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Media release

Tourism drives employment for New Zealand and boosts economy

Figures released today show that 303,420 New Zealanders are directly or indirectly employed by the visitor economy. The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) reiterates the important role of tourism as a major contributor to the New Zealand economy, generating \$44.4 billion from visitor spending for the year to March 2024 right across the country.

“The big news amongst the big numbers is that while Kiwis’ were spending less, international visitors were providing an important stimulus to our economy. It also shows that tourism businesses were hiring and creating positive employment opportunities” says Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram.

“What the figures signify is the individual efforts of many businesses and people across our country, their drive to deliver manaakitanga, and how their hard work bears fruit for the benefit of all of New Zealand.”

Headlines from today’s announcement include:

- Tourism is one of the country’s largest employers, directly and indirectly supporting 303,420 jobs for the year to March 2024 – 10.7% of the country’s entire jobs market.
- Tourism contributed 7.5% of Aotearoa New Zealand’s GDP – directly and indirectly for the period - up from 6.9% for the previous period.
- International visitors spent \$16.9 billion, an increase of \$10.6 billion from the previous year (up 59.9%).
- The impact of quieter domestic travel saw Kiwi’s spend less on holidays, dropping to \$27.5b, down 2.5%.
- New Zealand tourism proprietors are rebounding well, with the number of tourism businesses up 15.1%. A sign that there’s opportunity and new ideas and new experiences are being created.
- The industry goal to resume the position as New Zealand’s #1 export earner is progressing with tourism sitting in second place behind dairy and improving year on year.
- With total spend sitting at \$44.4 billion the potential for tourism to be contributing \$55 billion a year by 2030 is on track.

The results follow a flurry of positive tourism announcements made by the Government this month aimed at supporting the industry’s ongoing growth and conservation efforts. “It is an exciting time for the sector, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality as she progresses her Tourism Boost plans,” Ms Ingram says.

And there is scope for the industry to contribute further, “Our members are ready to provide memorable experiences across the country. New world-class conference centres in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington provide vibrant infrastructure and investment in hotels provides real potential for growth – especially as we head into the Autumn and Winter periods.”

Looking at the drop in domestic spend, Ms Ingram notes that the data coincides with the first European summer after our borders fully opened, which saw many Kiwi’s head offshore to visit families and friends. “Those that remained went on holiday but planned

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shorter stays and managed their money closely. These figures reinforce what we heard from our members at the time.”

Ms Ingram says that the TSA data provides the most comprehensive view of the tourism industry performance. “The data is hugely valuable, and we would love to see this released within six months of the reporting period so its insights can be of maximum benefit for the industry and government as it looks to boost the industry.”

For more information, please contact TIA Communications Advisor Leah McNeil – leah.mcneil@tia.org.nz or (021) 045 1143.

KEY FACTS

- The latest tourism data is released through the [Tourism Evidence and Insights Centre](#).
- Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) is Aotearoa New Zealand tourism’s peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of the country’s large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1,200 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's [Tourism Sustainability Commitment](#), which aims to see every tourism business in Aotearoa New Zealand contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy.
- TIA delivers a comprehensive and diverse range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and Tourism Summit Aotearoa.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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