3 RESULTS

3.1 Characteristics Of Respondents

As previously stated, the sample is representative of Reef tourism. The following section provides a description of the study respondents. For more precise descriptions of Reef tourism in general, refer to Driml (1987).

Sex: Of respondents interviewed 55% were male and 45% female.

Origin: Respondents came from all around Australia (Table 1).

Table 1 Origin Of Respondent

Origin/Place of Residence	**%**
New South Wales	21.5
Victoria	18.4
Queensland *	15.8
Western Australia	2.3
South Australia	4.0
Tasmania	0.6
northern Territory	1.1
Australian Capital Territory	0.8
Overseas residents	35.6
Total	100.0
...	(n=354)

(* 5.6% of all respondents resided in north Queensland)

First or Return Trip: For 56% of respondents it was their first trip to north Queensland. 13% of respondents were on their second trip, 8% on their third trip, and 17% had travelled to north Queensland on more than three occasions. 8% of respondents had made another trip to the region during the 12 months preceding the interview date, and 3% had made more than one previous trip during that time.

Length of Holiday: While non-local tourists are on holidays away from home, tourists who reside within north Queensland (locals), tended to be on day trips away from home, or on short two or three day holidays. The median value for the length of holiday for locals was one night away from home. Median values are given rather than the mean because the mean value would be skewed by the presence of extreme values by tourists on extended holidays. For other Australians, the median value for nights away from home was 14, with the median value for nights spent in north Queensland being 10. Australians tend to have one to three week holidays in north Queensland.

International tourists have a median value of 33 nights away from home, with a median of 8 nights in north Queensland. They tend to have one to two month long holidays spending one to two weeks in north Queensland. However, 20% of international tourists were on extended holidays spending over three months away from home.

Major Forms of Accommodation: 57% in hotel or motel accommodation; 14% camping; 6% in private homes; 6% in caravans; and 5% staying in youth hostels. Various other forms of accommodation accounted for the remaining 12% of respondents.

Major Form of Transport to the Region: plane 66%; car (19%); bus (4%); and train (3%).

Major Form of Transport within the Region: 23% of respondents travelled by private car; 16% by bus; 12% by rental car; and 9% by plane. 26% of respondents indicated they did not require any form of transport whilst in the region (generally resort guests).

Socio-economic Status: Respondents tended to be from the upper levels of socio-economic status. The majority, 73% were members of the workforce, of which 45% were classified as in professional or technical employment. A further 12% were in management or administration, 12% employed as tradespeople, 9% as clerical workers, and 9% in retail or service industries. 13% were in other forms of employment. Respondents not currently in the workforce included: students (8%); home duties (6%); retired (5%); and 4% were unemployed.

Education: Respondents had high levels of education: 46% held a tertiary degree; 23% had completed secondary school; and 13% had a trade or nursing certificate. The remaining 18% had left school at various times prior to the completion of secondary school.

Income: Respondents tended to have high gross family incomes as shown in Table 2 below. However, low levels of income were recorded for some respondents who were on lengthy vacations, thus not being a representation of their normal income level. The mean gross family income was conservatively calculated to be $34,000 by using the mid point of each category and a conservative $60,000 from the top category. Using a higher value to represent the $50,000 plus category could substantially increase the estimate of the mean gross family income, as over 28% of respondents had an income of over $50,000.

Age: Respondents were from all age categories (see Table 3) with a mean age of 36 years.

3.2 Reasons For Visiting North Queensland This Holiday

Respondents were asked, in an open ended question, to describe their reasons for visiting the north Queensland coastal region. The Weather was the most frequent response given as to why people come to north Queensland for their holiday (see Table 4). The Reef also appears to be important. Other features of north Queensland, for example Rainforests, are not so important but could be affected by the methodology of this study.

Responses to direct questions, as opposed to open ended questions, may be a better indicator of the relative importance of all the features of north Queensland. Because of the large number of categories, and the small number of responses recorded by each category, the categories have been combined into 13 categories for further analysis (see Table 4).

Table 2 Income Profile Of Reef Visitors

Income ($)	%
No income	3.6
0 - 5,999	7.8
6,000 - 11,999	3.3
12,000 - 17,999	9.9
18,000 - 25,999	15.8
26,000 - 31,999	10.4
32,000 - 39,999	11.0
40,000 - 49,999	10.0
50,000 +	28.7
Total	100.0
...	(n=335)

4 missing cases
9 refusals (2.5%)
6 don't know

Table 3 Age Profile Of Reef Visitors

Age	%
15-19	4.0
20-24	19.8
25-29	17.8
30-39	24.0
40-49	15.9
50-59	9.3
60 +	9.1
Total	100.0
...	(n=353)

1 missing case

Table 4 Reasons For Visiting North Queensland This Holiday **(breakdown)**

		SEASON		ORIGIN OF TOURIST			TOURIST STATUS				
	OVERALL	Winter	Summer	Local	Aust	over-seas	Reef Day Trip	Resort Guest	Island Day Trip	Camper	Main-land
	(column percentages, multiple responses)										
weather	31	43	14	23	34	27	21	34	29	34	60
reef	22	22	21	15	13	37	28	19	21	28	7
relaxation	14	18	8	31	19	2	2	22	9	17	13
sightseeing	14	15	11	15	11	16	16	18	7	7	20
new	12	11	13	15	11	12	17	10	14	3	7
water activities	10	11	8	8	11	7	12	6	5	21	27
part of trip	10	5	18	0	9	14	17	6	13	3	13
visit friends	8	10	4	8	10	4	2	3	17	14	7
social	6	4	10	8	8	4	2	10	5	7	7
work	6	8	4	8	7	5	7	5	10	0	7
unique environment	6	7	3	0	7	5	5	3	7	10	13
repeat visit	5	3	7	0	7	1	7	7	3	0	0
money	3	3	3	0	4	1	3	2	3	3	7

	PREVIOUS CORAL EXPERIENCE					DIVER STATUS		FISHER STATUS	
	First Trip	Return Visit	GBR exp	other place	No exp	Non Diver	Diver	Non Fisher	Fisher
weather	25	41	35	30	29	33	20	30	35
reef	27	15	16	33	17	23	14	20	27
relaxation	9	17	17	7	16	13	14	13	17
sightseeing	16	10	10	12	18	14	9	14	12
new	16	7	4	16	15	12	11	12	10
water activities	5	16	16	10	3	7	23	8	17
part of trip	14	6	4	12	14	10	14	10	12
visit friends	8	8	8	9	7	8	4	9	2
social	5	8	10	2	7	6	11	6	6
work	7	6	6	6	7	7	4	6	8
unique environment	4	9	10	4	3	6	7	5	10
repeat visit	2	9	9	2	3	5	2	4	6
money	2	5	4	1	3	3	2	3	2

420 responses, n = 282
Respondents were allowed up to 3 responses.
Mean number of responses per respondent was 1.5.
72 missing cases due to 2 interviewers failing to ask this question. This is not likely to bias the results.

The factors affecting reason for visiting north Queensland this holiday are as follows:

Season
The two most common responses in Winter were the Weather (43%) and the Reef (22%), whereas in Summer the two most common responses were the Reef (21%) and Part of Trip (18%)

There were a number of differences between the Winter and Summer season in the reason for coming to north Queensland. These differences were probably due to the composition of tourists in each season. In particular, the Weather was stated more often in the Winter season (43%) than in the Summer season (14%), as was to Relax (18% vs 8%), Visit Friends and Relatives (10% vs 4%), and Water Based Activities (11% vs 8%). In contrast, Part of Trip was stated more often in the Summer season (18% vs 5%), as was Social reasons (10% vs 4%).

Origin of Tourist
For tourists from overseas the two most common responses were the Reef (37%) and the Weather (27%), while for Australians the two most common responses were the Weather (34%) and to Relax (19%). For locals, the two most common responses were to Relax (31%) and the Weather (23%).

Whereas international tourists were the most likely to state that the Reef was the reason why they came to north Queensland (37%), 13% of Australian tourists and 15% for locals stated so. Locals and Australian tourists were more likely to give to Relax as a response (31% and 19% respectively) than were international tourists (2%).

Tourist Status
Respondents were classified into visitor categories, i.e. Day Tripper, Resort Guest or Camper, with respect to the location where the interview took place, and on the day the interview took place. For some locations, e.g. outer reefs, the only type of visitor status possible is day tripping. Respondents interviewed at these locations were grouped together. For the few people interviewed at mainland locations, visitor status also was not applicable, and they were also grouped together.

There were considerable differences in the reason for coming to north Queensland for this holiday between the different categories. For all groups except Reef day trippers, the most frequent response was the Weather. Weather was the second most frequent response for Reef day trippers, whose most frequent response was the Reef. For campers and day trippers to Resort Islands, the second most frequent response was the Reef. For resort guests, the second most frequent response was to Relax, while for mainlanders, the second most frequent response was Water Based Activities.

First Trip to north Queensland
First timers' two most frequent responses were the Reef (27%) and the Weather (25%). Repeat visitors' two most frequent responses were the Weather (41%) and Relaxation (17%). Tourists on their first trip to north Queensland were most likely to give the reasons: Part of Trip (14% vs 6%), See Something New (16% vs 7%), the Reef (27% vs 15%), and to Sightsee (16% vs 10%). Return tourists were more likely to give the following reasons: the Weather (41% vs 25%), Water Based Activities (16% vs 5%), to Relax (17% vs 9%), and Unique Environment (9% vs 4%).

Previous Coral Experience
Tourists with previous coral experience on the Great Barrier Reef gave as their two most frequent responses, the Weather (35%) and Relaxation (17%). Tourists with coral experience only in other parts of the world gave the Reef as their most frequent response (33%) and the Weather (30%). Tourists with no coral experience gave the Weather (29%) and to Sightsee

(18%) as their most frequent responses. Tourists with previous coral experience in other places in the world were the most likely to give the Reef as a reason for coming to north Queensland (33%) compared to tourists who had no coral experience (17%), or tourists who had coral experience on the Great Barrier Reef before (16%).

Diver Status

The two most frequent responses given by divers were Water Based Activities (23%) and the Weather (20%), while for non-divers it was the Weather (33%) and the Reef (23%).

Non-divers were the most likely to state the Weather (33% vs 20%), and the Reef (23% vs 14%) as reasons for coming to north Queensland for their holiday. Divers were the most likely to give Water Based Activities (23% vs 7%). This is partly because diving was classified as a water based activity. However, if the respondent was to give 'diving on the reef' as their response, both diving and the reef would be classified as their reasons.

It does appear, therefore, that divers are less interested in the reef than non-divers, being more concerned with diving than the reef per se. However, it may be possible that the Reef is regarded to be a good dive site, and that respondents imply that the reef is important in their holiday in terms of their diving, even though this is not explicitly stated in their response. This finding should be used with caution until further research into the importance of the reef to divers.

Fishing Status

For both fishers and non-fishers the two most frequent responses were the Weather (fishers 35%, non-fishers 30%) and the Reef (27% and 20%). Fishers were more likely than non-fishers to give the Reef (27% vs 20%), Water Based Activities (17% vs 8%), and Unique Environment (10% vs 5%) as responses for coming to north Queensland. Non-fishers were more likely than fishers to give Visit Friends and Relatives (9% vs 2%) as a reason.

3.3 Likes About North Queensland

Respondents were asked, again to an open ended question, what they liked about north Queensland (see Table 5). The Weather was the best attribute of north Queensland. Other features of north Queensland appear to be relatively insignificant in comparison to this large response. However, as an open ended question, the responses say more about immediate concerns and thoughts of tourists than it does about realistic and well thought out responses. If it is Winter, a sunny day, and the Respondent is from Victoria, the fact that the weather is stated is hardly surprising. Similarly, that National Parks were mentioned only by one person does not indicate that tourists do not like National Parks. Put as a direct question most people would have said that they liked National Parks.

Because of the large number of categories, and the small number of responses recorded by each category, the categories have been combined into 15 categories for further analysis (see Table 5).

The factors affecting likes about north Queensland are as follows:

Season
There were virtually no differences in the responses of tourists in Winter compared to responses in Summer in likes about north Queensland. In both seasons the two most frequent responses were the Weather (59% for both seasons) and the general Atmosphere of north Queensland (36% Winter, 31% Summer). The only differences worthy of comment were that in Winter, 10% of respondents said that north Queensland was Different, while only 2% gave this response in Summer. 7% of respondents in Summer stated that they liked Water Activities (swimming, fishing, diving), while only 1% gave this response in Winter.

Origin of Tourist
For all three groups the two most frequent responses were the Weather (65% local, 62% Australians, 52% International tourists) and the General Atmosphere (30%, 31%, 38%).

Locals and Australians were more likely to give the Weather as a response than were international tourists (65%, 62%, 52% respectively). Australians were more likely to give the Rainforest as a response than either international tourists or locals (8% vs 5% and 0% respectively) as well as the Sea (18% vs 12% and 15%). International tourists were more likely to give the Reef (27%) as a response than were Australians (14%) or locals (0%), as well as Natural History (12%, 6%, 5% respectively) and the General Atmosphere of north Queensland (38%, 31%, 30%).

Tourist Status
All types of tourist, except those interviewed on the mainland, gave the Climate as their most frequent response as to their likes about north Queensland. Mainlanders most frequent response was the General Atmosphere of north Queensland. This was the second most frequent response for all groups except for Campers, whose second most frequent response was the Reef. The second most frequent response for Mainlanders was the Climate.

First Trip to north Queensland
For both first timers and return visitors, the Weather and General Atmosphere were the two most frequent responses.

Repeat visitors to the Reef were more likely than first timers to suggest that the Weather (70% vs 50%), the Sea (21% vs 12%), and Relaxedness (15% vs 7%) were things they liked about north Queensland. First timers were more likely than repeat visitors to respond that the General Atmosphere (36% vs 29%) was something that they liked about north Queensland.

Previous Coral Experience
Given that tourists with previous coral experience on the Great Barrier Reef are repeat visitors to the reef, there was very little additional differences in response to likes about north Queensland between those tourists who had previous coral experience on the Great Barrier Reef, at other places in the world, and those who have no previous experience. For all three groups the Weather and the General Atmosphere of north Queensland were the two most frequent responses.

Diver Status
For divers, the two most frequent responses were the Weather (66%) and the Reef (29%), while for non-divers the two most frequent responses were the Weather (58%) and the General Atmosphere (36%). Divers were more likely than non-divers to give the Weather (66% vs 58%), the Reef (29% vs 15%), the Sea (20% vs 15%), and Water Activities (12% vs 2%). Non-divers were more likely than divers to give General Atmosphere as a response (36% vs 19%).

Fishing Status

There were no differences between fishers and non-fishers in their responses to likes about north Queensland. For both groups the two most frequent responses were the Weather (59% each) and the General Atmosphere (38% and 32%).

3.4 Dislikes About North Queensland

Respondents were also asked about what they disliked about north Queensland (see Table 6). While 42% of tourists disliked Nothing about north Queensland, the features of north Queensland that were most disliked were Stingers (11%), Humidity (9%) and Rain (4%) and Over-development (6%). Because of the large number of categories, and the small number of respondents in each category, these categories have been condensed into eight more comprehensive categories (see Table 6).

The factors affecting dislikes about north Queensland are as follows:

Season
In both Summer and Winter, the most frequent complaint was Nothing (43% and 40%). In Winter, the second most frequent complaints were Transport (12%) and Over Development (12%). while in Summer the second most frequent dislike was Nasties (19%). Nasties refers to annoying animals, insects and marine life. The higher incidence of Nasties in Summer is due to the number of complaints about stingers.

Winter tourists were more likely to complain about Over Development (12% vs 3%), and Transport issues (12% vs 7%), i.e. roads etc, than Summer tourists. Summer tourists were more likely to complain about the weather (17% vs 11%) and Nasties (19% vs 10%).

Origin of Tourist
For all three groups, the most frequent complaint was Nothing (40% local, 37% Australian, 50% international). For Australians and overseas tourists, Nasties were the second most frequent response (15% and 14%), while for locals, the Weather was the second most frequent dislike about north Queensland (35%).

Curiously, it was the locals who were more inclined to complain about the Weather (35%, compared to 13% for Australians or international tourists), or Nasties (30%, compared to 15% for Australians and 14% for international tourists). International tourists were the most likely to have no complaints (50% vs 40% Locals, 37% Australians). Australians were the most likely to complain about Over Development (9% vs 5% international, 0% Locals), and Transport (14% vs 10% Locals, 6% international tourists). The larger number of complaints from Australians about Transport reflects the fact that in this study 30% of Australians drove to the region.

Tourist Status
Nothing was the most frequent response by all categories of tourist. However, only 20% of campers gave this response, while 53% of Resort Guests gave this response, compared with 38% Reef day trippers, 37% island day trippers, and 45% of people interviewed on the mainland.

Table 6 Dislikes About North Queensland **(breakdown)**

		SEASON		ORIGIN OF TOURIST			TOURIST STATUS				
	OVERALL	Winter	Summer	Local	Aust	over-seas	Reef Day Trip	Resort Guest	Island Day Trip	Camper	Main-land
		(column percentages, multiple responses)									
nothing	42	40	43	40	37	50	38	53	37	20	45
nasties	15	10	19	20	15	14	13	12	17	18	20
weather	14	11	17	35	13	13	12	16	13	16	5
transport	9	12	7	10	11	6	12	4	11	16	10
over development	7	12	3	0	9	5	12	4	7	11	5
resorts	6	6	6	0	6	7	8	4	4	9	10
unfriendly people	5	6	4	0	7	2	2	2	8	7	15
other	10	15	7	10	12	8	8	9	11	14	15

	PREVIOUS CORAL EXPERIENCE					DIVER STATUS		FISHER STATUS	
	First trip	Return visit	GBR exp	other place	No exp	Non Diver	Diver	Non Fisher	Fisher
nothing	47	34	29	47	49	43	36	44	33
nasties	11	19	19	10	14	13	22	14	16
weather	11	15	19	12	11	14	16	14	12
transport	7	11	12	7	8	9	10	8	12
over development	8	6	7	7	7	7	5	7	9
resorts	7	5	4	7	6	6	5	6	3
unfriendly people	5	6	6	4	5	5	5	5	5
other	9	12	12	11	8	10	10	9	16

383 responses, n = 340

Respondents were allowed up to 3 responses.
Mean number of responses per respondent was 1.1.
14 missing cases from people who had not been in the region long enough to comment, or who otherwise did not know.

3.6 Worst Experience This Holiday

Tourists were also asked to describe their worst experience this holiday. 31% of all tourists considered that they had no worst experience to report. The wide range of responses given can be collapsed into a smaller number of categories for further analysis (see Table 8).

In the new categorization, the worst experience given by the second largest number of people was travelling, being given by 16% of tourists. 14% had worst experiences relating to other people. For 12%, the weather was the worst experience, while another 12% befell a personal accident or misfortune.

The factors affecting worst experience this holiday are as follows:

Season
There was very little difference between seasons in the response given to this question.

Origin of Tourist
Australians were the most likely to consider that they had no worst experience (33%), whereas 28% of international tourists, and only 15% of locals stated they had no worst experience to report. International tourists were the most likely to consider that travelling was the worst experience (24%). Locals were the most likely to have suffered from personal accidents or misfortunes (39%).

Tourist Status
Resort guests were the most likely to report that they had no worst experience (39%). Campers were the least likely to state that they had no worst experience (10%). Campers were the most likely to give the weather as their worst experience (21%).

First Trip to north Queensland
Tourists on return trips to north Queensland were more likely than first timers to state that they had no worst experience (35% vs 29%).

Previous Coral Experience
There were only small differences in responses between tourists in terms of their previous experience with coral.

Diver Status
There were no differences worth mentioning between divers and non-divers in terms of their worst experience.

Fishing Status
Non-fishers were more likely than fishers to state that they had no worst experience to report (33% vs 20%). Fishers were more likely than non-fishers to complain about the weather (16% vs 11%) and to report worst experiences involving personal accidents or misfortunes (20% vs 10%).

Table 8 *Worst Experience This Holiday* **(breakdown)**

		SEASON		ORIGIN OF TOURIST			TOURIST STATUS				
	OVERALL	Winter	Summer	Local	Aust	over-seas	Reef Day Trip	Resort Guest	Island Day Trip	Camper	Main-land
		(column percentages)									
none	31	29	32	15	33	28	28	39	31	10	22
travel	16	15	17	0	12	24	19	12	18	21	17
related to others	14	13	15	23	14	14	11	14	13	21	17
weather	12	11	13	8	11	13	14	11	10	21	0
personal accident	12	12	11	39	13	7	5	16	10	15	6
bad accommodation	7	11	4	0	10	3	9	5	7	3	22
travel problems	5	7	3	0	4	7	9	3	7	0	11
insects, stingers	3	2	4	8	2	4	4	1	1	10	6
other	1	1	1	8	1	1	2	0	3	0	0

	PREVIOUS CORAL EXPERIENCE					DIVER STATUS			FISHER STATUS
	First trip	Return visit	GBR exp	other place	No exp	Non Diver	Diver	Non Fisher	Fisher
none	29	35	33	28	31	32	26	33	20
travel	19	14	13	18	17	17	10	15	20
related to others	13	15	14	16	12	13	18	15	11
weather	15	8	9	16	11	12	12	11	16
personal accident	10	12	14	6	14	10	20	10	20
bad accommodation	6	10	7	5	8	8	4	6	9
travel problems	5	5	5	7	3	5	4	6	2
insects, stingers	3	2	3	2	4	2	8	3	2
other	1	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	0

(n=305)

Respondents were allowed only 1 response.
49 missing cases from people who had not been in the region long enough to comment.

3.7 Enjoyment Of Holiday

Tourists were asked to rate each item on a list of items comprising activities often undertaken in terms of their enjoyment on this holiday (see Tables 9 and 10).

Overall, to relax was the most important 'activity' with a mean score of 1.3 (1 very important, 2 somewhat important, 3 not very important, 4 not important at all). Other important features were a warm sunny climate (1.4), a natural environment (1.5), to enjoy scenery (1.5), and friendly people (1.6). Seeing coral was somewhat important (2.0), but was more important for international tourists (1.7) than for Australians (2.1) or locals (2.4).

The factors affecting enjoyment of holiday were as follows:

Season
There were little differences between seasons. The most obvious difference was that swimming was more important in Summer than in Winter (1.7 vs 2.1). This was also the case for snorkelling (2.2 vs 2.5) and other sporting activities (2.5 vs 2.8). Fishing, however, was more important in Winter than in Summer (3.1 vs 3.4).

Night life and entertainment was also more important in Summer than in Winter (2.7 vs 3.1) but still tends to be not very important.

Origin of Tourist
To relax was more important for locals (1.0) and other Australians (1.2) than for international tourists (1.5). For international tourists the most important activity in terms of enjoyment of this holiday was to see something new (1.2, compared to 1.8 and 1.7 for locals and Australians). Seeing coral was more important for international tourists (1.7) than for Australians (2.1) or locals (2.4).

Overall, items relating to relaxing in general, e.g. to relax, to get away from everything, sunbathing, and fishing, were more important to Australians and locals than they were to international tourists. On the other hand, items relating to discovery, e.g. scenery, see something new, see coral, nature walks, country towns, and historical places, were more important to international tourists than they were to Australians or locals. The reef and coral and marine life were far more important to international tourists (1.3, 1.5) than they are to Australians (2.1, 2.2) or to locals (2.1, 2.4).

Tourist Status
Many differences were recorded between the groups representing different types of tourist. Resort guests tended to place more importance on those items that are associated with relaxation, e.g. a warm sunny climate, to get away from everything, a coastal location, visiting islands, swimming, sunbathing, and other sporting activities. Whereas they placed least importance on the reef and coral.

Reef Day trippers and day trippers to resort islands tended to place more importance on the discovery items, to enjoy scenery, see something new, see coral, nature walks, national parks, country towns, historical places, and sugar cane.

Campers placed importance on a mixture of discovery and relaxation items but also placed greater importance on activities such as snorkelling, diving and fishing. The campers category is a composite group comprising two groups of campers. One group would consist of campers on resort islands who are primarily after a low cost relaxation type holiday. The second group comprises people who are dedicated divers who have gone to dive locations such as North West, Masthead, and Lady Musgrave Islands, where there are only limited facilities.