

Media Statement



Lower Domestic Traveller Spend

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11AM – 17 FEBRUARY 2006

Research released today by the Ministry of Tourism shows that in the year to March 2005, spending by domestic travellers fell by 9.5% to \$7.0 billion, a reduction of \$733 million.

“This result reflects key trends influencing the tourism industry at present,” says Bruce Bassett, Research Manager, Ministry of Tourism. “Over the past couple of years, the travel patterns of New Zealanders have changed significantly with international travel growing strongly at the expense of domestic travel.”

Spending on overnight trips fell by 11.2% to \$4.2 billion and day trips by 7% to \$2.8 billion, as estimated by the Domestic Travel Survey. Spending on holiday travel fell by 12.9% to \$2.5 billion as did business travel by 15.8% to \$1.7 billion. However spending by travellers visiting friends and relatives increased 0.4% to \$2.0 billion.

These results reinforce the overall lower level of domestic travel activity over the March 2005 year and indicate changes in travel patterns. For instance, during this period outbound travel by New Zealanders increased strongly by 23%. The high New Zealand dollar, low air-fares and “all-inclusive” holiday packages to destinations like Australia and the Pacific Islands, have combined to lure New Zealanders off-shore.

“These overall results are within expectations and confirm the relationship between the levels of New Zealand outbound and domestic travel activity. We also see that it is holiday travellers who are most likely to switch from domestic to overseas travel,” says Mr Bassett.

The Domestic Travel Survey is a telephone survey of 15,000 New Zealand residents undertaken throughout the year. Year end June and September data is expected in the second quarter of 2006. A range of data and reports from the survey are available for analysis on the Tourism Research Council New Zealand website – www.trcnz.govt.nz.

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