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Media release

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## Tourism industry disappointed at delay in confirming Australian travel date

Thousands of keen travellers and the tourism businesses ready to welcome them will be disappointed to learn they must wait another two weeks for guidance on when quarantine-free trans-Tasman travel might begin.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said this afternoon that an announcement would be made on 6 April regarding the commencement date for the trans-Tasman travel bubble.

Tourism Industry Aotearoa Chief Executive Chris Roberts says the industry was desperately keen to be given a date today. He remains hopeful that the bubble can be operating before the end of April.

“Our success in dealing with COVID, matched by Australia’s success, gives us this opportunity to reconnect our two nations.

“However, until they have a firm date, tourism operators cannot take bookings with confidence or scale up in terms of staff and services. It also delays marketing campaigns to the Aussies.”

TIA and its members accept that our borders must be opened safely, and they acknowledge that complex processes are involved. But discussions on what would need to be in place to allow the Tasman to re-open started almost immediately after our borders were closed a year ago, Mr Roberts says.

“The intention was to get everything ready to go when the time was right. The health experts say trans-Tasman travel can now be done safely, so any delay is frustrating.

“Separated families want to know when they can be reunited, sporting teams when they can travel, and Kiwi tourism businesses when they will be able to welcome back Australian visitors,” Mr Roberts says.

“Today’s announcement leaves them all in limbo until after Easter.”

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

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