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Media Release

Freedom camping group welcomed

The tourism industry is looking forward to being involved in the working group on freedom camping being set up by Tourism Minister Kelvin Davis.

“The issues are complex. Some regions welcome freedom campers and would love more while others want to restrict the activity,” Tourism Industry Aotearoa Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

“While every community needs to determine what works best for them, there is a role for Government to play in providing some national guidance.”

TIA convenes the New Zealand Responsible Camping Forum, which brings together about 30 representatives from the public and private sectors, including rental vehicle operators, tourism associations, camping app developers, local councils and government agencies. The Forum has agreed on some key approaches for managing camping issues, which include a mix of good information, appropriate infrastructure and enforcement measures.

Over the last two summers, the Forum has run a very successful social media campaign, sharing information on camping that has reached more than 605,000 people via [Facebook](#).

“Not all free campers are the same – they are made up of various groups including young international and domestic travellers, ‘grey nomads’, seasonal workers and the homeless. The majority of campers act responsibly and obey the rules. It’s only a small number who are creating problems,” Mr Roberts says.

“We know that many New Zealanders enjoy the privilege of free camping so we must be mindful of their rights in this debate.”

TIA wrote to all New Zealand mayors ahead of today’s meeting, updating them on the work that has been underway to manage freedom camping issues (letter attached).

The Forum’s central message to campers is that they should always check local camping rules, and stay at holiday parks, Department of Conservation campsites or other designated camping areas. Those not using certified self-contained vehicles must stay at campsites with toilet facilities.

“Where issues are arising, there are responses that will meet the needs of both local communities and visitors. TIA will bring all the knowledge built up through the Responsible Camping Forum to the new Working Group announced by Minister Davis to help identify enduring solutions.”

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For more information on the New Zealand Responsible Camping Forum, go to www.tia.org.nz/advocacy/tia-projects/responsible-camping

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$99 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$40 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$59 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism is New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$14.5 billion or 20.7% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2017).
- 14.5% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 399,150 people are working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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