

10 September 2020
Media release

Flight restrictions causing school holiday uncertainty

Tourism Industry Aotearoa is calling on the Government to loosen physical distancing requirements on domestic aircraft to give families the opportunity to make school holiday bookings.

TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says the holidays could be a lost opportunity for the struggling tourism industry.

The current alert levels are scheduled to remain in place until at least 11:59pm on Wednesday 16 September. The holidays begin on 26 September.

“People want to make their arrangements for the school holidays now. New Zealand might be back in Level 1 in time for the holidays, but that will be too late for many families to make plans,” TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

“As we saw in the July school holidays, there is strong enthusiasm from Kiwis to explore their country and visit friends and family. However, many people’s travel plans may be thwarted by the current physical distancing requirements on aircraft.”

Under Level 2, Air New Zealand can sell only around 50% of seats on their turboprop aircraft and 65% on their domestic jets. Physical distancing is also increasing the price of flying because the cost is spread between fewer people.

Jetstar has temporarily withdrawn from the New Zealand market entirely because they say it is not viable to keep flying under physical distancing requirements.

“If social distancing remains in place, there just won’t be enough seats to meet demand during the school holidays. If people can’t fly, other businesses from accommodation providers to visitor attractions and restaurants also miss out.

“The Government should allow airlines to safely use all of the seats on their domestic flights under Level 2. It needs to listen to epidemiologists like Professor Michael Baker and Associate Professor Nick Wilson, who have both been reported in the media as saying mask use is sufficient for safe flying,” Mr Roberts says.

“With the school holidays just around the corner, families getting out to the regions will be a vital lifeline for struggling tourism operators.”

For more information, please contact:

Ann-Marie Johnson
Communications Manager
0276 004 565
ann-marie.johnson@tia.org.nz

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

Inspire House, 125 Featherston St, Wellington 6011, New Zealand
P +64 4 499 0104 www.tia.org.nz E info@tia.org.nz



KEY FACTS

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Tourism in New Zealand was a \$112 million per day industry. Tourism delivered around \$47 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributed another \$65 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism was New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$17.2 billion or 20.4% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2019).
- 14.4% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand worked directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 393,279 people were working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025 & Beyond](#) sustainable growth framework/Kaupapa Whakapakari Tāpoi has a vision of growing a sustainable tourism industry that benefits New Zealanders.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

Inspire House, 125 Featherston St, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

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

