

True partnership needed for tourism recovery

When the new Government is elected, tourism operators will be looking for a clear signal that it is willing to work in close partnership on rebuilding the industry, Tourism Industry Aotearoa says.

"Tourism was the first industry to be hit by the pandemic and will be the last to recover. We need a public sector that works with the tourism industry to address immediate needs and achieve long-term aspirations," TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

"All parts of Government must understand their impact on tourism and the need to steer the waka in the same direction. Leadership and direction have to come from the top."

TIA's [Tourism Election 2020 Action Plan](#) identifies 'Partnership' as one of the six categories where action will be required from the incoming Government. It has listed 11 action points in this category.

"The new Government's first action to demonstrate support for the revitalisation of our industry must be to allocate the Tourism portfolio to a senior Minister. The portfolio has been held by the Prime Minister or a front bench MP since 2008, reflecting its importance to New Zealand's economy," Mr Roberts says.

"The need for an Associate Minister is also obvious, to stay across all the issues and help manage the workload."

TIA wants the [Tourism Recovery Ministers' Group](#), set up by the current Government, to continue after the election.

The association will also take a close interest in the progress of the [Tourism Futures Taskforce](#).

"The Taskforce is a creation of Government but has private sector input. It must listen and take guidance from a wide range of sectors and interests," Mr Roberts says.

TIA is in no doubt that further direct financial support for tourism businesses will be needed. But the support is not just about money. The incoming Government must commit to providing the policy settings to enable the fastest recovery possible, along with easing international travel restrictions as soon as it is safe to do so.

Looking beyond immediate needs, the industry wants a Government that will work with it to identify national tourism infrastructure priorities and include these in its infrastructure strategies.

"Prior to the pandemic, we had identified that the growth in visitor numbers was putting pressure on some communities, mainly because of a lack of infrastructure. We now have a never to be repeated opportunity to plan for a well-supported, sustainable tourism industry, and we must not miss this chance," he says.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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“Other countries are grasping the opportunity. For example, the West Australian Government has announced a AUD\$230 million investment in upgrading tourism infrastructure. Here, the International Visitor Levy account has close to \$45 million in unspent funds, collected pre-COVID. The last projects supported by the IVL were announced back in August 2019. This is the time to be making investments in infrastructure.”

TIA will call on the new Government to rule out any new tourism taxes.

“Our industry has taken a battering and needs a strong helping hand to get back up off the canvas. Tourism businesses are in no position to bear any extra taxes.”

For more details, read Mr Roberts’ [blog](#) on this topic.

Pre-election webinar

Representatives from the five political parties in the current Parliament will discuss how they propose to support tourism in a [TIA webinar](#) on Thursday 10 September. Tourism Minister Kelvin Davis will be joined by Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage, National Party tourism spokesperson Todd McClay, New Zealand First tourism spokesperson Fletcher Tabuteau and ACT leader David Seymour.

About the Tourism Election 2020 Action Plan

To support the revival and revitalisation of the tourism industry, the Tourism Election 2020 Action Plan identifies 37 specific actions required from the incoming Government, in six categories – Vision, Partnership, Regions, Natural Resources, Knowledge and People.

TIA has sent the Action Plan to all the major political parties, encouraging them to incorporate the action points into their tourism policies.

The association is also encouraging tourism operators around the country to get involved and highlight the importance of tourism to their local election candidates. They can use the Tourism Election 2020 Action Plan to lobby MPs and raise tourism issues at election meetings.

To read the Tourism Election 2020 Action Plan, go to <https://tia.org.nz/advocacy/tia-projects/tia-election-2020-action-plan>

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Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Tourism in New Zealand was a \$112 million per day industry. Tourism delivered around \$47 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributed another \$65 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism was New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$17.2 billion or 20.4% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2019).
- 14.4% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand worked directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 393,279 people were working in the visitor economy.
- The **Tourism 2025 & Beyond** sustainable growth framework/Kaupapa Whakapakari Tāpoi has a vision of growing a sustainable tourism industry that benefits New Zealanders.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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