

# International Arrivals & Departures November 2016

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	Nov 16	Oct 16	Sep 16	Aug 16
Total Arrivals	7,642	14,156	8,451	10,324
Total Departures	7,657	14,583	7,896	8,649

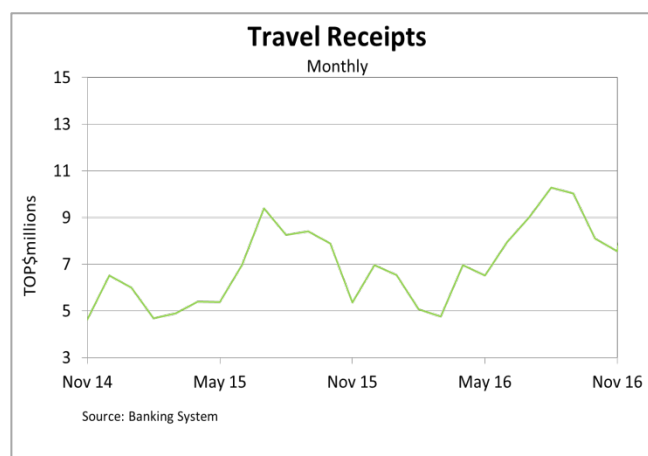
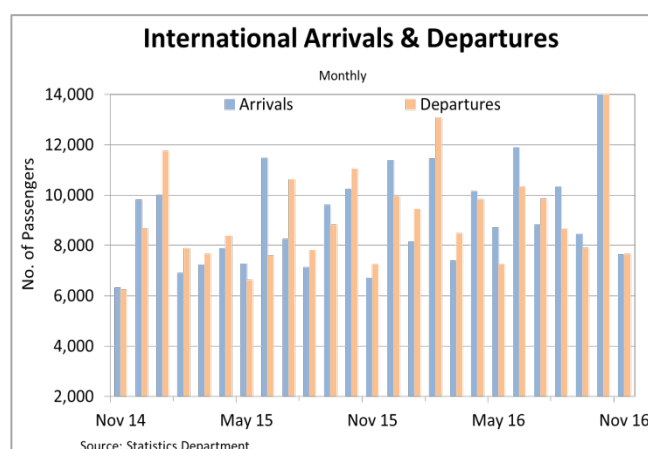
Note: Total Arrivals & Departures including air, cruise ship and yacht arrivals & departures

Source: Statistics Department

## Fall in arrivals and departures driven by less cruise ship arrival

The economic activities in the tourism sector slowed over the month, returning the total arrivals and departures to the monthly average. Total international arrivals<sup>1</sup> fell to 7,642 passengers in November, 46.0% lower than the previous month largely due to 4,145 passengers (63.2%) decline in total visitors. The only cruise ship that arrived in November 2016 brought in 176 passengers compared to 6,630 passengers in the previous month. As the whale watching season ended in October 2016, yacht passengers arrival declined by 74.3% to 88 passengers in November. Majority of the visitors were from New Zealand for holiday and visiting family and friends. However, air returning residents increased by 611 passengers (21.2%).

Accordingly, the fall in total arrivals was consistent with the 47.5% decrease in total international departures to 7,657



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

passengers, over the month. Furthermore, the fall in international arrivals coincided with a \$0.5 million (6.6%) decline in travel receipts over the month.

Over the year to November 2016, the total number of international arrivals grew by 15,998 passengers (15.6%). Air arrival visitors rose by 6,857 passengers (13.0%), followed by 5,688 (18.4%) air returning residents. Sea arrivals<sup>2</sup> (assuming they are all visitors) increased by 3,453 passengers (18.2%) as a result of larger number of cruise ships arriving during the year. The number of celebrations and events that occurred during the year to November 2016 supported this growth. This may have supported the transportation, trade and other sectors of the economy. The higher number of arrivals was also consistent with the \$10.6 million (13.4%) increase in travel receipts recorded in the year ended to November 2016.

The total international departures also rose by 12,905 passengers (12.4%) over the year due mainly to a rise of 9,760 passengers (11.5%) in departures by air.

## Outlook

The upcoming Christmas festive period is expected to result in an increase in the international arrivals and consequently the annual total of arrivals. There are 4 cruise ships expected to arrive in December 2016 and 21 ships are scheduled to arrive during 2017. Additionally, the scheduled school anniversaries for December such as the Channel College - Kelana 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Tailulu College (Tongatapu) 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Mailefihi Siu'ilikutapu 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary are expected to bring in more visitors, and subsequently departures. The signing of the mutual visa exemption agreement between Tonga and China, and the setting up of the Chinese group tours are expected to attract more tourists from China. The Reserve Bank will continue to closely monitor the country's economic developments to support economic growth.

**Total Number of International Arrivals & Departures**

	Arrivals						Departures					
	Monthly				Year Ended		Monthly				Year Ended	
	Nov 16	Oct-16	Sep-16	Nov-15	Nov 16	Nov-15	Nov-16	Oct-16	Sep-16	Nov-15	Nov-16	Nov-15
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,642</b>	<b>14,156</b>	<b>8,451</b>	<b>6,706</b>	<b>118,512</b>	<b>102,514</b>	<b>7,657</b>	<b>14,583</b>	<b>7,896</b>	<b>7,250</b>	<b>117,006</b>	<b>104,102</b>
Air	7,378	7,184	8,092	6,319	96,047	83,502	7,349	7,699	7,555	6,817	94,846	85,086
Visitors	3,881	4,298	5,185	3,550	59,466	52,609	3,698	4,937	4,865	3,332	58,269	53,050
Tongan residents	3,497	2,886	2,907	2,769	36,581	30,893	3,651	2,762	2,690	3,485	36,577	32,036
Cruise Ship*	176	6,630	-	291	20,659	17,578	176	6,626	-	291	20,642	17,586
Yacht*	88	342	359	96	1,806	1,434	132	258	341	142	1,518	1,430
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,642</b>	<b>14,156</b>	<b>8,451</b>	<b>6,706</b>	<b>118,512</b>	<b>102,514</b>	<b>7,657</b>	<b>14,583</b>	<b>7,896</b>	<b>7,250</b>	<b>117,006</b>	<b>104,102</b>
Visitors	4,145	11,270	5,544	3,937	81,931	71,621	4,006	11,821	5,206	3,765	80,429	72,066
Tongan residents	3,497	2,886	2,907	2,769	36,581	30,893	3,651	2,762	2,690	3,485	36,577	32,036

\* All sea arrivals are assumed to be visitors

Source: Statistics Department

<sup>2</sup> Includes cruise ship and yacht