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Media release

Alert level change gives NZ tourism operators hope

Tourism operators around the motu are a step closer to getting back to business but most will not be able to open their doors until we reach Alert Level 2, Tourism Industry Aotearoa says.

TIA is welcoming today's announcement – that all of Aotearoa New Zealand south of Auckland will move to Alert Level 3 from 11.59pm on Tuesday 31 August – as the first step in lifting restrictions.

Tourism will remain significantly affected by the latest lockdown for some time to come, TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

"Inter-regional travel is not possible under Alert Level 3. Hopefully, in a week or two, some parts of the country will be back to Level 2, and safe travel can resume.

"However, Aucklanders are the biggest source of domestic visitors and while Auckland remains at a higher alert level, it severely limits how much domestic tourism activity is seen around the rest of the country.

"The reality is that domestic tourism will not be able to fully resume until all of New Zealand is at Level 2," Mr Roberts says.

That means tourism operators could be facing a long period with little or no revenue, other than government support from the wage subsidy and resurgence payment.

"Tourism was the first industry to be affected by the pandemic and will be the last to recover. Tourism businesses face significant financial challenges in getting through the coming weeks. For many, the most useful thing they can do right now is encourage their staff, their whānau and everyone they know to get vaccinated," Mr Roberts says.

"The higher the vaccination rate, the greater likelihood that we can get on top of this virus and enjoy the freedom to travel again."

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KEY FACTS

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Tourism in New Zealand was a \$114.8 million per day industry. Tourism delivered more than \$48 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributed another \$66.7 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism was New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$17.5 billion or 20.1% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2020).
- 13.6% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand worked directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 384,186 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

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