

Media Statement



Easter Timing Affects March Tourism Arrivals

Tuesday 21 April 2009 – For immediate release

Data released by Statistics New Zealand today shows that in the month of March 2009, short-term international arrivals declined by 9.7%.

Many international visitors take advantage of the Easter holiday period to travel, which occurred in March in 2008 but moved to April in 2009.

Bruce Bassett, Ministry of Tourism Research Manager, said that the movement of the Easter holiday period had a significant impact on this result.

“It is estimated that 6% of the March decline is attributable to the ‘Easter effect’, making the underlying fall in international arrivals 4%.”

“In assessing the performance of tourism through the current economic down-turn, it is important to focus on the underlying performance, rather than on results that are heavily influenced by one-off events such as Easter falling in different months.”

The opposite effect is expected to happen for April data where performance will likely be better than the underlying pattern.

The key results are:

- Month of March 2009 226,461 arrivals, down 9.7%
(down 4% seasonally adjusted)
- Year ended March 2009 2,400,719 arrivals, down 3.9%
(down 2.5% seasonally adjusted)

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