

Small business needs recognised by reference group

A new group has been established by Tourism Industry Aotearoa to explore the challenges and opportunities facing small tourism businesses.

The Small Business Reference Group will support TIA in meeting the needs of small and micro tourism businesses.

It is estimated that up to 94% of tourism businesses have less than 20 staff. The majority of those businesses have 0-5 staff.

“The nature of issues faced by tourism businesses are often similar, regardless of size. But the solutions are not always the same, particularly due to time and resource constraints of small business. These businesses also present a window into regional differences and are an important connection with local communities,” TIA Advocacy and Engagement Manager Steve Hanrahan says.

Like the wider tourism industry, many small operators have been severely impacted by the closure of New Zealand’s borders, while others who are more focused on domestic tourism have been less affected.

Twelve small business owners representing a range of tourism sectors and a number of regions have agreed to take part in the group, which will meet quarterly.

Prior to the group’s first meeting, they were asked to identify the three top issues or priorities for their businesses. The most common were reopening New Zealand’s borders, cashflow/finance and short-term (summer) business planning.

“Appropriate responses and solutions for small businesses were debated and TIA will be progressing these over the coming months,” Mr Hanrahan says.

Members of the group are:

- John Barrett, Kapiti Island Nature Tours, Wellington
- Donna Brooke, Sunlover Retreat, Coromandel
- Fergus Brown, Holiday Parks New Zealand
- Richard Burdon, Glen Dene Hunting & Fishing, Lake Hawea
- David Gatward-Ferguson, Nomad Safaris, Queenstown
- Grant Harnish, Salt Air, Northland
- James Lazor, Mt Dobson Ski Area, Tekapo
- Adele Marsden, New Zealand Educational Tours, Tauranga
- Steve & Kate Norris, Fiordland Trips and Tramps, Fiordland
- Richard Ussher, Cable Bay Adventure Park, Nelson
- Trevor Weir, Rotorua Duck Tours, Rotorua
- Jacqui Wilkinson, Adventure Capital, Auckland

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KEY FACTS

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Tourism in New Zealand was a \$112 million per day industry. Tourism delivered around \$47 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributed another \$65 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism was New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$17.2 billion or 20.4% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2019).
- 14.4% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand worked directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 393,279 people were working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025 & Beyond](#) sustainable growth framework/Kaupapa Whakapakari Tāpoi has a vision of growing a sustainable tourism industry that benefits New Zealanders.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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