

# CUMMINGS ECONOMICS

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## Statistical Note AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER 2022 ECONOMIC TRENDS CAIRNS REGION

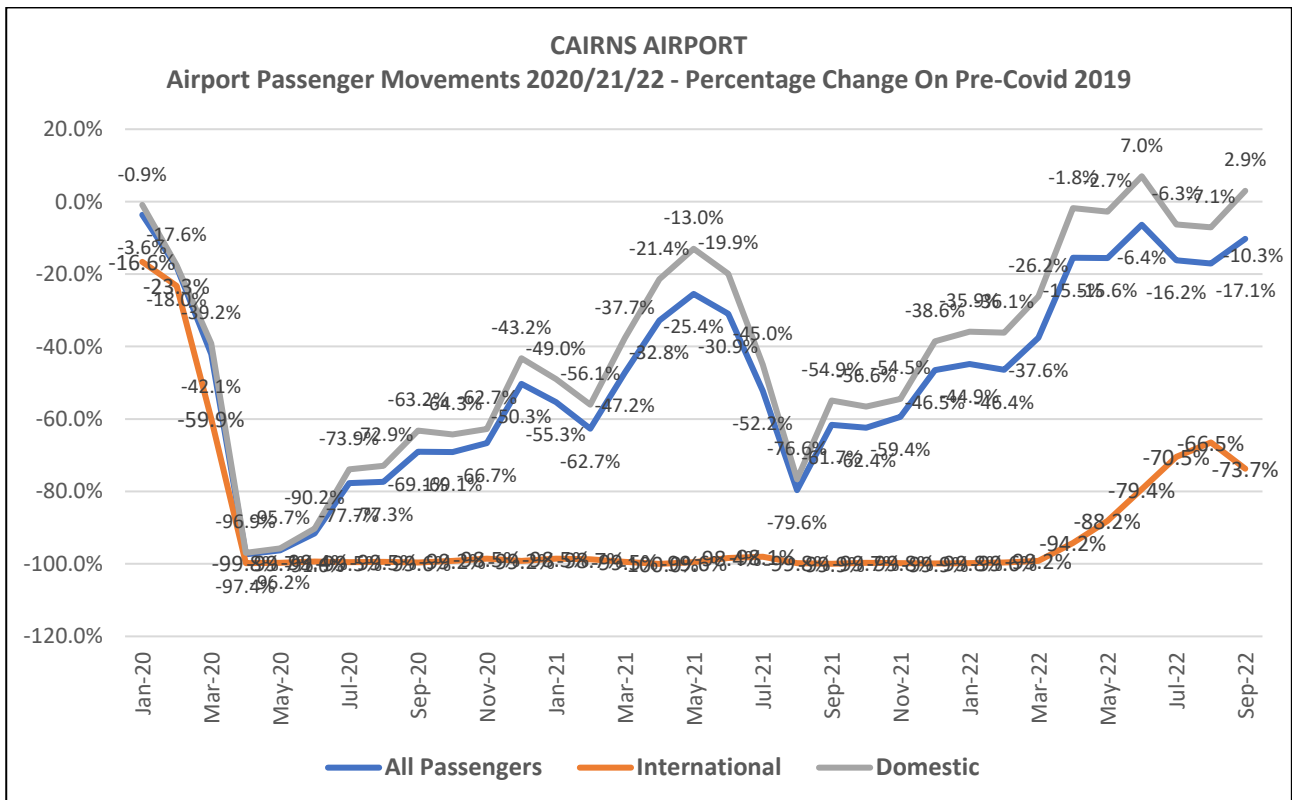
### SOME MIXED SIGNALS

While airport passenger numbers continue to rise compared with pre-Covid (2019) and Council's single residential building approvals moderate again, there are some mild mixed signals in the employment series (see Special Note over).

### TOTAL PAX NUMBERS STILL NOT THERE

Although airport passenger numbers through the domestic terminal in September moved up above 2019 figures indicating a post-Covid surge in domestic tourism, international terminal numbers while recovering, were still down strongly on pre-Covid 2019 figures and overall passengers remained 10% below same month 2019.

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

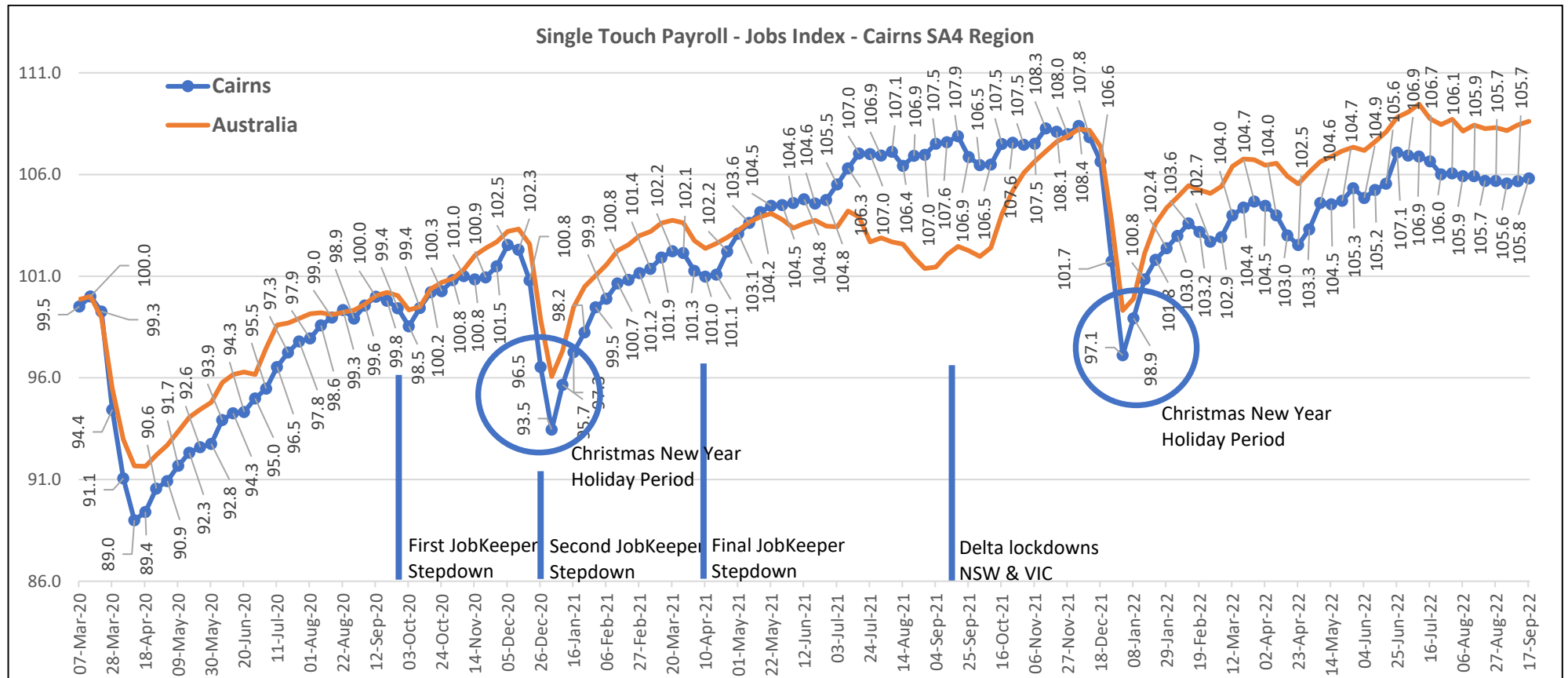


Source: Cummings Economics from Cairns Airport.

**SINGLE TOUCH PAYROLL – JOBS INDEX – FIGURES INDICATE RECOVERY HAS PLATEAUED**

Recent figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Jobs Index based on the Single Touch Payroll reporting system continues to indicate that in the Cairns region, the recovery in job numbers may have plateaued on a seasonal basis and, in fact, the Index is down about 1% compared with same period last year.

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



Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Bureau of Statistics.



### JOBSEEKER NUMBERS MILD DECLINE

Latest figures indicate a drop in the numbers recorded as receiving unemployment benefits to a level below those recorded pre-Covid.

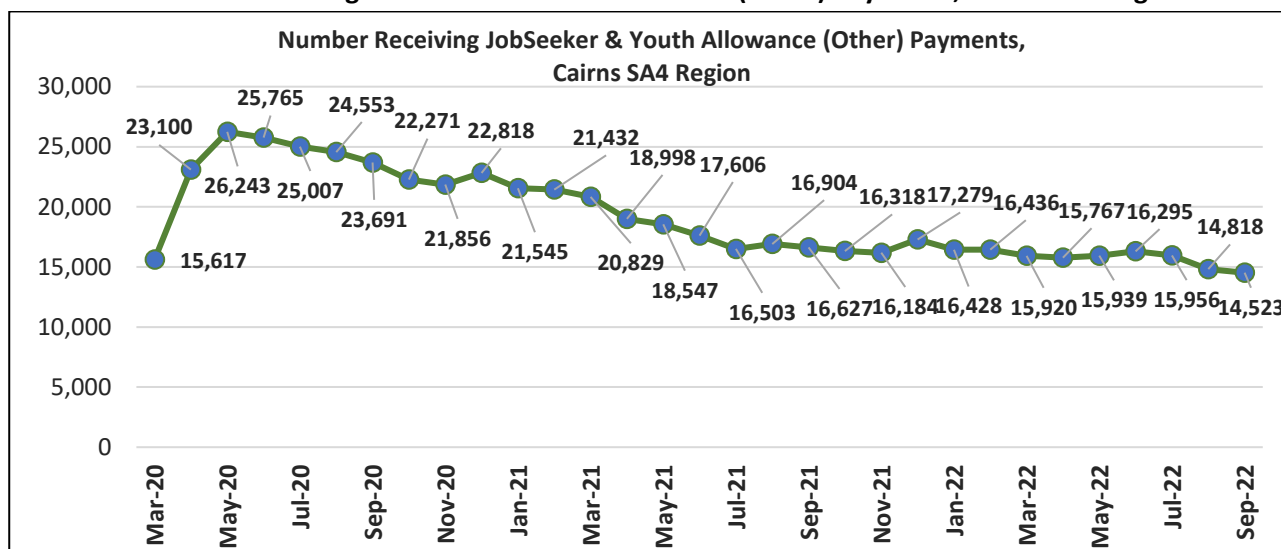
**Table 1 – Numbers Receiving JobSeeker & Youth Allowance (Other)**

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

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**



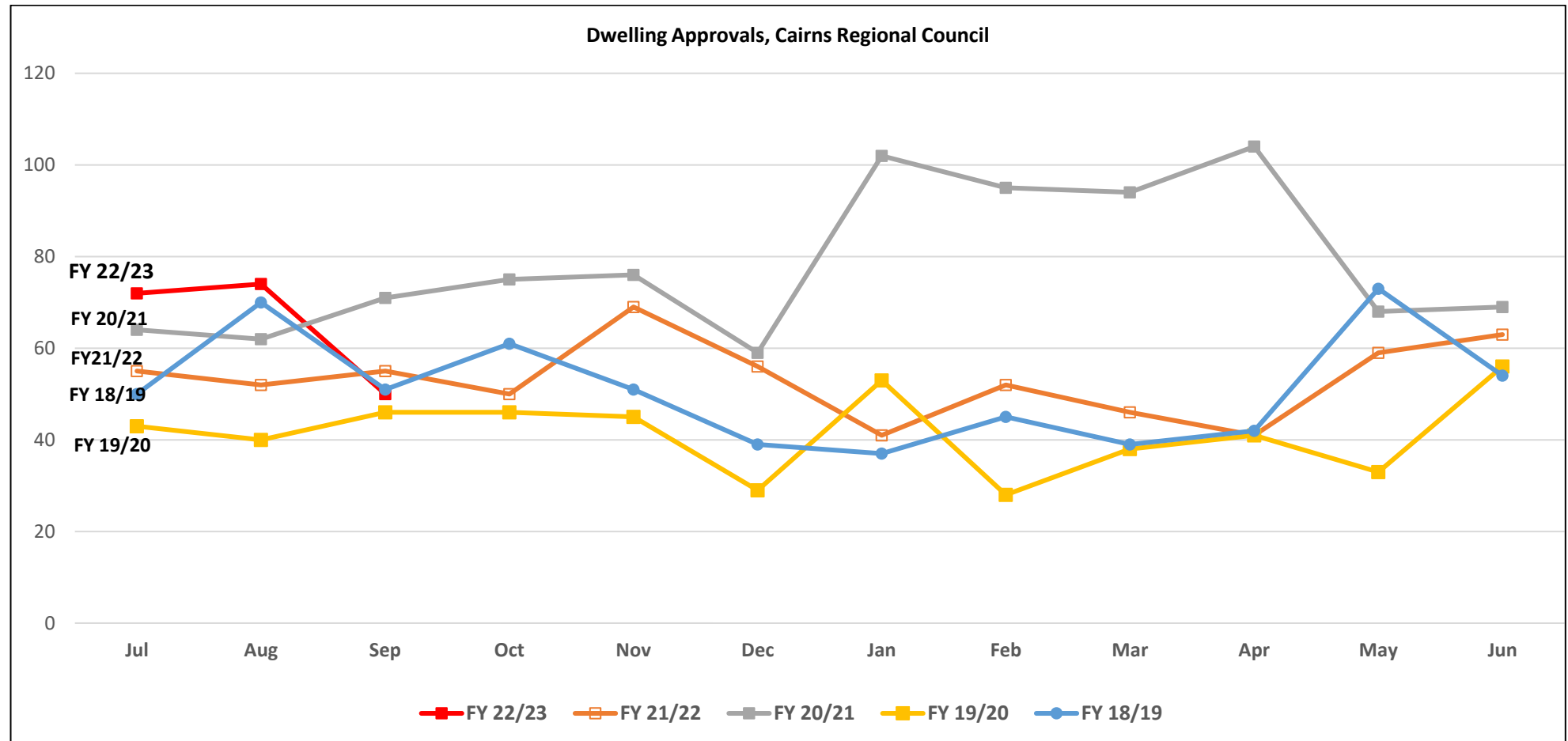
Source: Cummings Economics from Australian Department of Social Services.

**Special Note** - Census data now available indicates that at the time of the 2021 Census in August 2021, there was an increased number of workforce recording that they were in part-time employment or away from work in the Cairns SA4 region. As recorded in previous Chart 2, while the numbers recorded as being employed as per the ABS Single Touch Payroll Index is not showing any increases in recent months compared to same month in 2021, the numbers on JobSeeker (unemployment benefits) have been showing some decline. This could be consistent with a proportion of the workforce on part-time employment or temporarily away from work declining and moving to full-time employment.

### CONSTRUCTION – HOME BUILDING APPROVALS JUMP-UP NOT SUSTAINED

A jump-up of single dwelling approvals to over 70 in July and August was not sustained in September that was back down to 53.

Chart 4 – Dwelling Approvals, Cairns Regional Council



Source: Cummings Economics from Cairns Regional Council.