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Subscription rates on application.
ISSN 1176-3574

ISSUE 579/Executive Summary

February 3rd, 2006

Talk of recession, but tourism will still grow

TOURISM will continue to grow by an average four percent a year to 2011. So while growth may be slowing compared to recent years it is too soon to talk of a recession in the tourism sector, says TIA CEO Fiona Luhrs.

TIA is recommending members focus on smart business management including: delivering quality products; ensuring they continue to deliver value for money, especially considering the high New Zealand dollar; ensuring they have effective sales and distribution in place; improving productivity; focusing on maximising returns from existing visitors

“The slowing growth also reinforces the need to boost TNZ’s funding for international marketing, which TIA is advocating. TIA also supports government plans to review the domestic tourism market’s performance,” Ms Luhrs adds.

NZD to crash?

THE New Zealand dollar will crash later this year, predicts BNZ chief economist Tony Alexander.

Rotoru’as pride - Cuddling lion cubs!

AFTER hearing of Paradise Valley Springs’ 10-week-old lion cubs, Americans Donya Shirzad and Jeff Roberson changed their holiday plans to return to New Zealand to fit in a cuddle with the cubs. “This has just been a once in a lifetime experience,” Ms Shirzad said afterwards.

Park may face limit on numbers

OPERATORS using Abel Tasman National Park could have a cap placed on the number of visitors they will be allowed to guide there each day. The suggestion is in a draft management plan for the park just released by DoC.

DoC is also proposing: focusing commercial operations at four key coastal places in a move to preserve the visitor experience and the park’s ecology; banning jet-skis; developing offshore island sanctuaries; allowing mountainbikes into the park in winter. Submissions must be with DoC by May 4.

2006 may be tough, warns Cossar

OPERATORS should keep a close eye on their business in 2006, as this year may well be tougher than previous ones. Few economists are seeing positive signs for the new year, and all predictions - fuelled by factors such as the slowing of the economy, the high New Zealand dollar, and the cost of fuel - are pointing to a flatter market.

No business lost over Vero Rally - Todd **NO existing Invercargill holiday parks lost any business during the Vero Rally. And, without the rally, the business would not have gone to the city anyway, points out Top 10 Holiday Park’s Philip Todd.**

Invercargill City Council should be congratulated for taking a proactive stance and setting aside an area for the visitors to use - “and for their ongoing support of other large events such as last year’s Lions Tour when it is obvious the existing infrastructure won’t cope.”

Behind-the-scenes at AJ Hackett

FASCINATION with bungy jumping can now be indulged with a new visitor activity on offer in Queenstown.

The Secrets of Bungy tour launched by AJ Hackett Bungy takes visitors to the Kawarau Bridge site behind-the-scenes of the operation and offers an understanding of the adventure activity that was the catalyst for Queenstown’s global recognition as the adventure capital of the world.

Pupu Springs closed

THE waters of Te Waikoropupu - or just Pupu - Springs in Golden Bay have been closed to diving, swimming and other contact to protect them from the invasive alga didymo.

Action planned over Holidays Act

THE damaging effects of the Holidays Act 2003 are causing concern in the industry, says Positively Wellington Tourism CEO Tim Cossar. But he’s doing something about it...

Aussie tourism's importance slipping
TOURISM'S importance to the Australian economy is slipping as locals stay at home and traditional markets such as Japan turn their backs on Australia and head elsewhere.

Prevue seeks \$1M investment

MORE than 1.2 million on-line video viewers used Prevue Corporation's travel industry e-marketing network in the year to January. That's according to figures from the New Zealand-born company, as it seeks \$1 million in investment capital to fund the next stage of its global coverage. Details: MD Peter Tanner 021-379379 or peter@prevucorporation.com.

Karate-ka to protect rally from vandals!

WHEN 150 veteran and vintage cars motor into the Aoraki/Mount Cook Village on Sunday, a special security service will swing into action. But it's not two-legged vandals who are the target.

The event will be almost 100 years to the day that Rodolph Wigley and John Rutherford, both driving De Dion cars, set out from Tekapo after lunch and made it to the Hermitage at 4 the following morning. The protection squad will be on the lookout for...thieving kea attracted to the glittering vehicles!

West Coast campers in the poo

FREEDOM campers along the West Coast are in the poo. Surveys by Westland District Council show such visitors commonly use roadside bushes as toilets. A region-wide working group has been set up to deal with general waste management issues.

* Some campervan and caravan users may be allowed to "freedom camp" up to two nights if Marlborough District Council today (Friday) agrees to change its policy and allow the practice in some areas. But the vehicles will have to be self-contained. Tasman District already encourages travellers to use campgrounds while recognising some prefer to park and be on their own.

DoC says ferries acted irresponsibly

FERRY companies have acted irresponsibly while damaging the Marlborough Sounds with ferry wake, and must be strictly controlled, says DoC. It backed Marlborough District Council's proposed Variation 3 regulations at an Environment Court hearing in Blenheim this week.

MPs to fast-track amendment?

AT least 15 coach drivers have lost their jobs since the Land Transport Amendment Act came into force on January 16.

BCA executive director John Collyns says the Act retrospectively revoked the "P" endorsements of drivers who had been convicted of offences including murder, rape, a range of sexual offending, assault and acid throwing.

The offence of sex with someone aged between 12 and

16 years ("carnal knowledge") is included in the non-appeal provisions.

"In our view it is a serious miscarriage of justice that people convicted of acid throwing, assault and robbery are allowed an appeal while others who had consensual sex with their girlfriend in the back of the Holden 30 years ago have no such right."

The association lobbied LTNZ and the Ministry of Transport, which are sympathetic. "They advised the Select Committee that this would be the result of retrospective legislation, but were ignored."

\$45M Hilton for the stars

RESOURCE consent for a five star, five-storey \$45 million Hilton hotel development have been lodged with Greater Wellington regional council.

11 businesses aim for sustainability

SOUTHLAND'S Sustainable Tourism Project is underway with 11 pilot businesses having been selected and the first assessments scheduled to be undertaken as part of the government's \$1.2 million Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Project.

What Ivan really wants for his birthday...

FORMER shearing world record-holder Ivan Bowen wants only one thing for his 90th birthday: to shear a sheep on stage during the Agrodome's 2.30pm

Killing tourism...

A 15-storey building proposed at Paihia, Bay of Islands, will have a major impact on the waterfront, according to objectors.

TIA against any more air travel taxes

NEW air travel taxes make flying more expensive and TIA opposes any proposals that will increase barriers for visitors to New Zealand.

Journeys at the Edge

WHAT is said to be a unique product is being launched on March 13 by Simply Wild, Nelson. Journeys at the Edge is a 4.5 day off-road journey through mountains, bush and on sea and rivers. There's sailing, mountain biking, trekking, jetboating, sea kayaking and rafting as well as helicopter trips.

Awards are "bigger deal this year"

WINNING a Tourism Industry Award in 2006 will be more of a big deal than ever, TIA says, with operators showing keen interest in entering. CEO Fiona Luhrs says that simplifying the entry process has resulted in a "significant increase" in interest from entrants.

Lovemaking = calmer speakers!

WE always have a lot to say in the industry. Many of us are public speakers and/or presenters. So, here's a tip to keep stress at bay: have sex beforehand.