

# CUMMINGS ECONOMICS

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## Statistical Note MARCH 2022 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

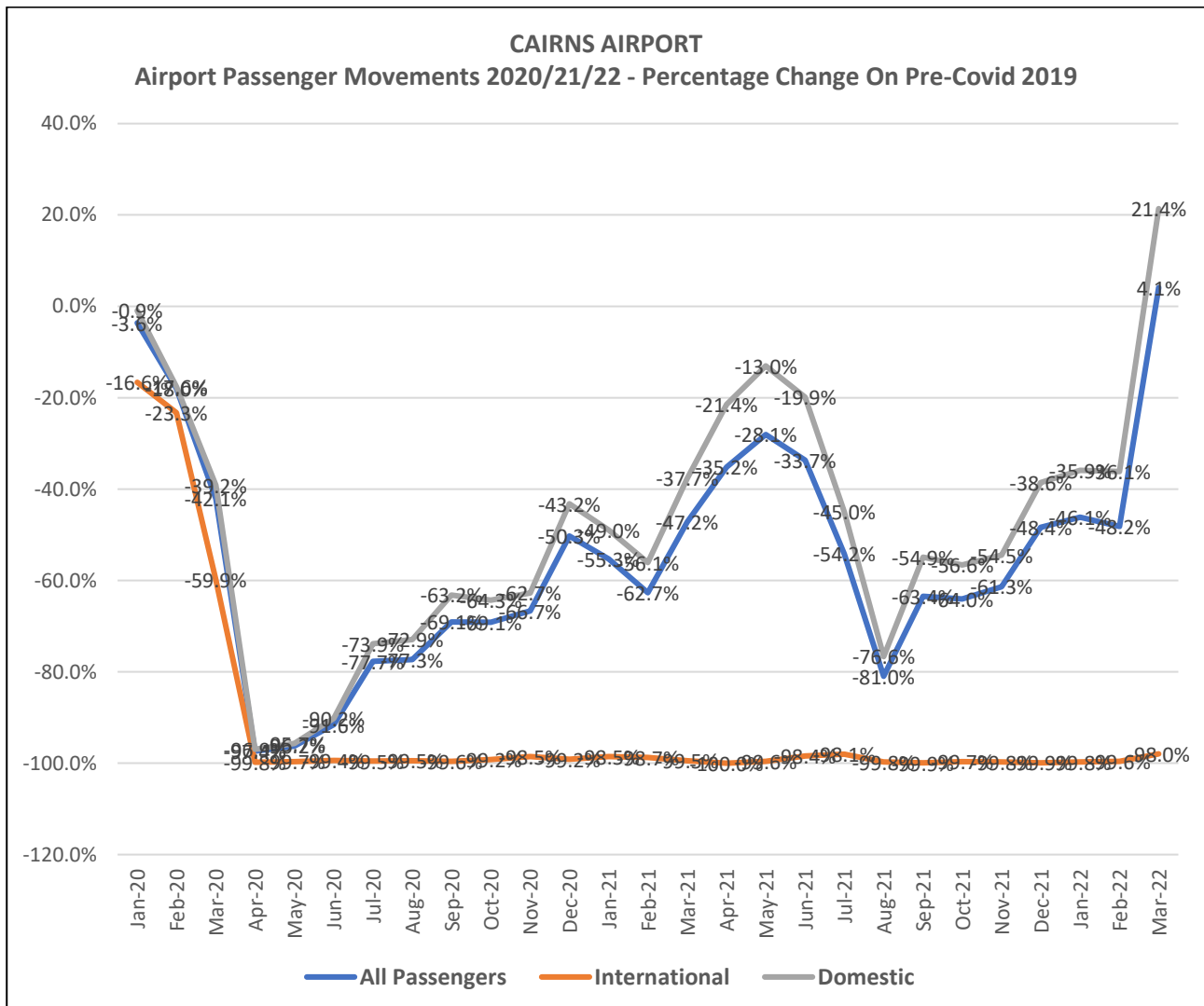
### POST-COVID ON ITS WAY

Available March data indicates progressive easing of restrictions are seeing the regional economy moving into a post-Covid era.

### AIRPORT PASSENGERS COMING BACK

March figures indicate domestic air traffic bouncing back strongly as restrictions lift.

**Chart 1 – Airport Passenger Movements 2020/21/22 - Percentage Change on pre-Covid 2019 – Cairns Airport**

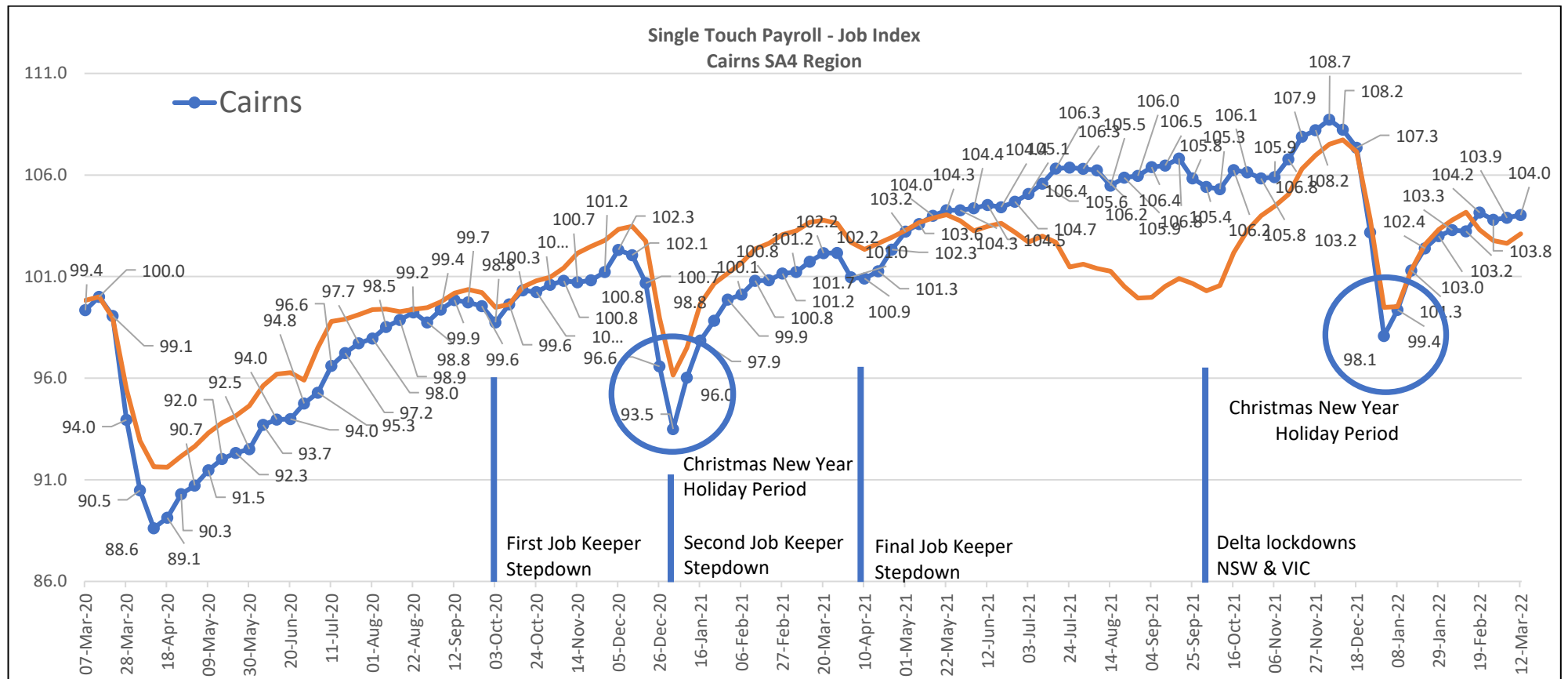


Source: Cummings Economics from Cairns Airport.

**SINGLE TOUCH PAYROLL – JOBS INDEX – SLOW GOING STILL**

December/ January saw the regular dip in the Index occurring over the Xmas/ New Year holidays after a peak in early December/ late November. The figures indicate, when compared with the peak and trough of the previous year, growth of about 3 – 4% both in the region and nationally although some of this growth could reflect more businesses moving on to the Single Touch Payroll System. However, in February and March, growth dropped back to a lower level on the same period in the previous year.

**Chart 2 – Single Touch Payroll – Jobs Index, Cairns SA4 Region & Australia-Wide**



Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Bureau of Statistics.



**JOBSEEKER NUMBERS ABOUT PRE-COVID LEVELS**

After a seasonal lift in December, numbers on JobSeeker unemployment benefits have fallen back down to about 16,000 in March, i.e. just above pre-Covid levels.

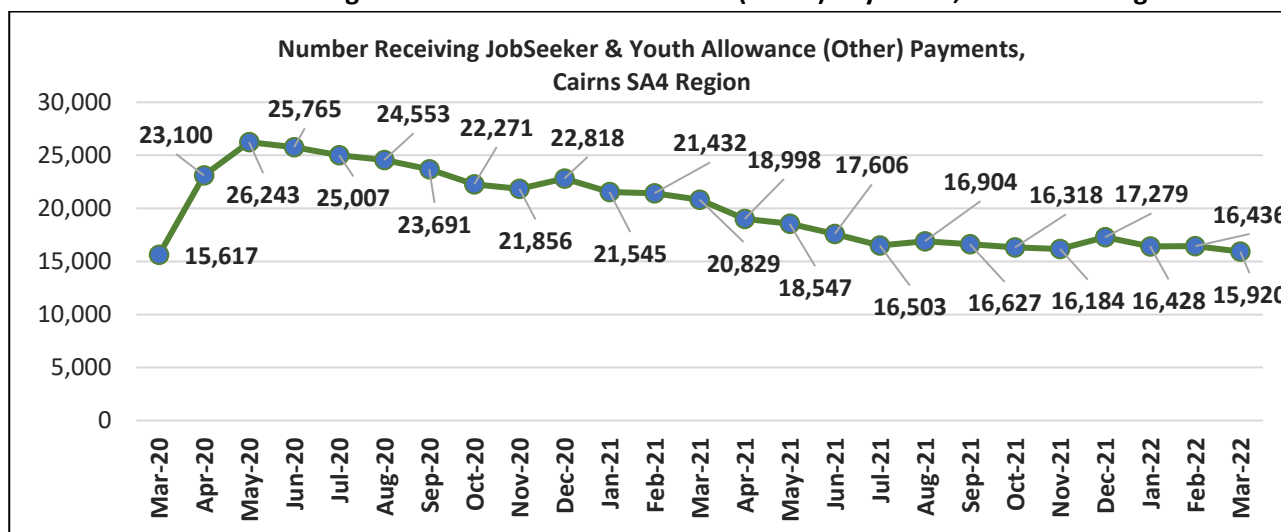
**Table 1 – Numbers Receiving JobSeeker & Youth Allowance (Other)**

Period	Cairns <sup>(1)</sup>	Cairns SA4 Region <sup>(2)</sup>
March 2020	9,256	15,617
April 2020	14,433	23,100
May 2020	16,181	26,243
June 2020	15,871	25,765
July 2020	15,476	25,007
August 2020	15,234	24,553
September 2020	14,651	23,691
October 2020	14,042	22,271
November 2020	13,661	21,856
December 2020	14,153	22,818
January 2021	13,380	21,545
February 2021	13,235	21,432
March 2021	12,824	20,829
April 2021	11,526	18,998
May 2021	11,258	18,547
June 2021	10,588	17,606
July 2021	9,851	16,503
August 2021	9,092	16,904
September 2021	9,930	16,627
October 2021	9,791	16,318
November 2021	9,654	16,184
December 2021	10,285	17,279
January 2022	9,728	16,428
February 2022	9,702	16,436
March 2022	9,449	15,920

Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Department of Social Services.

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

**Chart 3 – Numbers Receiving JobSeeker & Youth Allowance (Other) Payments, Cairns SA4 Region**

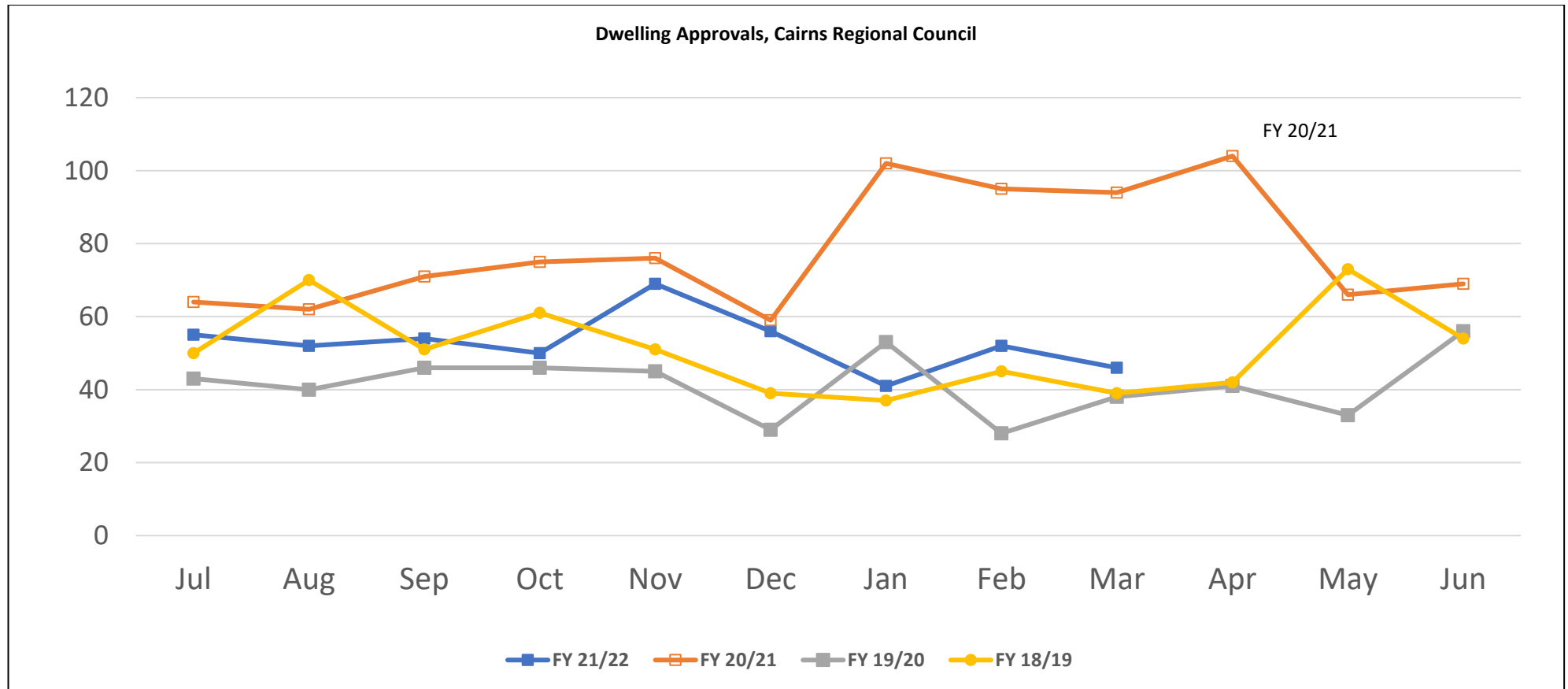


Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Department of Social Services.

**CONSTRUCTION – DWELLING APPROVALS**

The chart indicates a seasonal drop in January in dwelling approvals in Cairns Regional Council area followed by a lift in February and March to above pre-Covid levels, but well down on the very strong levels of approvals in the previous year.

**Chart 4 – Dwelling Approvals, Cairns Regional Council**



Source: Cummings Economics from Cairns Regional Council.

