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Media Release

90-day trial & rest break proposals concern tourism industry

Abolishing the 90-day trial period and stipulating specific times for rest breaks is impractical for tourism employers, Tourism Industry Aotearoa says.

TIA is calling on the Government to review those provisions in the Bill proposing amendments to the Employment Relations Act.

The Bill proposes that only employers with 20 or fewer employees will be able to include a 90-day trial period in employment contracts.

“With the 90-day trial period, employers have some security that they will not be stuck with an employee who is not right for them. Without it, employers lose that safety net, and may be less likely to take on inexperienced employees,” TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

“Anyone who works with young people who have just left school or graduated from university, or beneficiaries returning to the workforce, knows that all they want is their chance to show an employer what they can do. This Bill could deny them that. Government wants to get New Zealanders into work and we wholeheartedly support any approach that enables this. Taking away the 90-day trial period is a barrier to employment when we need enablers.”

Mr Roberts says that tourism operators are concerned by the Bill’s clauses stipulating when rest and meal breaks should be taken. Employees who cannot agree on a time for rest and meal breaks with their employers will have the right to take rest breaks exactly ‘halfway’ through the morning and the afternoon, and have their meal break exactly ‘in the middle’ of the day.

“This is totally impractical for many in the tourism industry. At present, many tourism operators rotate staff so that at one time some employees are on duty while others can take their break. If all employees commencing shift at the same time have to take their breaks at the same time we won’t be able to offer the same levels of service to our visitors.

Mr Roberts is urging the Government to consult with the industry on how best to protect tourism employees while ensuring visitors receive world-class service.

“We could not agree more with the Workplace Relations Minister that ‘good employment law strikes a balance between employers and workers’. It’s just that what is being proposed now is not a balance, and it will be bad for both employers and workers.”

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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To read TIA's submission, go to:

<https://tia.org.nz/advocacy/recent-submissions/employment-submissions/>

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$99 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$40 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$59 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism is New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$14.5 billion or 20.7% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2017).
- 14.5% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 399,150 people are working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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