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## Media Release

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# Big issues facing new Tourism Minister

Tourism Industry Aotearoa looks forward to working with new Tourism Minister Paula Bennett and Associate Minister Nicky Wagner on some of the big issues facing the tourism industry.

“Paula Bennett has ably supported former Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism John Key for the last two years in her role as Associate Tourism Minister. We are pleased she is continuing her involvement with the industry as the new Minister,” TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

“The tourism industry has benefited enormously from having Mr Key as Tourism Minister for the last eight years. We are pleased the portfolio is remaining with a highly ranked Cabinet Minister, reflecting the industry’s importance to New Zealand’s economy.”

TIA will seek meetings with Mrs Bennett and Ms Wagner early in the new year, to discuss the challenges facing the fast-growing tourism industry.

Total annual tourism revenue has grown from \$28 billion to \$34.7 billion in just two years. Strong growth is expected to continue over summer and throughout 2017, and the medium term outlook is very promising.

“However, we know and acknowledge that there is rising public and industry concern that tourism is growing faster than our ability to cope. Without a coordinated response from industry and central and local government, we risk being unable to fully capture the future potential of tourism and protect the long-term sustainability of our industry,” Mr Roberts says.

“Tourism funding and infrastructure are the top priorities for the industry as we head into 2017, along with supporting the recovery of Kaikoura and the wider tourism industry in surrounding regions.

“Mrs Bennett has a particular interest in getting Kiwis into work. TIA has already worked closely with her on workforce issues and we look forward to continuing these efforts.”

As Customs Minister, Ms Wagner has already had considerable influence over the experiences our visitors have when they arrive at our border, and TIA would look forward to working with her as Associate Minister of Tourism, Mr Roberts says.

“Mr Key was a great supporter of the tourism industry – for example, his vision for the New Zealand Cycle Trail has allowed a new visitor segment to be developed – and we hope Mrs Bennett and Ms Wagner will continue his good work.”

### TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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**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](http://www.tia.org.nz) for more information

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