

# International Arrivals & Departures January 2017

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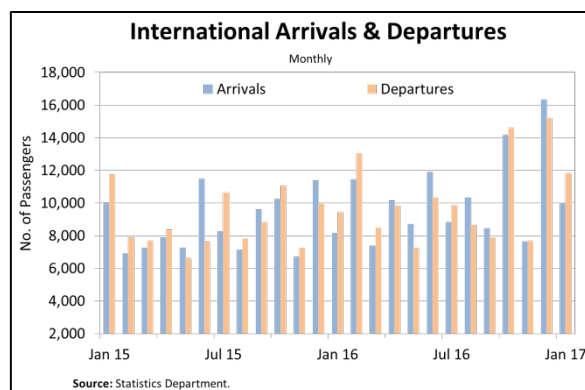
	Jan 17	Dec 16	Nov 16	Oct 16
Total Arrivals	10,008	16,324	7,642	14,156
Total Departures	11,812	15,208	7,657	14,583

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

Source: Statistics Department

## Visitors' arrivals slow after the busy Christmas period

The total number of international arrivals<sup>1</sup> fell by 6,316 passengers (38.7%) over the month due to a significant decline in air arrivals by 3,344 passengers (30.0%). Additionally, sea arrival<sup>2</sup> passengers also decreased by 2,972 passengers (57.5%) as only 2 cruise ships arrived during the month compared to 4 cruise ships in December. Majority of the air arrival visitors recorded in January were from New Zealand (NZ), Australia, and the United States (US), with the purpose of visiting families and friends during the holidays. However, air returning residents arrivals rose by 1,413 passengers (46.3%), where most passengers fell in the age group of 10-24 years old. This reflected students returning in preparation for the commencement of the 2017 academic year. The decrease in international arrivals coincided with a \$2.8 million (21.9%) decline in travel receipts over the month.



Similarly, total international departures declined by 3,396 passengers (22.3%). Moreover, the total international air departure during the month reflected the high international arrival of visitors in December 2016, as 7,593 air departure passengers in January 2017 were non-Tongans.

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

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

In year ended terms, the total number of international arrivals grew by 23,118 passengers (22.6%). Air arrival visitors rose by 4,910 passengers (9.1%), followed by a 4,327 (13.4%) rise in returning residents. Sea arrivals (assuming they are all visitors) increased by 13,881 passengers (87.6%) as a result of larger number of cruise ships arriving during the year. The number of celebrations and events that took place during the year to January 2017 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 \$19.0 million (23.7%) increase in travel receipts recorded over the year.

The total international departures also rose by 21,560 passengers (20.9%) over the year due to a rise in cruise ships departures of 13,440 passengers (93.0%), followed by a 7,986 (9.2%) increase in air departure passengers.

## Outlook

The Reserve Bank remains optimistic that the tourism sector will remain vibrant in the upcoming months. The 21 cruise ships scheduled to arrive in 2017 and events will bring in visitors. Additionally, 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	
	Jan 17	Dec-16	Nov-16	Jan-16	Jan 17	Jan-16	Jan-17	Dec-16	Nov-16	Jan-16	Jan-17	Jan-16
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,008</b>	<b>16,324</b>	<b>7,642</b>	<b>8,150</b>	<b>125,320</b>	<b>102,202</b>	<b>11,812</b>	<b>15,208</b>	<b>7,657</b>	<b>9,441</b>	<b>124,636</b>	<b>103,077</b>
Air	7,813	11,157	7,378	8,150	95,593	86,356	9,620	10,041	7,349	9,441	95,222	87,236
Visitors	3,351	8,108	3,881	3,581	58,900	53,990	7,593	4,467	3,698	7,462	58,675	54,187
Tongan residents	4,462	3,049	3,497	4,569	36,693	32,366	2,027	5,574	3,651	1,979	36,547	33,049
Cruise Ship*	2,187	5,155	176	-	27,901	14,440	2,185	5,161	176	-	27,888	14,448
Yacht*	8	12	88	-	1,826	1,406	7	6	132	-	1,526	1,393
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,008</b>	<b>16,324</b>	<b>7,642</b>	<b>8,150</b>	<b>125,320</b>	<b>102,202</b>	<b>11,812</b>	<b>15,208</b>	<b>7,657</b>	<b>9,441</b>	<b>124,636</b>	<b>103,077</b>
Visitors	5,546	13,275	4,145	3,581	88,627	69,836	9,785	9,634	4,006	7,462	88,089	70,028
Tongan residents	4,462	3,049	3,497	4,569	36,693	32,366	2,027	5,574	3,651	1,979	36,547	33,049

\* All sea arrivals are assumed to be visitors

Source: Statistics Department