

International Arrivals & Departures

Release date: 12 July 2016

April 2016

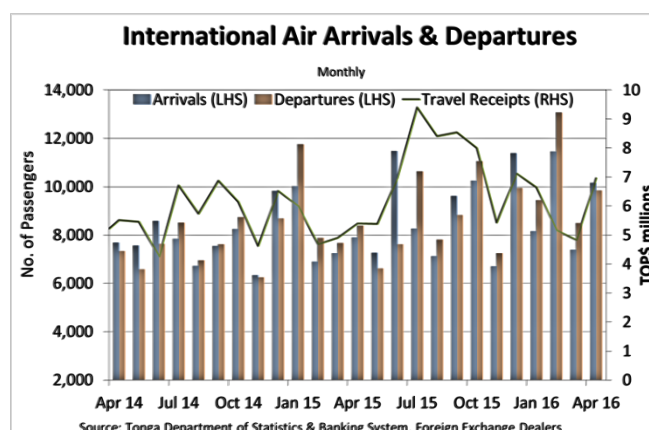
	Apr 16	Mar 16	Feb 16	Jan 16
Total Arrivals	10,153	7,383	11,453	8,150
Total Departures	9,839	8,488	13,059	9,441

Note: Total Arrivals & Departures including air, cruise ship and yacht arrivals & departures

Source: Tonga Department of Statistics

Cruise ship boosted both the passenger arrivals & departures

The arrival of the Pacific Pearl and Sea Princess cruise ships in April brought 3,690 passengers contributing to a 2,279 increase in the total number of international passenger arrivals¹. Air arrivals also rose by 487 passengers (8.2%) driven by both the returning residents and visitors, with returning residents increasing the most by 265 passengers (10.0%). The majority of the visitors that arrived by air in April were from New Zealand (NZ), Australia and the United States (US). The main purpose of travel was to visit friends and families and also for holiday. The commencement of Fiji Airways' direct route from Fiji to Vava'u and also the introduction of the Air New Zealand Boeing 777 flights in April contributed to the rise. The arrival by yacht in April recorded 8 visitors. The increase in the number of international arrivals in April coincides with a \$2.1 million (43.8%) rise in travel receipts. The transportation sector, tourism sector, and other sectors in the economy may have been positively impacted by the increase in visitors arriving during the month.



The total number of international departures also increased by 1,351 passengers (15.9%) over the month due to a 2,287 passengers (162.1%) rise in the number of departing visitors travelling by cruise ships. This offset the decline by 938 passengers (13.3%) in air departures.

¹ Includes Tongan residents and visitors

In year-ended terms, total number of international arrivals continued to experience growth of 14,498 passengers (15.3%) from arrivals by both air and sea. The air arrivals rose by 9,895 passengers (12.5%), and were mainly Tongan residents which rose by 5,960 passengers (21.3%). Visitors arriving by air also increased by 3,935 passengers (7.7%). The higher arrivals reflected more numbers of cruise ships that arrived during the year compared to the previous year. Travel receipts during the year to April 2016 rose by \$15.6 million (23.1%) in line with the increase in arrivals. This is supported by events that occurred during the year such as the King's coronation, villages and various family re-unions, school anniversaries and annual church conferences which may have supported the tourism, transportation, trade and other sectors of the economy.

The total international departures rose as well by 13,975 passengers (14.5%) over the year due mainly to a rise of 9,505 passengers (11.7%) in departures by air.

Outlook

International arrivals are expected to increase in the coming months due to the annual church conferences, Tupou College Toloa 150th anniversary celebration and the upcoming Latter Day Saints 100th anniversaries. The setting up of the Chinese group tours and signing of the mutual visa exemption agreement between Tonga and China would also attract more tourists from China. The National Reserve Bank of Tonga will continue to closely monitor these developments and the country's economic developments to support economic growth.

Total Number of International Arrivals & Departures

	Arrivals						Departures					
	Monthly				Year Ended		Monthly				Year Ended	
	Apr 16	Mar-16	Feb-16	Apr-15	Apr 16	Apr-15	Apr-16	Mar-16	Feb-16	Apr-15	Apr-16	Apr-15
Total	10,153	7,383	11,453	7,890	109,167	94,669	9,839	8,488	13,059	8,378	110,552	97,833
Air	6,455	5,968	5,979	5,919	89,118	79,223	6,135	7,073	7,592	6,408	90,495	80,990
Visitors	3,537	3,315	3,259	3,642	55,134	51,199	3,257	3,534	4,164	3,832	55,648	47,703
Tongan residents	2,918	2,653	2,720	2,277	33,984	28,024	2,878	3,539	3,428	2,576	34,847	33,287
Cruise Ship*	3,690	1,411	5,474	1,940	18,691	13,828	3,698	1,411	5,467	1,940	18,700	15,082
Yacht*	8	4	-	31	1,358	1,618	6	4	-	30	1,357	1,761
Total	10,153	7,383	11,453	7,890	109,167	94,669	9,839	8,488	13,059	8,378	110,552	97,833
Visitors	7,235	4,730	8,733	5,613	75,183	66,645	6,961	4,949	9,631	5,802	75,705	64,546
Tongan residents	2,918	2,653	2,720	2,277	33,984	28,024	2,878	3,539	3,428	2,576	34,847	33,287

* All sea arrivals are assumed to be visitors

Source: Tonga Department of Statistics