

27 July 2017

Media Release

Govt has listened to tourism industry concerns about work visa changes

New Zealand's fast growing tourism industry is pleased the Government has listened to its concerns about the proposed changes to temporary work visas.

Tourism Industry Aotearoa Chief Executive Chris Roberts says the temporary work visa changes announced by the Government today will be a relief to many tourism and hospitality employers who are struggling to find suitably qualified New Zealanders to fill vacancies.

"TIA's [submission](#) stressed that the proposed visa changes could stifle the tourism industry's growth potential by making it more difficult for employers to hire essential staff. Simply tightening immigration settings should not be done without first addressing the lack of suitably qualified New Zealanders, particularly in popular visitor destinations with small resident populations like Franz Josef or Te Anau," Mr Roberts says.

"While we don't have a precise measure for how many migrants are employed in tourism, we do know that places like Queenstown rely heavily on working holiday makers and Essential Skills Visa holders to fill vacancies ranging from chefs and wait staff to outdoor adventure guides and baristas. There are acute staff shortages in some popular tourism hotspots, remote destinations and at peak times of the year.

"Tourism needs both lower-skilled and higher-skilled staff. You can't manage a business back of house, if there's nobody to work front of house."

TIA is pleased to see the Government plans to develop 'a framework for further targeting of immigration settings by sectors and regions'. Tourism must be recognised as a key sector requiring migrant workers within this framework, Mr Roberts says.

"Our submission said the Government needs to take into account the substantial differences between local and regional economies, and labour markets. We look forward to working with immigration officials to define the needs of each region and sector of tourism.

"We also want to see WINZ work more closely with the tourism industry on how to identify and place the right New Zealand candidates into positions."

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

Level 4, 79 Boulcott Street, PO Box 1697, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

P +64 4 499 0104 www.tia.org.nz E info@tia.org.nz

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)

Three thick, parallel red diagonal stripes run from the bottom right corner towards the top left of the page.

For further information, please contact:

Ann-Marie Johnson
Communications Manager
Tourism Industry Aotearoa
DDI: 04 496 5001
Mobile: 027 600 4565
Email: ann-marie.johnson@tia.org.nz
www.tia.org.nz
www.tourism2025.org.nz

KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$95 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 \$55 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 2016).
- 13.2% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 332,322 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

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

Level 4, 79 Boulcott Street, PO Box 1697, Wellington 6140, New Zealand
P +64 4 499 0104 www.tia.org.nz E info@tia.org.nz
[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)