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Media release

Tourism ready to contribute more to NZ economy

With the December 2022 quarter GDP results setting out a decline of 0.6%, there is real scope for tourism to play a very important role in moving to positive territory, Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram says.

Pre-COVID (year to 31 March 2020) tourism directly contributed 5.6% of GDP and this fell to 3.0% through the COVID period (year to March 31 2022) as the industry focused on domestic tourism alone.

"Now, with international visitors starting to return, we are in a great position to recover the 2.6% of GDP that was lost in the COVID period. If we do this, the future national GDP position will be stronger," Rebecca Ingram said.

"The focus now needs to be on removing the roadblocks to the recovery of our diverse tourism industry."

"While it is great to see international tourism recovering, the tourism industry could be making a greater contribution if pressure on workforce recovery was relieved. Anecdotally, we all hear about businesses that are curtailing their offerings as they simply don't have enough staff."

"If we can boost the workforce available for our tourism businesses then these businesses will be able to offer more experiences and also extend their opening hours."

"A key first step is to remove the friction we see in the flow of skilled and valuable workers from overseas and, while this is happening to some degree, TIA wants to see this key constraint addressed so we can quickly realise gains for New Zealand as a whole," Rebecca Ingram said.

For more information, please contact:

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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.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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- TIA leads implementation of the industry's **Tourism Sustainability Commitment** which aims to see every New Zealand tourism business contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy
- 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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