

# International Arrivals & Departures

Release date: 29 April 2016

## February 2016

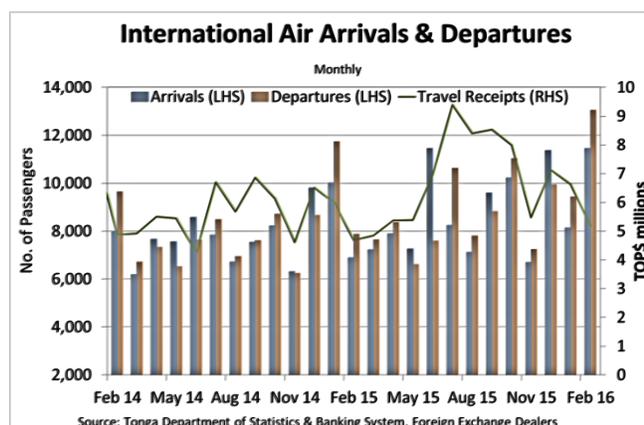
	Feb 16	Jan 16	Dec 15	Nov 15
Total Arrivals	11,453	8,150	11,374	6,706
Total Departures	13,059	9,441	9,949	7,250

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

Source: Tonga Department of Statistics

## Cruise ships driving increase in arrivals & departures

The arrivals of five cruise ships during the month boosted the tourism activity, as reflected in a 40.5% rise in international arrivals<sup>1</sup>. This was mainly driven by a significant rise in the number of visitors<sup>2</sup>, increasing from 3,581 visitors in January to 8,733 visitors in February. Air arrivals fell by 26.6% and there were no yacht arrivals, while cruise ship arrivals rose significantly with 1,728 passengers higher than in January. Of the five cruise ships arriving during the month, one cruise ship was redirected from Fiji due to Tropical Cyclone Winston. Two of the cruise ships also docked at Halaevalu Wharf in Vava'u.



The travel receipts however fell by 22.2% to \$5.2 million in February, which coincides with the decrease in the number of air arrivals. This implies that the cruise ship visitors may have not spent as much in Tonga as the air arrival visitors. The transportation sector, hotel and restaurants 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 38.3% over the month due to an increase in the number of departing visitors travelling by cruise ships.

<sup>1</sup> Includes Tongan Residents and Visitors

<sup>2</sup> Air arrival visitors plus cruise ship visitors

The total number of international arrivals over the year rose by 14.3% to 11,453 passengers, driven mainly by a 26% rise in arrivals by cruise ships, whom were mainly visitors on holiday. Arrivals by air increased by 12.8% over the year, as arriving Tongan residents rose by 20.4% and visitors arrivals increased by 8.7%. The majority of air arrival visitors during the year were on holiday. Furthermore, the rise in air arrivals 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. The higher number of visitors is consistent with a \$13.9 million increase in the total travel receipts during the year to February 2016, compared to the previous year reflecting the special occasion of the King's Coronation and other events that took place during the year which supported the tourism, transportation, trade and other sectors of the economy.

The total international departures also rose by 14.5% over the year due to a 18.4% rise in departures of visitors mainly on cruise ships during the year.

## Outlook

Air arrivals are expected to fall in the coming months and to increase in the normal peak period around June-July 2016. However, with the committed Fiji Airways direct route from Fiji to Vava'u to commence in April 2016, it is anticipated that this will attract more visitors to the Kingdom. In addition, an increase in air arrivals is expected due to the upcoming events scheduled for this year such as the LDS 100<sup>th</sup> and Toloa 150<sup>th</sup> anniversaries and annual church conferences. The setting up of the Chinese Group Tours would also attract more tourists from China. The NRBT will continue to closely monitor these developments and the country's economic developments and financial conditions to maintain internal and external monetary stability, promote financial stability and a sound and efficient financial system to support macroeconomic stability and economic growth.

**Total Number of International Arrivals & Departures**

	Arrivals						Departures					
	Monthly				Year Ended		Monthly				Year Ended	
	Feb 16	Jan-16	Dec-15	Feb-15	Feb 16	Feb-15	Feb-16	Jan-16	Dec-15	Feb-15	Feb-16	Feb-15
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,453</b>	<b>8,150</b>	<b>11,374</b>	<b>6,896</b>	<b>106,759</b>	<b>93,410</b>	<b>13,059</b>	<b>9,441</b>	<b>9,949</b>	<b>7,878</b>	<b>108,258</b>	<b>95,856</b>
Air	5,979	8,150	11,274	4,500	87,835	77,844	7,592	9,441	9,844	5,498	89,330	78,895
Visitors	3,259	3,581	8,444	2,381	54,868	50,460	4,164	7,462	4,192	2,867	55,484	45,908
Tongan residents	2,720	4,569	2,830	2,119	32,967	27,384	3,428	1,979	5,652	2,631	33,846	32,987
Cruise Ship*	5,474	-	100	2,373	17,541	13,918	5,467	-	100	2,373	17,542	15,177
Yacht*	-	-	-	23	1,383	1,648	-	-	5	7	1,386	1,784
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,453</b>	<b>8,150</b>	<b>11,374</b>	<b>6,896</b>	<b>106,759</b>	<b>93,410</b>	<b>13,059</b>	<b>9,441</b>	<b>9,949</b>	<b>7,878</b>	<b>108,258</b>	<b>95,856</b>
Visitors	8,733	3,581	8,544	4,777	73,792	66,026	9,631	7,462	4,297	5,247	74,412	62,869
Tongan residents	2,720	4,569	2,830	2,119	32,967	27,384	3,428	1,979	5,652	2,631	33,846	32,987

\* All sea arrivals are assumed to be visitors

Source: Tonga Department of Statistics