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Media release

Many challenges ahead for tourism in 2022

A recently formed network of tourism sector associations is warning its members that 2022 is set to be just as challenging as 2020 and 2021.

The Tourism Association Network was established earlier this year by Tourism Industry Aotearoa as a forum for the senior leadership of tourism sector associations to discuss and respond to strategic issues for tourism. It comprises 28 associations representing hospitality, accommodation, transport and activity interests.

TAN had a full and frank meeting with Tourism Minister Stuart Nash today, covering prospects for the domestic tourism summer and for the staged relaxing of international border restrictions next year.

TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says the ever-changing global pandemic environment means a huge amount of uncertainty remains.

"The Government will continue with a health-based approach in 2022. When border restrictions are lifted in January and February to allow Kiwis to self-isolate upon arrival, there could be 20,000 or more return to New Zealand.

"While the majority will be vaccinated and tested, it is likely some COVID cases will come in. We will also have thousands of New Zealanders travelling around the country over summer. The Government will be watching carefully to ensure our health system can cope and the traffic light system is working effectively.

"How quickly we ease border restrictions for non-Kiwis will largely be determined by how well we do as a country in managing the pandemic in the first quarter of 2022.

"Tourism businesses need to plan for the worst and hope for the best. The Government has signalled there will be a staged approach to the return of international arrivals from May 2022, but it is possible it will be summer 2022-23 before there is any significant inflow of visitors."

However, there is still a chance we could safely open up more quickly, particularly with Australia, Mr Roberts says.

"The biggest hurdle to the resumption of international tourism is the seven-day self-isolation requirement."

Detailed analysis issued by TIA at the recent Tourism Summit Aotearoa shows the dramatic dampening effect of this requirement. "If the seven-day isolation requirement extends later into 2022, the economic loss over the next three years from a slower tourism recovery could be at least \$16 billion."

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



TAN members will continue to advocate for a reduction or removal of the seven-day requirement when it can be safely done.

Mr Roberts says tourism businesses are going into the summer holiday period feeling a mixture of excitement and apprehension.

“They will be welcoming Kiwi holidaymakers with open arms and making all the necessary arrangements to keep everyone safe. But they are apprehensive about what lies ahead in 2022, after two incredibly difficult years. Their industry associations will do everything we can to support them.”

For more information, please contact:

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

KEY FACTS

- TIA is New Zealand tourism’s peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of New Zealand’s large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1300 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- TIA is deeply involved in discussions on recovery and what the future of tourism in New Zealand will look like.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's **Tourism Sustainability Commitment** which aims to see every New Zealand tourism business committed to sustainability.
- TIA delivers a comprehensive and diverse range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and the Tourism Summit Aotearoa.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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