

Media Statement



Domestic tourism spend up

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Research just released by the Ministry of Tourism shows that spending by domestic travellers increased by 6.2% to \$8.1 billion in the year to December 2008.

Spend by travellers taking day trips increased by 14.5% to \$2.9 billion. This increase had a large influence on the overall growth in spend. Spending on overnight trips also increased, by 2.0% to \$5.1 billion.

Bruce Bassett, Ministry of Tourism Research Manager, said that in 2008 a number of changing influences affected the domestic travel industry.

“Early on, high fuel prices were an influence in reducing travel activity, but as prices eased travel picked up, particularly by those taking day trips, and those visiting friends and relatives (VFR).”

VFR travellers increased their spending by 15.5% to reach \$2.5 billion. Holiday travellers also increased their spending by 4.0% to \$3.2 billion, while spend by business travellers declined by 1.3% to \$2.1 billion.

Mr Bassett added that the VFR travel segment was one of the most resilient travel groups and that this had also been true for international travel over this period.

“The positive domestic spend result reflects the resilience of the tourism industry, and that taking a holiday or a short break is an essential part of the Kiwi lifestyle.”

“This strength in domestic activity is particularly important at the moment while international markets are affected by the global economic slowdown. Domestic travel makes up 56% of New Zealand’s total tourism economic activity. The solid base it provides for the industry cannot be underestimated, particularly in a time when international markets are under pressure.”

The Domestic Travel Survey is a telephone survey of 15,000 New Zealand residents undertaken throughout the year. Data and reports from the survey are available on the Ministry of Tourism’s research website – www.tourismresearch.govt.nz/dts .

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