



For Immediate Release
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Making the ‘Link’

Red Cat Adventures, Whitsunday Jetski Tours and Wildcat Mackay join SeaLink Marine and Tourism Family

Three of Australia’s top marine tourism companies are joining another nationally renowned name, with Red Cat Adventures, Whitsunday Jetski Tours and Wildcat Mackay, all welcomed into the SeaLink Marine & Tourism family of iconic experiences, including SeaLink, Captain Cook Cruises, Kingfisher Bay Resort and many more.

At each of these Mackay and Whitsunday-based businesses, locally operated by Asher and Julie Telford, it will be ‘business as usual’ for consumers, agents and staff, with all brands continuing to offer their much-loved national-award-winning experiences.

For the Telfords, who will stay at the helm of Red Cat Adventures, this was an important factor in taking such a momentous step for the Group.

“Red Cat Adventures has been part of our family and supported by the Whitsunday community and tourism industry for almost a decade that has been the most rewarding years of our lives. We knew when the time was right, we could only move to this next chapter with people we can trust and whose values align to ours, to build on Red Cat’s bold brands, iconic experiences and impeccable customer service levels we’ve worked so hard to create,” Julie Telford said.

“The fact that SeaLink is also a homegrown Australian success story with strong links to the local communities they operate in is also significant,” she added.

“Our careers started back in 2005 with Ash and I working as a skipper and deckhand on the overnight charter boats. Red Cat Adventures was born in 2015; we expanded the fleet quickly, and we have never looked back. SeaLink has risen from a single ferry to and from Kangaroo Island, to become Australia’s largest integrated land and marine tourism and public transport service provider, transporting over 200 million customers each year. So, this felt like a great fit for us and we are really excited to be still involved in the future growth of the Whitsundays Islands”

Having grown up on Kangaroo Island, Asher Telford couldn’t agree more.





“As a kid I often caught the SeaLink ferry and before starting Red Cat Adventures I did my Master IV in Adelaide with some of the SeaLink crew, so to think that after all this time I’m going to be part of the SeaLink family is like coming full circle,” he said.

“While bigger companies have approached us before, we’ve never felt they were the right fit for our culture, but knowing SeaLink as we do – and being welcomed by their management team – we feel very comfortable that we can all grow together, and by that, I mean not just our business offerings to customers, but also in the opportunities for our 75 staff.

“Over the years we’ve employed thousands of incredible people who’ve been on this ‘Red Cat’ journey with us, and we are grateful for their passion and dedication to tourism and for working so hard to ensure all guests have an ‘adventure of a lifetime’. Our staff have been instrumental in our success. We are extremely proud of them, and it’s been a pleasure to watch them grow with us. Now, through the multi-faceted opportunities and global avenues within SeaLink, their career pathways have just evolved exponentially.”

CEO of SeaLink Marine & Tourism, Donna Gauci, said she was thrilled to have Red Cat Adventures join the SeaLink Marine & Tourism family, emphasising: "This is an exciting opportunity for both organisations as we are equally dedicated to highlighting the finest the Whitsundays region has to offer and creating brilliant unforgettable experiences for our guests."

Since establishing Red Cat Adventures in 2015, the Telfords have built three, custom-designed ‘Thundercats’, operating Whitsunday Island tours alongside the sailing vessel ‘Tongarra’.

Thanks to the Queensland Government’s Growing Infrastructure Fund, the State-of-the-art ‘Wildcat Mackay’ was established in 2022, offering unique daytrips to Great Barrier Reef islands off Mackay, as well as outer reef experiences from the Whitsundays. In 2022 Wildcat Mackay was awarded Gold for the Best New Tourism Business in Australia!

Acquired by the Red Cat Adventures Group in 2022, and with the tag-line “your ride, your adventure”, Whitsunday Jetski Tours offers the daily 1.5-hour Airlie Adventure Tour, two-hour Two Island Safari and four-hour Ultimate Trek, visiting Long Island’s Palm Bay.

In addition to its regular daytrips, the Red Cat Adventures Group also runs school-based Coxswain’s courses and a variety of Eco and Edu-tourism-tailored tours, including the





curriculum-based 'Immersive Learning Project', designed to foster 'travel for good' and broaden stewardship of the Great Barrier Reef.

Over the course of the Telfords' tenure Red Cat Adventures has had the honour of being inducted twice into Queensland Tourism's Hall of Fame for the Best Major Tour and Transport Operator and Adventure Tourism business. The business has also been awarded Gold at the prestigious Qantas National Tourism Award for four consecutive years, demonstrating excellence in tourism.

"We've shared the emotional highs of building custom-built boats and winning national awards but also the lows of clinging on through Covid; we've constantly innovated, pushed boundaries, challenged the market, built strong successful brands, and we still love what we do every day." Mrs Telford said.

"But most importantly, we've delivered the best experiences on the Great Barrier Reef to hundreds of thousands of guests – a few hundred of whom are proudly stamped with real Red Cat tattoos – and I'm proud to say that ethos will continue with the SeaLink team."

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer, Rick Hamilton, said this was a momentous milestone for not just both business groups but also the Whitsundays' tourism industry.

"The Whitsundays wins when we work together, and I have no doubt this significant partnership will only result in more unforgettable experiences for guests from around the world," Mr Hamilton said.

For more information, visit www.redcatadventures.com.au www.jetskitour.com.au and www.wildcatmackay.com.au.

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