

CUMMINGS ECONOMICS

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Statistical Note
APRIL-MAY 2023
ECONOMIC TRENDS CAIRNS REGION

EARLY INDICATIONS OF TIGHTENING IMPACTS

The regional economy is showing some signs that the Reserve Bank's actions to slow the economy are having an effect with some rise in numbers on unemployment benefits, patchiness in single house dwelling approvals and some evidence that domestic airborne visitation is down on last year.

NUMBERS ON UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UP

After having flattened out following recovery from COVID restrictions (except for a one-month seasonal rise in December that occurs each year), in April, the number registered for employment benefits rose by about 1,000 in the Cairns SA4 region.

However, it will be important to wait for a further month's figures before it is certain that an upward trend is occurring.

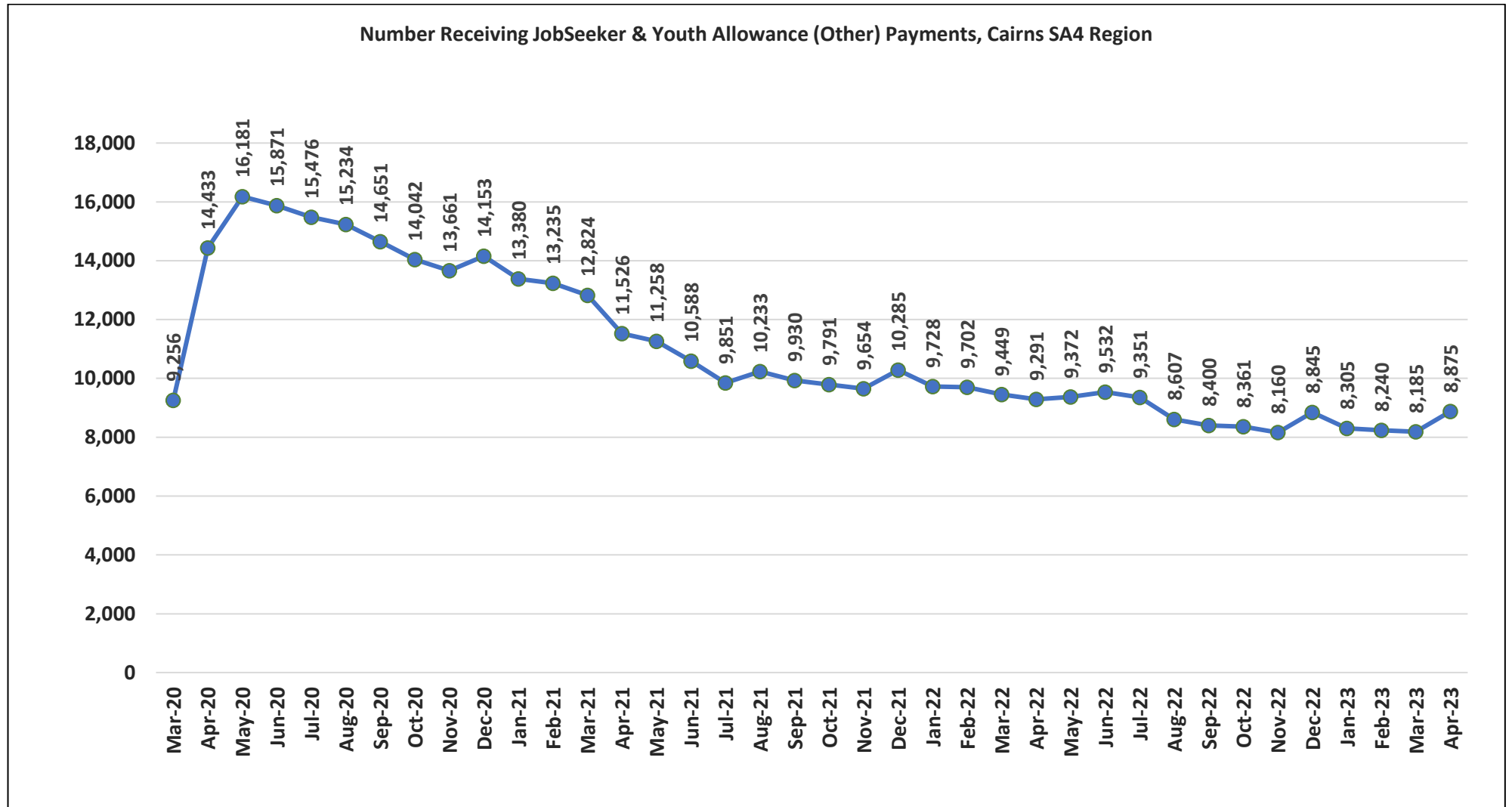
Table – Numbers Receiving JobSeeker & Youth Allowance (Other) Payments, Cairns SA4 Region

PERIOD	Cairns ⁽¹⁾	Cairns SA4 Region ⁽²⁾	PERIOD	Cairns ⁽¹⁾	Cairns SA4 Region ⁽²⁾	PERIOD	Cairns ⁽¹⁾	Cairns SA4 Region ⁽²⁾
Mar 2020	9,256	15,617	Apr 2021	11,526	18,998	May 2022	9,372	15,939
Apr 2020	14,433	23,100	May 2021	11,258	18,547	Jun 2022	9,532	16,295
May 2020	16,181	26,243	Jun 2021	10,588	17,606	Jul 2022	9,351	15,956
Jun 2020	15,871	25,765	Jul 2021	9,851	16,503	Aug 2022	8,607	14,818
Jul 2020	15,476	25,007	Aug 2021	9,092	16,904	Sep 2022	8,400	14,523
Aug 2020	15,234	24,553	Sep 2021	9,930	16,627	Oct 2022	8,361	14,575
Sep 2020	14,651	23,691	Oct 2021	9,791	16,318	Nov 2022	8,160	14,267
Oct 2020	14,042	22,271	Nov 2021	9,654	16,184	Dec 2022	8,845	15,395
Nov 2020	13,661	21,856	Dec 2021	10,285	17,278	Jan 2023	8,305	14,560
Dec 2020	14,153	22,818	Jan 2022	9,728	16,428	Feb 2023	8,240	14,435
Jan 2021	13,380	21,545	Feb 2022	9,702	16,436	Mar 2023	8,185	14,385
Feb 2021	13,235	21,432	Mar 2022	9,449	15,920	Apr 2023	8,875	15,440
Mar 2021	12,824	20,829	Apr 2022	9,291	15,767			

Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Department of Social Services.

Note ⁽¹⁾: Cairns LGA excluding Babinda. Note ⁽²⁾: Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Tablelands, Mareeba, Douglas.

Chart 1 – Numbers Receiving JobSeeker & Youth Allowance (Other) Payments, Cairns SA4 Region



Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Department of Social Services.

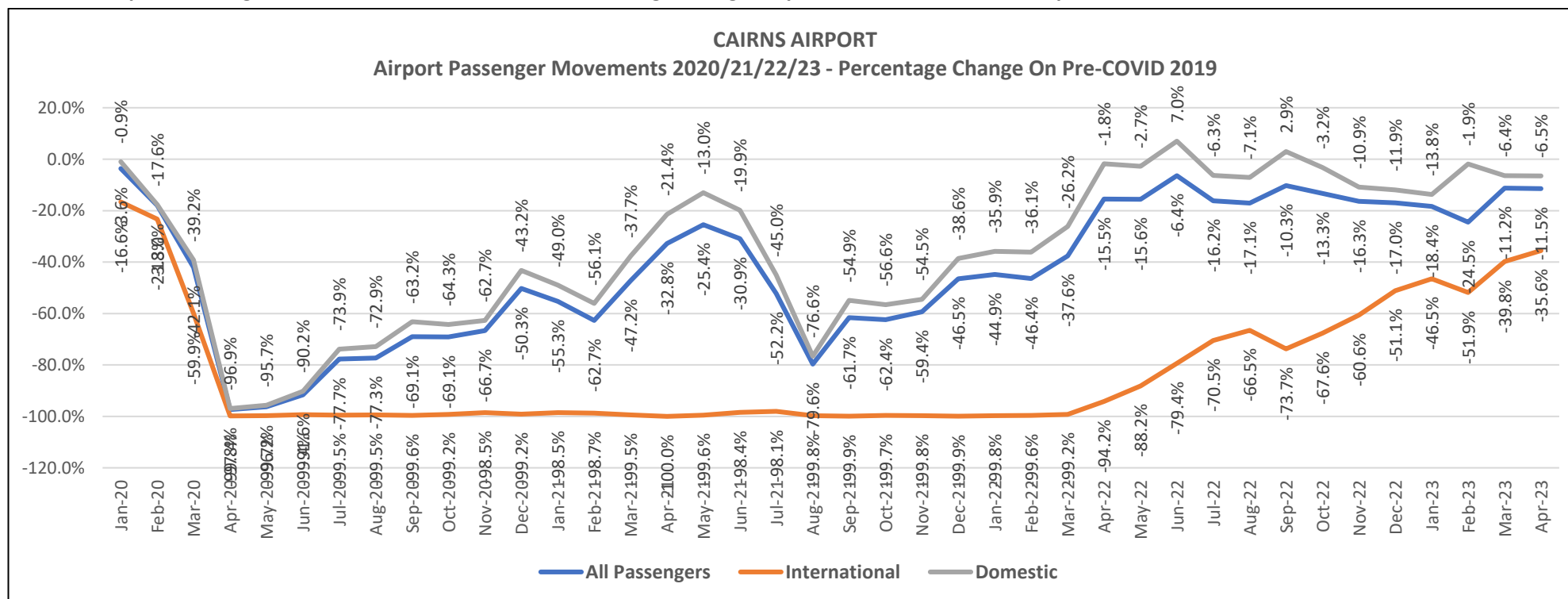


AIRPORT RECOVERY STALLS

The following chart compares airport passenger numbers through the domestic and international terminals and overall, with the same months in 2019 pre-COVID.

They indicate that passenger numbers through the airport overall are 11% down on pre-COVID, the same as the previous month. The domestic terminal remains down about 6%. Recovery through the international terminal continues but still remains 36% down on pre-COVID. If account is taken of that part of the traffic through the domestic terminal that was international visitors entering or exiting Australia via other airports, the indications are that domestic visitor numbers by air are down on last year.

Chart 2 – Airport Passenger Movements 2020/21/22/23 - Percentage Change on pre-COVID 2019 – Cairns Airport



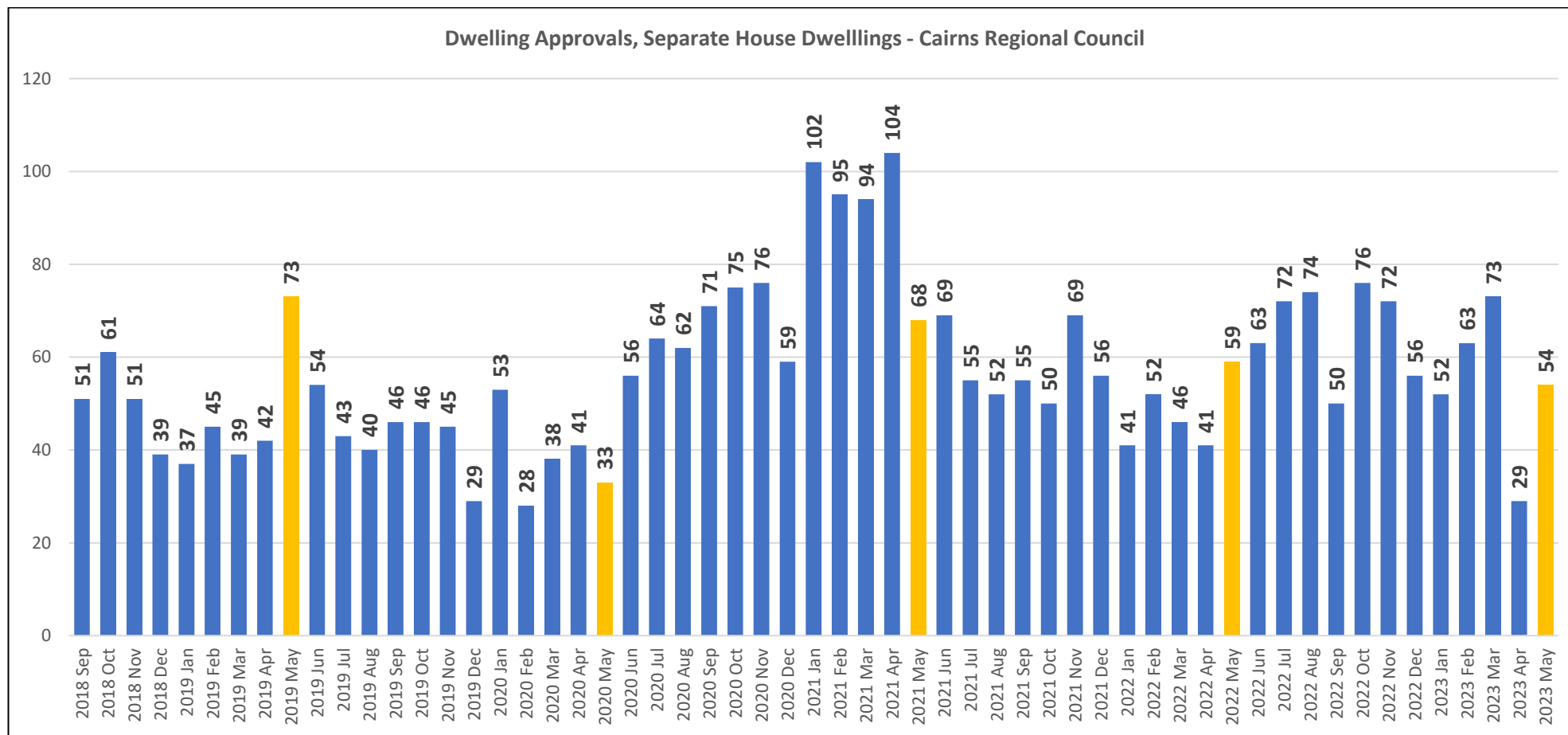
Source: Cummings Economics from Cairns Airport.



CONSTRUCTION – HOUSE BUILDING APPROVALS PATCHY

Cairns Regional Council building approvals for separate house dwellings have become quite variable in the first five (5) months of this year up to end May. April figures were very low but there was some recovery in May.

Chart 3 – Dwelling Approvals, Separate House Dwellings - Cairns Regional Council –



Source: Cummings Economics from Cairns Regional Council.

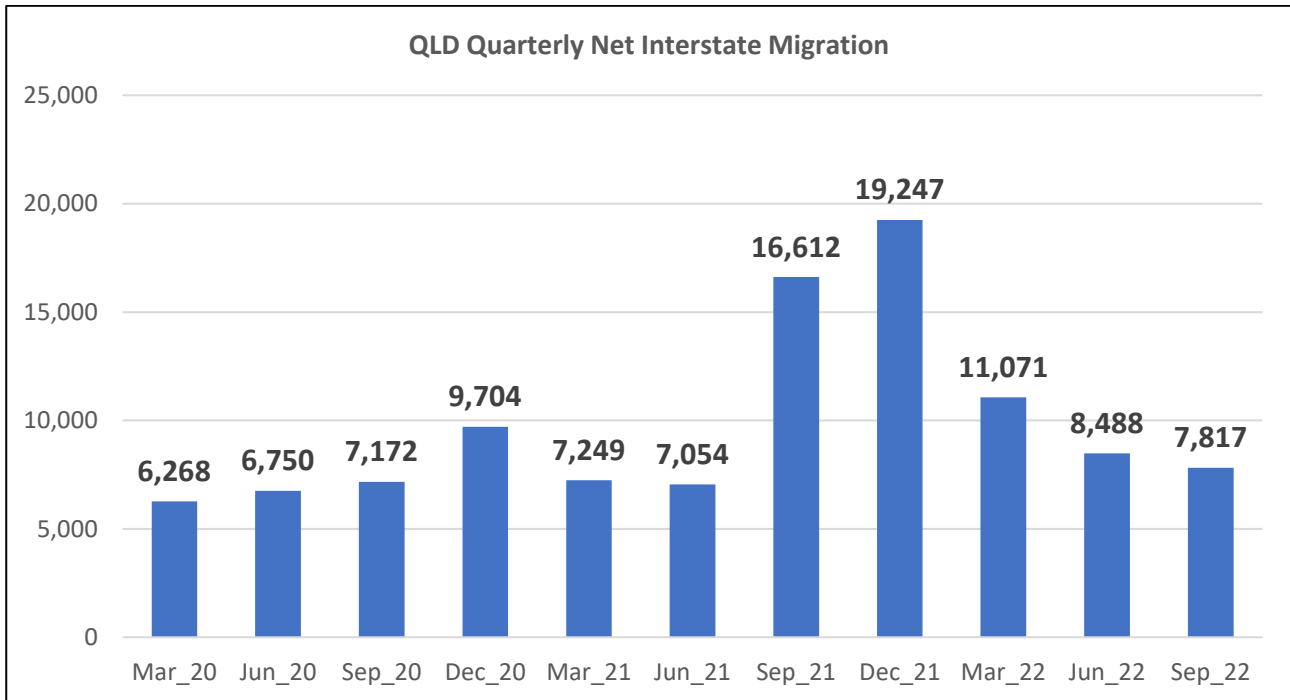


POPULATION GROWTH

It is clear that the bounce in interstate migration into Queensland post-COVID is now over. Population growth figures for 2022-23 for the Cairns region are not likely to be available until April 2024.

However, against this background, they are likely to record a moderation on the levels recorded for 2021-22.

Chart 4 – QLD Quarterly Net Interstate Migration



Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Bureau of Statistics data.