

Media Statement



Tourism Spend Softens

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International visitors to New Zealand spent \$6.0 billion in the year to June 2009, down 2.6% on the previous year, according to data released by the Ministry of Tourism.

This decline closely matched the 2.8% fall in international arrivals over the period, said Bruce Bassett, Ministry of Tourism Research Manager.

“After nearly a full year in which the New Zealand tourism industry has been impacted upon by the global recession and the worldwide decline in tourism activity, it is reassuring that the impact on tourism expenditure has been limited.

“Even after a year of very unfavourable conditions, the tourism industry remains a major contributor to the New Zealand economy.

Australia has provided strong arrivals growth, but with many of these visitors being lower spending visiting friends and family travellers, the overall spending by this market fell by 3.3% to \$1.6 billion.

The United Kingdom has been sharply hit by the recession that has resulted in a fall in arrivals across all travel types. UK expenditure in New Zealand was down 18.6% to \$826 million.

The United States also has been affected by the global recession with arrivals to New Zealand being soft for most of the year. Despite this, US expenditure fell by just 1.7% to \$608 million over the year to June 2009.

Chinese expenditure increased by 28% to \$334 million, despite the fall in arrivals over the period being 13.2%. This spend increase was directly due to a recent boost in the number of long-stay education travellers.

Germany recorded robust expenditure growth of 18.8% to \$285 million based on a 3.2% increase in German arrivals and an increased proportion of holiday travellers.

Mr Bassett added that the recently released New Zealand tourism forecasts indicated a return to growth in international visitor arrivals in 2010, followed by a strong rebound in 2011. Therefore, international visitor expenditure is also expected to show recovery from 2010.

For further information on the release of International Visitor Survey data please visit the Ministry of Tourism research website (www.tourismresearch.govt.nz/ivs) or contact Bruce Bassett – telephone 021 609 674 or email bruce.bassett@tourism.govt.nz.

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