisbane at 5.30pm, which allows a full day in Brisbane for business or pleasure. Weekend flights are also available at different times and Brindabella also offers flights to Port Macquarie.

Last year, Brindabella introduced its new J41 Jetstream aircraft to the route, which considerably improved the stan-

dard of service offered to customers travelling to and from Brisbane.

With a cruise speed of 540km/h, the fully pressurised J41 aircraft is the fastest and most fuel efficient in its class. The highly efficient twin-engine turboprop offers optimum balance of performance, comfort and larger baggage allowances.

The larger aircraft also means Brindabella can now carry 30 passengers on its daily flights to and from Brisbane, with a flight attendant available to ensure you have a comfortable journey.

Brindabella is a Qantas affiliate airline and bookings can be made either through Brindabella or Qantas.

Visit www.brindabellaairlines.com.au to make a booking or for enquiries, call 1300 668 824.



>> Eric Hughes enjoys a coffee at the Biggles airport lounge. Eric and his wife Christine moved to Coffs Harbour in 1995, and two years later found what they were searching for when the Biggles business became available.



MEET 'MR BIGGLES'

You're flying out of Coffs Harbour. You've parked your car, checked in, and there's 20 minutes left before boarding. What do you do?

Well, you browse the Biggles magazine racks for something to read on the plane and order a coffee and a snack, of course!

To many, Biggles may be the famous fictional pilot and adventurer Captain James Bigglesworth.

However, in Coffs Harbour, Biggles is synonymous with Eric Hughes, the friendly gentleman in his mid-50s with the British accent who owns and runs the airport café.

Like so many of his contemporaries, Eric moved to Australia from the UK in search of a better lifestyle back in 1971.

He started working in retail in Sydney, where he met his wife Christine, had a milk run and worked in bakeries before running his own bakery and working six long days a week.

"I came to Australia looking for a better life, but somehow living and working in Sydney ended up being not much different from the UK," Eric recalls.

"You work hard, make long hours, and hardly have time to enjoy family life."

So the couple, together with their three children, decided on another lifestyle change and moved to Coffs Harbour in 1995.

For the first few years, Eric went back to Sydney for work during the week and he still didn't feel he'd made much of a change. The turnaround came in 1997.

"We actually went back to the UK on an

WHAT IS BIGGLES?

- Café – coffee, tea, cakes, snacks, sandwiches, burgers, fish & chips
- Bar – alcohol is served in this licensed bar
- Shop – newspapers, magazines, lollies, souvenirs
- Internet lounge – Wi-Fi available to go online
- Car park ticket office – payment point for the security car park

Biggles' opening hours are 5.30am-6.30pm Monday to Saturday and 7.15am-5.30pm on Sunday, with someone always there until the last plane has landed for car park ticketing duties.

open ticket to see if we could live there," says Eric. "But when we heard that Biggles was for sale, we jumped at the chance to have another go at our lifestyle change."

"We were soon back in Coffs Harbour and I took over the business together with a friend in September 1997."

The pair decided to stick to 'Biggles' as the name for the coffee lounge, which had been established by Derek and Ann King Scott in 1987.

It was originally located on the other side of the terminal before moving to its current location in 2001.

When his business partner returned to Europe in 2002, Eric assumed full control of

Biggles – and he hasn't looked back since.

He's like a fish in water, or should we say, like Captain Biggles at an airport!

Eric still chooses to come into work every day of the week, but he doesn't make the long hours he once used to.

With seven part-time ladies to help him serve customers, he doesn't have to. They work in shifts from the first arrival to the last departure of the day, generally from 5am to 8.30pm.

"My staff is absolutely great, and they're loyal to the core," says Eric. "Five of them have been with Biggles for longer than five years. They don't hesitate to cover for each other, even at 5am, and stay late without complaining if the last plane has been delayed."

Eric reckons he has the best place to work in Coffs Harbour.

"There's good camaraderie between everyone working at the airport, we get to meet and talk to a lot of travellers, even meeting the occasional celebrity and getting their autograph for our special celebrity boards, and we can look straight from our shop out onto the runway," he says. "What more could I want?"

Eric obviously has no plans to go anywhere else.

He'd better not either, because his friendly demeanour, old-fashioned chivalry and continuous presence at our airport since 1997 have made Eric Hughes the unofficial 'face of the Coffs Harbour airport'.

LET'S JUMP!

Skydiving only for the young, fit and adventurous? Think again.

Both skydiving centres at the Coffs Harbour Airport would like to get the word out: anyone can jump from a plane.

With advanced equipment, experienced instructors and strict regulations in place, an increasing number of older people and people with disabilities have been enjoying tandem jumps. That includes people in their 60s, 70s, 80s and, yes, even 90s.

Between the two operators – Coffs City Skydivers and Skydive Coffs Harbour – you have a variety of options to choose from.

Landing on the beach, at the airport close to lounge and club facilities, or at a location of your choice, a photo and/or DVD package, and various heights to jump from.

Jumping from the ultimate height of 14,000 feet means you will be freefalling at 200km/h for over a minute, followed by a smooth 5-7 minute canopy ride – safely strapped to your skilled instructor – during which you can enjoy the spectacular views of the Coffs Coast beneath you.

Coffs City Skydivers also offers training courses to learn how to skydive solo, join canopy formation jumps or become an instructor. It has about 30 members in its skydiving club who do regular solo jumps.

Skydive Coffs Harbour is part of Skydive Australia and can convert bookings between its various drop zones along the East Coast, which is particularly useful for travellers whose planned jump in one of those places can't go ahead due to bad weather.

In Coffs Harbour, you can book a tandem jump for any day of the week, but there's no jumping in rain, heavy wind or low cloud conditions. The minimum age for tandem jumps is 14.

For more information, contact Coffs City Skydivers on 6651 1167 or Skydive Coffs Harbour on 1800 800 840.



>> You're never too old to experience the thrill of a tandem skydive.



PROFESSIONAL PILOT TRAINING

Eight young, uniformed pilot cadets sit in a purpose-built 'flying classroom' and closely watch what happens on the 62" flat screen as the instructor behind the controls performs a demo of a tricky aircraft manoeuvre.

This scenario is part of daily reality at Professional Pilot Training (PPT), Coffs Harbour Regional Airport's full-time pilot school for budding commercial airline pilots, which is owned by John Brien and Rob Loretan.

Rob, who has been PPT's Chief Flying Instructor and Chief Pilot since 2000, is an experienced aviator whose impressive CV showcases four decades of international aviation experience.

As part of the RAAF, he has flown heads of state around Australia, worked in Malaysia and the US and was a member of the 1980 Roulettes aerobatic team.

He also was the Chief Instructor at NASA (Cessnock) for 14 years and spent another five years in senior positions at the Civil Aviation Authority before coming to Coffs Harbour.

"PPT is a small pilot school, but we focus on providing high-quality airline training," says Rob.

"We specialise in training foreign students for Air Niugini, the national airline of Papua New Guinea. We currently have seven very talented PNG students living on site and undergoing our full-time 15-month pilot training course.

"Other students who want to become a commercial airline pilot are welcome too, but they have to undergo the exact same schooling as the Air Niugini students."

PPT, located on Aviation Drive, currently employs three flight instructors and has four airplanes plus two training cabins that operate much like flight simulators to help train the pilots.

"Our pilot school has a number of classrooms, including one theatre-style room with a flight simulator and a large screen that allows us to show the aerodynamics of different airplanes in a way that all students can really experience it," says Rob.

"We are the only flying school with a state-of-the-

art facility like that.

"I'm very proud of all the students who graduate here. Our pilot school may take longer than others, but we factor in that these students have to adjust to a different culture, we're patient, but we really push them to make them work hard and there's a 100 per cent pass rate among our cadets.

"Air Niugini is very satisfied with our services and keeps sending us new cadets to train every year.

"We have room for 24 on-site students, so we're working towards securing a contract with another airline to provide their new recruits with professional pilot training here in Coffs Harbour."

"We have a good relationship with all the other operators on the airfield and Coffs Harbour City Council has done an excellent job providing facilities and incentives and giving proactive support to foster this."

PPT can be contacted on 6651 5199 for more information about its professional pilot training course.



>> Rob Loretan has been PPT's Chief Flying Instructor and Chief Pilot since 2000.



>> PNG students Rhoda Ilave and Jehutha Juju.

DREAMS COME TRUE IN COFFS FOR PNG CADETS

Seven lucky Papua New Guinean students are currently living and studying at the Coffs Harbour Regional Airport to become a pilot for Air Niugini.

Lucky, because they are the 'chosen few' who made it through the rigorous screening and selection process in which the PNG national airline narrows down a field of more than 1000 applicants to just the cream of the crop.

These seven bright individuals, aged 20-24, get to spend 15 months in Coffs Harbour to become an airline pilot.

The youngest member and the lone girl in the group is 20-year-old Rhoda Ilave, who is only the fourth female to be trained by Air Niugini.

"I was in medical school, but my brother was doing the pilot training here last year and he loved it so much that he got me excited and I decided to apply too," says Rhoda.

"My dream is to fly big airplanes, it's such

a good feeling to be flying, you're doing something that humans aren't actually designed to do."

Although Rhoda's parents are both economists, flying does seem to run in the family's blood.

Her brother was just promoted to First Officer on a Dash 6 with one of Air Niugini's domestic alliance airlines; Rhoda is well on her way to start her own flying career; and at age 10, her youngest sister now says she wants to be a pilot, too.

Ever since Rhoda's fellow cadet Jehutha Juju was a little boy, he has known exactly what he wanted to do when he grew up.

"A piwot" is what he reportedly always answered when his uncles asked him what he wanted to become.

The 21-year-old was studying mechanical engineering at university, but when he saw the Air Niugini recruitment ad for cadets he dropped out and applied.

"I actually stopped my course before I was accepted because I just had this strong feeling that I would be successful," says Jehutha.

"When my dad was young, he was accepted as a cadet to train with the first airline in New Guinea. But his mum, my grandmother, was afraid he might die so he took up business management instead.

"My dad is quite proud that I am now training to become a pilot, and my grandmother has come around and is OK with it too."

The students all enjoy living in Coffs Harbour and when they're not flying or studying they may go shopping or go to church, to the beach or see a movie at the cinema.

Their proudest moment will come in December, when they get to take their visiting family members up into the sky with them as part of the graduation ceremony. And by that time a new batch of recruits will be here to start their Coffs Harbour adventure.

LOCAL STUDENT NOW INSTRUCTS

Two years ago, Sheldon Adams of Coffs Harbour was studying economics in Brisbane. This time last year, he was learning to be a pilot at Professional Pilot Training (PPT). Now, Sheldon is training to become a flight instructor.

"I went to uni because all my friends were going, but my heart wasn't in it," says Sheldon, who in his pilot uniform looks older than his 20 years.

"I've wanted to be a pilot since I was four, and when I found out I could train right here in my hometown, I returned within 24 hours to join the course that had only just started."

Graduating in December last year, Sheldon looked around for a job as a charter pilot, but without a lot of flight hours under his belt he found it hard to compete with more experienced pilots.

"I'm very lucky that PPT asked if I would like to stay on to train and work with them as a flight instructor," he says.

"It's a bit weird because it was only last year that I was in the same shoes as the students I'm starting to instruct now, but it's very satisfying to see this group of cadets who are so focused and happy to be pursuing their dream."



>> Sheldon Adams now stands at the front of the class after graduating from PPT last December.

10 REASONS TO HIRE A HELICOPTER



>> Precision Helicopters.

When you see or hear a helicopter above you, some people up there may be having the time of their life enjoying the best possible views of the Coffs Coast.

But then again, the chopper may just be on an entirely different mission altogether.

Yes, the two commercial helicopter companies based at Coffs Harbour Regional Airport do offer scenic flights, but they are just one of the services on offer.

Photographers, farmers, government departments, media organisations and power companies are among those who regularly hire a helicopter for other purposes.

Besides scenic flights, here are nine

other reasons to hire a helicopter – aerial photography and filming, pipeline and powerline surveys and inspections, fire spotting and fire bombing, flood relief, property surveys and inspections, aerial agriculture such as seeding and spraying, stock mustering and feral animal control, charter flights for transfers in style and helicopter pilot training.

Scenic flights are also known as joy flights, and for good reason – everyone loves them.

Between them, Precision Helicopters and Strath Air Helicopters offer a range of scenic flights that start with a 'taster' of about 6-7 minutes in the air.

Both operators' most popular tour is

a 15-minute flight around the harbour, up to Moonee and back across the Orara Valley, but there are countless other itineraries and packages and you can even design your own helicopter tour.

With only window seats available and the ability to take the door off, the flights offer the most amazing views of the Coffs Coast's natural beauty, which is so different from the air it surprises even locals who have lived here their whole lives.

For further information about scenic flights or hiring a helicopter, contact Strath Air on 6652 7508 or Precision Helicopters on 6652 9988.



>> Strath Air.



VIRGIN BLUE

On July 31, it will be seven years since the first Virgin Blue Boeing 737 jet touched down in Coffs Harbour, the first regional NSW airport to welcome Virgin's 'next generation' plane.

With it, an era of greater competition arrived on the NSW North Coast.

Today, Virgin Blue operates two daily jet services to Sydney and a weekly direct flight to Melbourne on Saturdays.

Virgin Blue's Coffs Harbour operations are managed by Clancy Willoughby, who has lived in Coffs all her life. At just 22, she's believed to be Virgin Blue's youngest Station Manager in Australia.

"I started working part-time at the Virgin Blue check-in counter during my last year at Southern Cross University where I was doing a business course," says Clancy.

"I was promoted to Station Manager in May this year after receiving extensive training."

Her team consists of six counter staff and 10 baggage handlers, some of whom are university students who only work a few shifts per week.

"Because we only have one morning and one afternoon flight, all our staff work part-time, but we really enjoy working together and with the other people stationed at the airport," she says.



>> Clancy Willoughby manages the Virgin Blue operations in Coffs Harbour. At 22, she is believed to be Virgin Blue's youngest Station Manager in Australia.

"We're like a little community here, there's a great atmosphere and we all get along very well."

Sharing supervision duties with Aaron Martin, Clancy is responsible for the official paperwork for the flights, ensuring all regula-

tions are strictly adhered to.

"It's because of this time-consuming administration and passenger safety that check-in needs to close 20 minutes before each flight," says Clancy.

Checking in online could save you some time, but only if you have no luggage.

"Around 20 per cent of our passengers now use web check-in and they can go straight to the departure gate," says Clancy.

With bags, however, you would still have to go to the check-in counter.

Virgin Blue has been using its new 104-seat Embraer 190 E-Jet for most of its Sydney-Coffs Harbour flights since early this year. Although it looks very similar to a Boeing 737 on the outside, with a two-by-two seating configuration the aircraft is more streamlined and offers better fuel consumption and more comfort for passengers.

As for its Melbourne route, Coffs Coast residents should be pleased to learn Virgin Blue recently rescheduled its direct flight on Saturdays to a more convenient 12.15pm departure time from Coffs Harbour, also allowing for easier connections to and from other major cities in Australia.

Call Virgin Blue on 13 67 89 for enquiries or visit www.virginblue.com.au to make a booking.



>> Safe and secure. Coffs Airport Security Carpark has been part of the airport's landscape for 10 years.

SECURE PARKING GIVES TRAVELLERS PEACE OF MIND

Is it a hangar? A storage facility? A private carpark for airport personnel perhaps? No ladies and gentlemen, the large white building on your left as you drive towards the Coffs Harbour airport terminal is a state-of-the-art security carpark.

You would think that the various signs along the road and at the car park entrance and the huge 'Coffs Airport Security Carpark' sign across the front of the building would give it away. Strangely enough, that isn't always the case.

"The security carpark has been there nearly 10 years now and although it's well used and appreciated, a lot of people tell us they didn't recognise it as a carpark," say Tom and Therese Murray-Prior, who built, own and run the facility.

"Maybe it's because you can't see the cars from the outside."

Of course, that's exactly what makes it such a safe and secure building – it's not just undercover, but fully enclosed and locked up, with a security gate and 12 cameras to monitor what goes on inside.

And secure it is. "There has never been a security breach in all these years," the couple proudly proclaims.

LOCKED UP

- No bookings required
- Fees \$2/hr, \$13/day, \$78/week
- Payment at Biggles upon return (cash, Visa, MasterCard, bankcard)
- Open daily from 5.30am until 30mins after arrival of last scheduled flight

Tom and Therese got the idea for a secure carpark at the airport when air travellers started storing their cars at Hi-Tech Self Storage in Toormina, which the couple built and ran during the 1990s.

Starting with 44 car spaces, the security carpark at the airport has gone through several upgrades over the years and currently offers dry, safe and secure parking for 120 vehicles. And it has stayed dry, even at times when other parts of Coffs were flooded. It's also a breeze to use, with no time wasted when parking your car.

"Travellers find it incredibly convenient to simply drive in, take their ticket, walk the short undercover walkway to the ter-

минаl and fly out in the knowledge their car will be safe and waiting for them when they return," says Therese.

Upon arrival back at the airport, travellers simply validate their ticket and pay their parking fees at Biggles Coffee Lounge and off they go.

The Murray-Priors' approach to business hasn't changed since they owned the storage facility, and it shows.

The place is kept immaculate, there's anti-slip flooring and good lighting and the whole experience is as smooth and pleasant as can be.

Thanks to all the hi-tech security features, which allow Tom and Therese to monitor the carpark from home, the couple is able to enjoy the best of both worlds – run a successful business while having enough free time to enjoy hobbies, attend various board meetings and visit their four children and nine grandchildren.

And don't think you need a Benz or a Bentley to use the carpark – a peek inside reveals cars of all brands, ages and price ranges standing happily side by side, waiting for their owners to return from their business trip or holiday.

NEW TRAVEL AGENCY OPENS

In April this year, Coffs Coast Travel opened its office in the building next door to the Coffs Harbour Regional Airport terminal.

Owned and run by Rick Haines and Paul Kelly, the original owners of Kelly Travel, the agency makes travel bookings and arrangements for businesses, families and individuals, while specialising in sporting groups and corporate travel.

"We gladly welcome past and new clients to our agency," says Paul.

"Our promise to our clients is to provide them with excellent personal service and they will benefit from our expertise that comes from many years of experience as leaders in the travel industry."

Although many people now book their own travel online, using a travel agency is still a good idea, especially if you need more than just one flight.

Coffs Coast Travel can help you get the best flights for the best price available and organise smooth connections, arrange accommodation, visa and insurance and get a cost-effective overall package.

Corporate clients, in particular, will appreciate the agency's advanced financial reporting system.

Coffs Coast Travel is also the official regional representative of Qantaslink.

For more information, contact the travel agency on 6651 2022.



>> Paul Kelly from Coffs Coast Travel can help with all your travel needs.



QANTASLINK

Since the start of its regular Sydney-Coffs route on Boxing Day 1992, QantasLink's Coffs Harbour services have come a long way.

From two flights a day on small 36-seater aircraft, the Qantas subsidiary has introduced larger planes and more flights over the years to cater to demand.

Since mid-2008, most flights on this popular route are now carried out on new, 74-seat Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 aircraft, currently flying to Sydney up to four times a day.

The Q400 travels at jet-like speeds of 667km/h and passengers who have travelled on it will have noticed the cabin is more comfortable and less noisy than previous, smaller turbo props that were used by the airline.

Having been there since the start, when QantasLink was still operating under the name Eastern Australia Airlines, Customer Services Officer Rob Crawford confirms a lot has changed in 17 years.

"We didn't even have computers those first few years," says Rob. "Everything was



>> Matt Endemi checks in Kate at the QantasLink desk. Inset: Rob Crawford

done manually then.

"Now all Qantas staff around the world are on one and the same system and are looking at exactly the same information."

Hailing from New Zealand, where he served customers in a post office for 20 years, Rob originally came to Coffs Harbour for a week-long visit to see his sister. Decid-

ing to stay on, he completed a travel course here and worked at Kelly Travel, the local QantasLink representatives, before starting his job at the airport.

Rob now supervises the QantasLink staff shifts on rotation with Lisa Burns and Matt Endemi, who have both been with the airline more than 10 years as well.

Their team is made up of 12 staff members who do the ground handling for all QantasLink and Brindabella flight arrivals and departures at Coffs Harbour airport.

In an effort to be involved in local communities, Qantas regularly offers support to local charities and events.

That support extends to our local economy, with refreshments on board most QantasLink flights out of Coffs Harbour being prepared by our own airport café Biggles.

"A lot of passengers comment on what a beautiful airport this is," says Rob.

"It's a very progressive airport and we're lucky to be working here."

For enquiries, call Qantas on 13 13 13 or visit www.qantas.com.au to make a booking.



>> The Control Tower at the Coffs Harbour Regional Airport handles up to 120 aircraft movements on an average weekday.

KEEPING COFFS AIRSPACE SAFE

With air traffic increasing, Coffs Coast residents can rest easy knowing that our skies are kept safe by professional air traffic controllers in our airport's Control Tower.

While aircraft movements high up in the sky are controlled by radar from a major control centre in Brisbane, Coffs Harbour is one of Australia's 26 airports where the airspace directly above it is managed from a local air traffic control tower.

Ours is the only controlled airspace between Newcastle and Coolangatta.

"All aircraft that enter our airspace need to get our clearance so that we can ensure there's always a safe distance between them," explains John Ruttiman, who leads a team of four air traffic controllers in Coffs Harbour.

"We are a so-called procedural tower. That means we don't have radar coverage,

but we use radio communications with the pilots, visual monitoring using our eyes and binoculars and constant calculations to keep aircraft safely separated and to determine the safest and most efficient order for take-offs and landings."

Weather elements are just some of the things that are constantly monitored on the comprehensive instrument panel in the centre of the tower and the controllers ensure that pilots always have the most recent and accurate information available to them.

They also work in close consultation with the Brisbane centre, to which aircraft are 'handed over' when they leave our airspace at an altitude of 4500 feet.

"We handle around 100-120 aircraft movements on an average weekday," says John. "During the 10 hours a day that the tower operates, everyone needs to lodge a

flight plan with us, from commercial airlines to charter planes, helicopters, skydiving operators, private aircraft and the pilot school's training planes.

"Even when there are no flights for a while, we always have to stay alert because we can suddenly get several pilots contacting us at the same time and we have to direct each of them safely and efficiently.

"We were incredibly busy during the recent floods, when we had to deal with around 200 flight movements on some days."

From the outside, the white tower with the big windows next to the Coffs Harbour Regional Airport terminal doesn't reveal just what goes on inside.

But next time you look at it, you'll know that it's a buzzing command centre where experienced air traffic controllers are hard at work keeping our skies safe.

SNAKES ON A PLANE

Sending documents, parcels or pets around Australia or overseas is easy at Coffs Harbour Regional Airport.

With the only airside airfreight facility between Newcastle and the Gold Coast, putting a dog on the plane or having fresh flowers delivered is a simple process.

Door-to-door parcel delivery service Australian Air Express (AaE) has its office and warehouse right next door to our airport terminal.

"We can use any flight in the Qantas network to transport freight across Australia and to most other countries around the world," says Coffs Harbour's AaE Agent, James Bianchi.

"Our trucks will pick up and deliver the parcel or people can drop it into our office at the airport and choose next flight, same day, overnight or 48-hour delivery."

Since his first freighting job at the airport – with Ansett in 1978 – James has seen just about anything flown in and out, including exotic snakes and reptiles, live bees for the US and penguins for the Pet Porpoise Pool. AaE specialises in perishables, such as bloodstock and fresh produce.

Toll Priority also operates out of Coffs Harbour airport, but has its warehouse off-site.

To find out more, contact Australian Air Express on 13 12 13 or Toll Priority on 13 15 31.



>> You can send items to anywhere in the world from the Coffs Harbour Regional Airport.

SPREAD YOUR WINGS AND LEARN TO FLY

Step inside the Coffs Harbour & District Aero Club on Aviation Drive and you will see board after board on the walls carrying names of pilots that trained here.

Although a quick count may reveal about 500 names, the true figure is probably in the thousands, as records didn't start until several

decades after the club's 1928 inception.

The flying school and social club is the hub of recreational aviation on the Coffs Coast.

Anyone who wants to learn to fly a small airplane can come here and take a trial introduction flight or a full training course for their Recreational Aviation Australia Pilot Certificate.

At the moment, 10 students are learning to fly at the club, guided by veteran flight instructors Charlie Smith and David Sercombe.

After successfully completing all course components, including 40 hours in the air, they qualify for their first, restricted pilot licence and their names can be proudly added

to the club's walls.

In addition to offering pilot training, the club also carries out charter and joy flights and, as a licenced club, is available for private functions.

To find out more, contact the Coffs Harbour & District Aero Club on 6652 2992.



AIRPORT DIRECTORY

Airport Administration:

General Enquiries: 6648 4767
Airport Manager: 6648 4737

Airlines:

Qantaslink
Airport Desk: 6651 1966
Reservations: 13 13 13
www.qantas.com.au

Virgin Blue
Airport Desk: 6658 0696
Reservations: 13 67 89
www.virginblue.com.au

Brindabella
Airport Desk: 6651 1966
Reservations: 1300 668 824 or 13 13 13
www.brindabellairlines.com.au

Freight:

Australian Air Express: 6652 7670
Toll Priority: 6650 9115

Coffs Coast Travel: 6651 2022

Biggles Cafe: 6651 2777

Security Car Park: 6651 5211



Ph: 13 13 90



Ph: 6651 4994



Ph: 6651 1899



Ph: 6651 3600



Ph: 6652 5022



Ph: 6652 8622