

# International Arrivals & Departures May 2016

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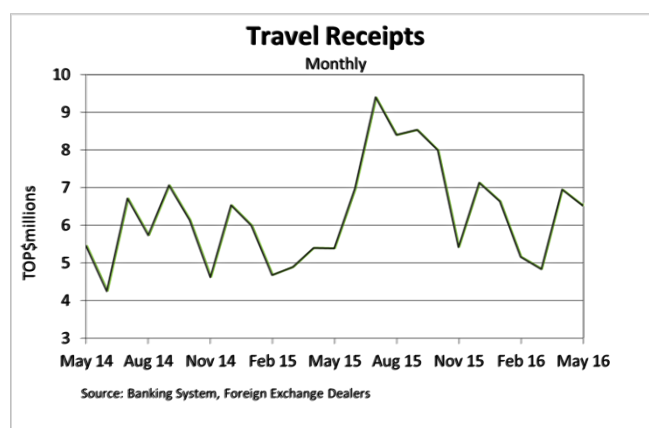
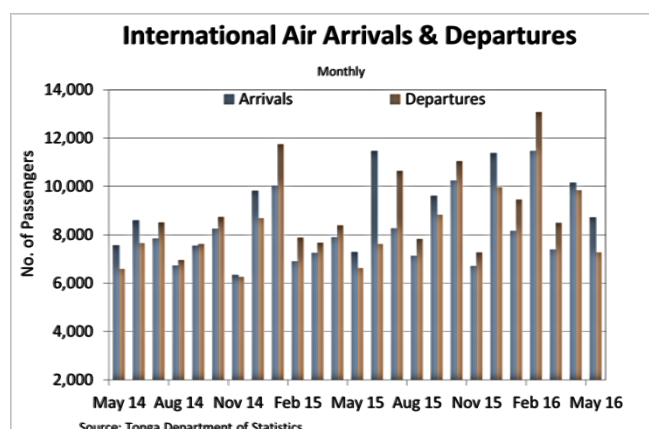
	May 16	Apr 16	Mar 16	Feb 16
Total Arrivals	8,707	10,153	7,383	11,453
Total Departures	7,258	9,839	8,488	13,059

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

Source: Tonga Department of Statistics

## No cruise ships in May results in lower arrivals & departures

A significant fall in arrivals by ship drove the overall decline in the total number of international arrivals<sup>1</sup> by 1,446 passengers (14.2%) over the month. There was no cruise ship arriving in May in contrast to 2 cruise ships arriving in April. This offset an increase in air and yacht arrivals by 2,007 (31.1%) and 237 passengers respectively. Majority of the air arrivals recorded in May were passengers from New Zealand, Australia and the United States, with the purpose to visit relatives and friends, and also for holidays. The events taking place in May including church conferences, and mother & father's days may have contributed to the rise in air arrivals. Travel receipts however fell by \$0.4 million (6.2%) to \$6.5 million. The transportation sector, tourism sector and other sectors in the economy may have been negatively impacted by the decrease in visitors arriving during the month.



<sup>1</sup> Includes Tongan residents and visitors

The total number of international departures also decreased by 2,581 passengers (26.2%) over the month, due to a decline of 3,698 in the number of departing visitors travelling by cruise ships. Departures by air and yacht increased but were insufficient to offset the decrease in the visitors departing by cruise ships.

Over the year, the total number of international arrivals continued to rise by 16,233 passengers (17.2%). This is due to a rise in both arrivals by air and by ship with air arrivals increasing the most by 12,398 passengers. Both number of Tongan residents and visitors rose, supported by events that occurred during the year. The strengthening of the New Zealand, United States and Australia dollars against the Tongan pa'anga stimulated high outbound travel from NZ, U.S and Australia during the year. The higher number of arrivals is also consistent with the \$16.6 million rise in travel receipts in year ended terms.

The total international departures rose as well by 14,591 passengers (15.1%) over the year due mainly to a rise of 10,901 passengers (13.5%) departing by air.

## Outlook

International arrivals are expected to increase in the coming months due to the annual church conferences, Tupou College Toloa 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and the upcoming Latter Day Saints 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The setting up of the Chinese group tours and signing of the mutual visa exemption agreement between Tonga and China is expected to 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	
	May 16	Apr-16	Mar-16	May-15	May 16	May-15	May-16	Apr-16	Mar-16	May-15	May-16	May-15
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,707</b>	<b>10,153</b>	<b>7,383</b>	<b>7,268</b>	<b>110,606</b>	<b>94,373</b>	<b>7,258</b>	<b>9,839</b>	<b>8,488</b>	<b>6,612</b>	<b>111,198</b>	<b>97,890</b>
Air	8,462	6,455	5,968	6,510	91,070	78,672	7,104	6,135	7,073	5,968	91,631	80,730
Visitors	5,220	3,537	3,315	3,820	56,534	50,830	4,267	3,257	3,534	3,516	56,399	48,143
Tongan residents	3,242	2,918	2,653	2,690	34,536	27,842	2,837	2,878	3,539	2,452	35,232	32,587
Cruise Ship*	-	3,690	1,411	555	18,136	14,123	-	3,698	1,411	555	18,145	15,404
Yacht*	245	8	4	203	1,400	1,578	154	6	4	89	1,422	1,756
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,707</b>	<b>10,153</b>	<b>7,383</b>	<b>7,268</b>	<b>110,606</b>	<b>94,373</b>	<b>7,258</b>	<b>9,839</b>	<b>8,488</b>	<b>6,612</b>	<b>111,198</b>	<b>97,890</b>
Visitors	5,465	7,235	4,730	4,578	76,070	66,531	4,421	6,961	4,949	4,160	75,966	65,303
Tongan residents	3,242	2,918	2,653	2,690	34,536	27,842	2,837	2,878	3,539	2,452	35,232	32,587

\* All sea arrivals are assumed to be visitors

Source: Tonga Department of Statistics