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Media Release

Social media connects with freedom campers

A social media campaign targeting young freedom campers has been an outstanding success, attracting 2.4 million views over the summer.

The **CampNZ** Facebook page has gained 18,500 followers from around the world since it was launched in December. Targeting 18-35 year olds travelling in privately-owned and rented vehicles, the page provided reliable information on local rules and camping etiquette when and where campers needed it.

It is the first social media campaign mounted by the Responsible Camping Forum, with funding from a dozen Forum members.

While the major rental vehicle operators provide camping information to their clients, providing private vehicle owners with good information has been challenging, Tourism Industry Aotearoa Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

“The response to our Facebook campaign has far exceeded our expectations. We’ve built a community of locals and international campers, inspired high levels of engagement from the community, and ongoing support for sharing ideas and messages about responsible camping,” Mr Roberts says.

“The majority of campers are responsible and as annoyed as anyone else by bad behaviour. Social media may be the most effective way to ensure all those who want to experience freedom camping behave appropriately.”

The Responsible Camping Forum will discuss whether to continue the social media campaign next summer when it meets in late May.

Forum members will also discuss the findings of new insight into freedom camping in New Zealand. The Forum commissioned a study to assess and summarise the research available on freedom camping, plus identify where gaps in information and knowledge exist.

“The study identifies 22 gaps in knowledge and information, highlighting not only the complex nature of this issue but also that a continuing focus on insight and information gathering is important as we work to reduce issues and maximise the benefits,” Mr Roberts says.

Knowledge gaps include details on freedom campers’ behaviour and motivations, how much they spend, and how much New Zealanders value the right to freedom camp.

The research has been shared with councils around the country. To read the research, go to www.tia.org.nz/advocacy/tia-projects/responsible-camping/

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About the Responsible Camping Forum

The New Zealand Responsible Camping Forum was established in 2007. Led by TIA, it brings together representatives from the tourism industry, rental vehicle operators, and central and local government. For more information, visit www.tia.org.nz/advocacy/tia-projects/responsible-camping/

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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 for more information

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