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17 August, 2015

### SIX-STAR HOTEL TOWER THE CENTREPIECE OF JUPITERS PROJECT



A transformed Jupiters Hotel & Casino will enhance the Gold Coast's reputation as one of the world's top tourist destinations when the global spotlight shines on the region in 2018, according to Echo Entertainment Chairman, John O'Neill AO.

At a ground-breaking ceremony for the new six-star 17-storey hotel tower to be built in front of the existing hotel, and completed in time for the 2018 Commonwealth Games, Mr O'Neill said the development would make the Gold Coast and Queensland justifiably proud.

The tower, comprised exclusively of luxury hotel suites while also showcasing new signature bars and restaurants, private gaming rooms and butler service, is the centrepiece of Echo Entertainment's \$345 million investment in the iconic Jupiters property.

"We are committed to positioning Jupiters as a world-class integrated resort and assist in the exciting transformation of the Gold Coast before, during and after its hosting of the 2018 Commonwealth Games," Mr O'Neill added.

"Our six-star hotel tower has a construction completion date that will ensure its readiness for the Commonwealth Games. The tower will offer new levels of luxury and only the best in finishes and amenities, not to mention six-star service."

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Queensland Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, joined Mr O'Neill, Echo Entertainment CEO, Matt Bekier, and Echo Entertainment Managing Director Queensland, Geoff Hogg, at the groundbreaking event to celebrate a development that will help generate more than 1000 jobs.

Construction of the first six-star hotel to be built on the Gold Coast in more than 15 years will also be undertaken by an industry-leading Australian-based company, it was announced.

Probuild is the successful tenderer for the construction of the new all-suite tower and gaming facilities at Jupiters.

In operation for almost 30 years, and with more than 1300 employees, Probuild has delivered on a diverse range of projects across the country from residential to commercial and entertainment.

“This project is a celebration of the Gold Coast,” said Mr Bekier.

“To that end, we have been working with local designers and international architects to ensure it will resonate with the local community while also driving broader domestic and international appeal.

“These are exciting times for the Gold Coast and we’re delighted to be playing what we believe will be a key role in advancing the growth of tourism and jobs creation in the region.”

The new tower forms an integral part of the property’s transformation and further highlights Echo Entertainment’s commitment to continued investment in south east Queensland, having been announced last month as the preferred proponent to redevelop Queen’s Wharf Brisbane.

The complete redevelopment project at Jupiters will create some 1700 temporary and permanent jobs during its life cycle. This will include 500 jobs during construction of the tower. The number of team members employed at Jupiters – currently 1600 – will also increase to around 2000 by the time the transformation is complete. Jupiters is already one of the Gold Coast’s major employers.

Echo Entertainment also plans to offer additional training and apprenticeships opportunities through the establishment of a world class hospitality school on the Gold Coast and in Brisbane from 2016.

Mr Hogg provided further detail on the tower, saying some suites will boast three or four bedrooms and each will embrace the best of the Gold Coast, with large balconies and captivating city views. An exclusive, high-end lounge bar will also overlook the infinity edge pool

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“The Gold Coast’s reputation as a must-visit destination continues to strengthen with both leisure and business travellers, so we are working to create a broad offering that will help to support this well into the future,” he said.

“We are also creating spaces that cater to the specific needs of individual travellers with some suites to include home offices, extra family rooms, theatres or even private karaoke parlours.

“Suites will also be equipped with digital signage, allowing guests the flexibility to change in-room information into many different languages.

“We are also working on six-star room service, to allow guests to order from any restaurant across the property, or one of the new restaurants, and enjoy dining on their balcony overlooking the Gold Coast skyline.”

Construction work on the new hotel tower will start shortly, and follows the completion last December of significant stage one works that included the opening of two new restaurants – Kiyomi and Cucina Vivo – a new resort pool and bar experience, and the refurbishment of the building façade.

The exterior of the Gold Coast landmark was painted for the first time since its construction with more than 12,000 litres of paint applied over 8,000 hours.

Earlier this year Echo Entertainment moved to the next stage of the redevelopment, commencing what will be a complete refurbishment of the almost 600 rooms in the existing hotel.

One of the most comprehensive and highest value hotel refurbishments ever undertaken in Australia, the revitalisation of the existing rooms, along with some of the initial work around the pool and hotel façade, will cost in the region of \$75 million.

The first of the refurbished hotel rooms are expected to be ready for occupancy at the end of October.

The entire refurbishment, undertaken in a phased approach to minimise disruption, is scheduled for completion by the end of 2016.

Echo Entertainment announced its full year results for FY2015 earlier this week, including net profit after tax of \$169 million, up 59% on FY2014.

Mr Bekier said Echo, with broad-based growth, was excited to be investing in, and delivering on, transformational projects at the Gold Coast and Brisbane, with the company also committed to moving its headquarters to Queensland.

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“In recent times, we have been focussed on investing significantly in our properties,” he said.

“We have been named preferred proponent for the Queen’s Wharf redevelopment in Brisbane and are currently focussed on our considerable program here on the Coast.”

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