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Media release

Working holidaymakers make welcome return to NZ

Tourism operators are looking forward to welcoming working holidaymakers as they return to New Zealand from today.

Working Holiday Visa holders and some skilled workers can now enter New Zealand with no self-isolation requirements.

This is a big step on the road to recovery for the tourism industry, Tourism Industry Aotearoa says.

"Working holidaymakers will help fill skill shortages being felt across many sectors, including the primary industries and hospitality. They will also be keenly sought after by many tourism operators who are trying to fill vacancies as they look to address workforce shortages across the industry," TIA Communications Manager Ann-Marie Johnson says.

The working holidaymakers will also provide a welcome boost to the tourism industry as they explore Aotearoa New Zealand and experience all we have to offer.

"We are marking the second anniversary of the closure of New Zealand's borders this week. That is 730 days of pain for small and large tourism businesses throughout the motu," Ms Johnson says.

"Tourism was the first industry to be affected by the pandemic and will be the last to recover. We are heartened that the Government has signalled that our borders are likely to open to international visitors sooner than planned and we are keen to see the new timeline which is expected imminently."

"It would be wonderful if New Zealand could reopen to Australian visitors in time for their April school holiday period which includes Easter. If forecasts are correct, New Zealand's Omicron outbreak will have passed its peak by then."

Many parts of the tourism industry operate to long lead times. Airlines and the cruise sector in particular are finalising their schedules and selling itineraries for next summer. Tourism operators also need some time to prepare their businesses for the return of international visitors.

The current asymmetric border settings mean Kiwis have the option of going to Australia without the ability for Australians to come here. The industry's recovery will not begin until high value business travellers and holidaymakers can enter New Zealand, Ms Johnson says.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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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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