

International Arrivals & Departures

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June 2016

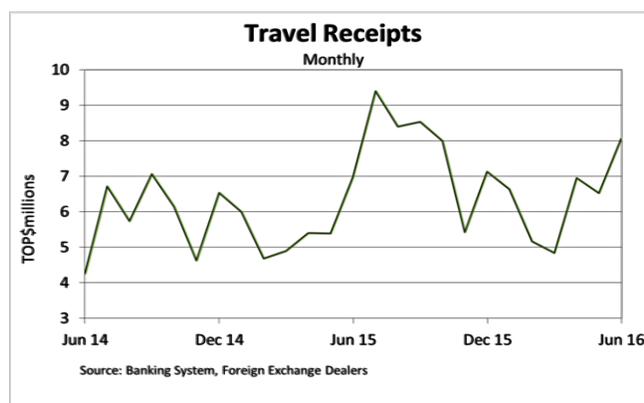
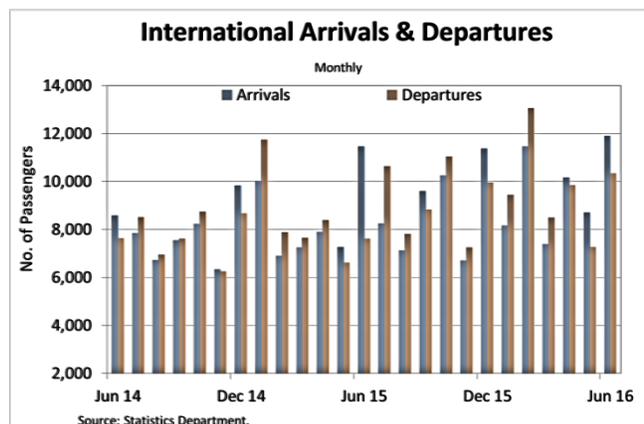
	Jun 16	May 16	Apr 16	Mar 16
Total Arrivals	11,896	8,707	10,153	7,383
Total Departures	10,328	7,258	9,839	8,488

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

Source: Statistics Department

Strong growth in international arrivals due to celebrations

Tourism activity was vibrant over the month of June supported by the annual church conferences, various family re-unions and one-off events that took place during the month such as the celebration of Queen Mother's birthday and Tupou College Toloa 150th anniversary. Over the month, total number of international arrivals¹ grew by 3,189 passengers (36.6%), led by rises in arrivals by both ship and air. 69% of total arrivals were visitors compared to 62% in the previous month. The arrival of the Pacific Pearl cruise ship which travelled via Vava'u brought 1,784 passengers, contributing to the seasonal monthly rise. In addition, air arrivals increased by 1,391 passengers (16.4%) and a slight increase in yacht arrivals by 14 passengers (5.7%). Air arrivals from New Zealand, Australia and the US continued to drive the high arrivals in June 2016, with the purpose of visiting friends and families and also for holiday. The increase in the number of arrivals also coincides with events that occurred



¹ Includes Tongan residents and visitors

during the month. The banks and foreign exchange dealers also reported an increase in travel receipts over the month by \$1.5 million (23.5%) to \$8.1 million. NRBT has identified from its Overseas Exchange Transactions (OET) reports that Tonga has consistently maintained travel trade surpluses as travel receipts are always higher than travel payments.

The total number of international departures also rose by 3,070 passengers (42.3%) over the month due to the arrival of the cruise ship.

The overall performance of the tourism industry in 2015/16 strengthened as expected by the National Reserve Bank of Tonga (NRBT). In the year to June 2016, the total number of international arrivals continued to increase by 13,785 passengers (14.2%), driven by rises in all categories. Air arrivals grew the most by 9,736 passengers (11.9%) followed by cruise ships arrival, rising by 4,022 visitors (28.4%). The annual events and festivities during the year have contributed to this increase. These events have driven a 1.3% rise in domestic food prices over the year as a result from higher demand. Furthermore, 14 cruise ships were recorded in 2015/16 compared to only 12 arrived in 2014/15. The introduction of the Air New Zealand Boeing 777 flights and the commencement of Fiji Airways direct flight from Fiji to Vava'u during the year also contributed to the rise. The outbound travel from NZ, U.S and Australia to Tonga during the year continued to rise, supported by its strong currencies against the Tongan pa'anga. The higher number of arrivals is also consistent with a \$14.9 million (21.3%) rise in travel receipts in the same period.

A significant rise in air departures of 13,662 passengers (16.9%) over the year drove the total international departures to increase as well by 17,338 passengers (18.0%).

Outlook

The International arrivals are expected to increase in the coming months due to scheduled events such as the Latter Day Saints 100th anniversary. The signing of the mutual visa exemption agreement between Tonga and China and the setting up of the Chinese group tours is expected to attract more tourists from China. The completion of the renovation of the International Dateline Hotel by the Tanoa Group is expected to also attract more tourists. 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	
	Jun 16	May-16	Apr-16	Jun-15	Jun 16	Jun-15	Jun-16	May-16	Apr-16	Jun-15	Jun-16	Jun-15
Total	11,896	8,707	10,153	11,462	111,040	97,255	10,328	7,258	9,839	7,608	113,918	97,863
Air	9,853	8,462	6,455	9,550	91,373	81,637	8,356	7,104	6,135	5,600	94,387	80,725
Visitors	6,763	5,220	3,537	5,898	57,399	52,265	5,753	4,267	3,257	3,461	58,691	48,811
Tongan residents	3,090	3,242	2,918	3,652	33,974	29,372	2,603	2,837	2,878	2,139	35,696	31,914
Cruise Ship*	1,784	-	3,690	1,757	18,163	14,141	1,777	-	3,698	1,757	18,165	15,425
Yacht*	259	245	8	155	1,504	1,477	195	154	6	251	1,366	1,713
Total	11,896	8,707	10,153	11,462	111,040	97,255	10,328	7,258	9,839	7,608	113,918	97,863
Visitors	8,806	5,465	7,235	7,810	77,066	67,883	7,725	4,421	6,961	5,469	78,222	65,949
Tongan residents	3,090	3,242	2,918	3,652	33,974	29,372	2,603	2,837	2,878	2,139	35,696	31,914

* All sea arrivals are assumed to be visitors
Source: Statistics Department