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Media release

Working Holiday Visa changes a boon for tourism industry

Tourism employers around Aotearoa New Zealand will be celebrating today's announcement that steps are being taken to support tourism workforce recovery, Tourism Industry Aotearoa says.

Immigration Minister Michael Wood has announced that:

- the visas of working holidaymakers already in New Zealand with visas expiring between 26 August 2022 and 31 May 2023 will be extended by six months
- new visas will be issued to existing Working Holiday Visa holders who have yet to arrive, allowing them to enter New Zealand by 31 January 2023
- the number of visas permitted under capped Working Holiday Schemes will be doubled - a one-off increase to recognise the spots that were unused last year due to the border closure. This will give the ability for up to an extra 12,000 working holiday makers to be able to enter and work in New Zealand.

Minister Wood also confirmed the sector agreement for seasonal snow and adventure tourism, which gives access to migrant workers in important seasonal snow and adventure tourism roles at \$25.00 per hour. The wage threshold will be increased each year until the sector agreement ends in 2025.

"This is very positive news for the tourism industry, we need great people joining tourism so we can gear up for the summer season," TIA Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram says.

"We are hopeful this will help to relieve some of the immediate pressures on employers. And there are added benefits - while not all Working Holiday Visa holders will work in tourism and hospitality, they will all want to enjoy tourism activities and experiences while they are in New Zealand."

A recent survey by TIA found that 75% of tourism businesses are currently recruiting across more than 30 different role types - everything from bike mechanics to marketing and sales roles, operations managers and sea kayak guides. But 59% of vacancies were receiving less than five applications.

While most tourism employers would prefer to hire New Zealanders, half of the survey respondents expected they would need WHV holders to fill some roles this summer.

"TIA has been working closely with the Backpacker, Youth and Adventure Tourism Association (BYATA) to highlight to the Government the challenges facing tourism businesses. We are grateful that Ministers have listened to us and put in place measures to support the recovery of the tourism industry workforce this summer," Ms Ingram says.

There will still be plenty of opportunities for New Zealanders interested in working in tourism, she says. Tourism has fantastic career opportunities in every part of the country

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and an enormous variety of roles are available for those interested in joining the industry at this defining time.

Meanwhile, the tourism industry is also reviewing the [Better Work Action Plan](#) released for consultation last week. The Plan has the long-term objective of building a more sustainable workforce model for the tourism industry and individuals who choose to build their career in tourism.

[View the results of TIA's workforce survey.](#)

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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.
- 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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