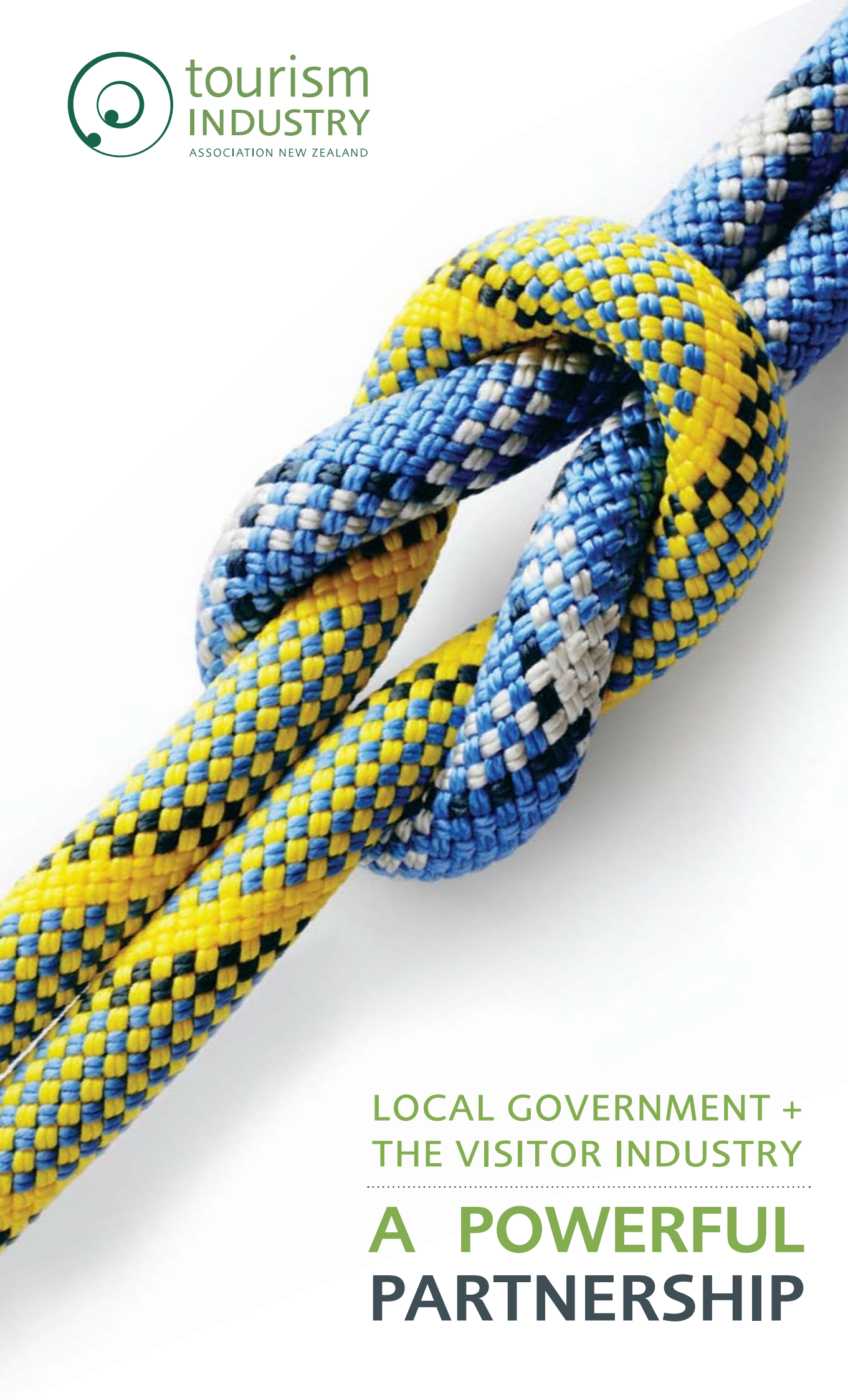




tourism  
INDUSTRY  
ASSOCIATION NEW ZEALAND



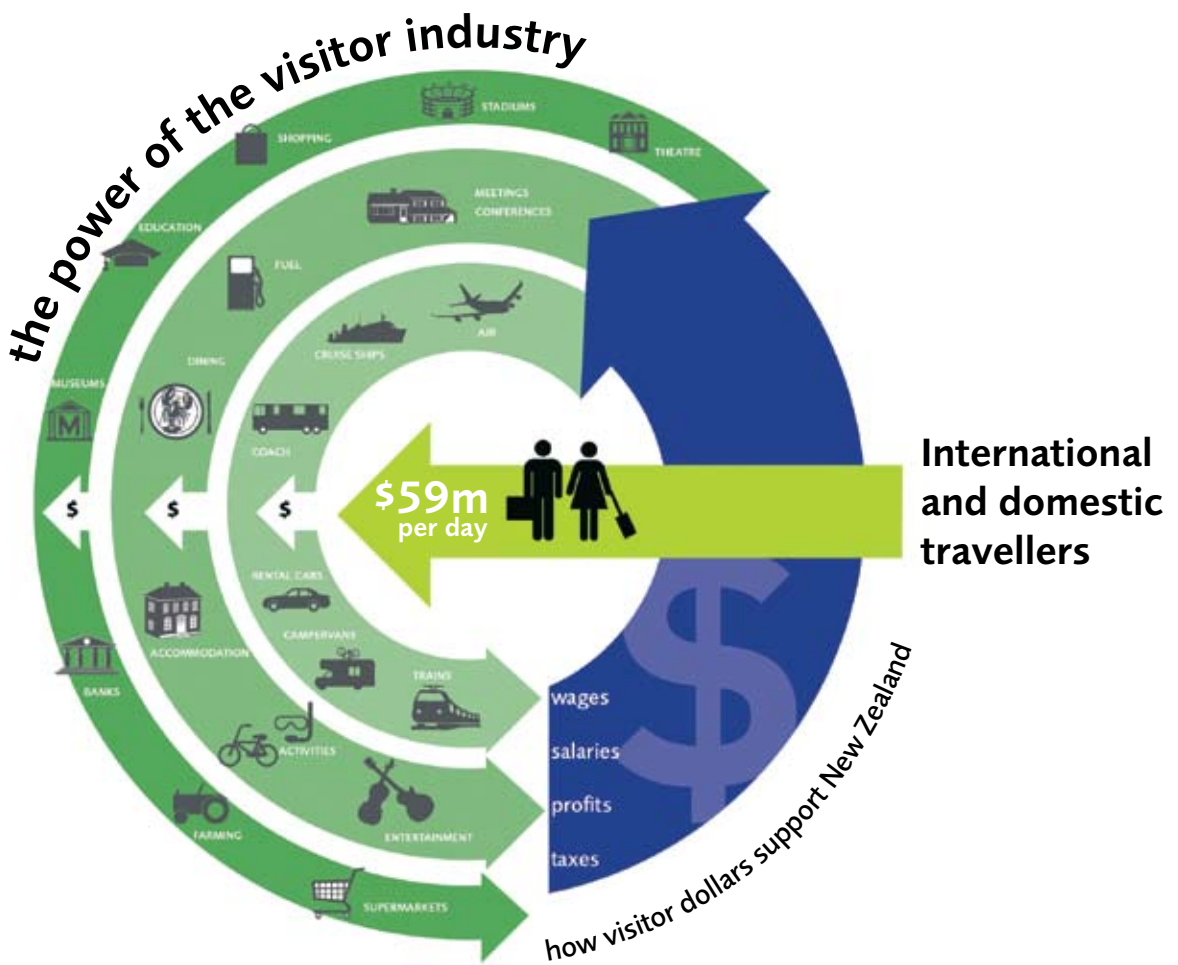
LOCAL GOVERNMENT +  
THE VISITOR INDUSTRY

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**A POWERFUL  
PARTNERSHIP**

# FUTURE STATEMENT

"Local government, communities and the visitor industry work in partnership to further strengthen the industry's contribution to sustainable economic development in all regions of New Zealand."



# TODAY, visitors to communities across the country will spend \$59 million.

These visitors will come from down the road, across the country and around the world. They will arrive on holiday, to conduct business, to visit friends and family and to further their education. The money they spend will create jobs, sustain businesses and help to support a wide range of facilities and services for residents.

The industry serving these visitors – the visitor industry – is diverse. It encompasses transport operators, retailers, accommodation providers, activity and attraction operators, restaurants, bars and cafes, convention and entertainment venues, art galleries, museums, supermarkets and a wide range of other privately-held businesses and publicly-owned organisations. Most are small to medium sized enterprises but collectively they represent a powerful economic force.

The visitor industry is already a significant driver of regional economic development. In partnership with local government, it can and is likely to contribute even more.



(Photo Source: Toby Clark, Helipro)

# RAISING THE BAR

## Local government and the visitor industry – why work together?

This document is an outline for all candidates contesting the 2010 elections as well as for people working within councils. It is designed to give candidates and staff a better understanding of the importance of the visitor industry to the regions and communities of New Zealand. It is an expression of the visitor industry's commitment to work with local government and to maximise the benefits that will accrue from an active and positive partnership.

The visitor industry already makes a significant contribution to regional economic development through the jobs and income it generates. But only a fraction of visitor spending actually occurs in places commonly considered visitor specific – such as accommodation and activities or attractions – with the rest taking place in shops, cafes, restaurants, roadside stalls, petrol stations and elsewhere. In this way, the visitor industry touches and benefits people throughout our communities.

The contribution made by councils to the visitor industry is equally significant. Local councils play a huge role in determining the level and quality of visitor services and infrastructure available, the events that take place and the public money that is invested in destination promotion. Activity of this nature helps attract visitors, influences how long they stay and how much they spend and – importantly – whether they recommend the region to others and whether they return themselves.

Councils are arguably the visitor industry's most important partner and the largest visitor industry operator in the country, investing in and supporting infrastructure such as museums and stadia, events and festivals, and in promotional activities and agencies such as Regional Tourism Organisations and i-SITE Visitor Centres. Providing great experiences is at the heart of a successful visitor industry and councils and visitor businesses both play a critical role in helping to shape and deliver those experiences.

In the regional leadership series that TIA ran with more than 500 industry operators in late 2009, better engagement with local government was identified as a major priority for the sector. Visitor-based businesses see council as a critical partner but many feel they lack a clear understanding of how to get involved and stay involved in decision-making at a regional level.

This must change if we are to extract maximum benefit from the visitor industry. We need to work together to raise the bar and achieve the best possible outcomes for regions. New ideas and new thinking are needed to deal with the challenges councils, communities and all businesses dependent on visitors face and to grow the sector's overall contribution to regional economic growth. This year's elections present a great opportunity to get started.

TIM COSSAR

Chief Executive

Tourism Industry Association

August 2010



# VISITORS – A BEDROCK OF OUR ECONOMY

Visitors are fundamental contributors to our economy and way of life.

Visitors are fundamental contributors to our economy and way of life.

The visitor industry takes a lead role in promoting New Zealand to the world. Thanks to New Zealand's international market positioning, the country is recognised around the world as one of the most beautiful and unspoiled places on earth. The 100% Pure market positioning signifies pride in our country, pride in our people and culture, and pride in the unique environment and experiences that New Zealand offers the world.

This market positioning built by a vibrant visitor industry has become an important source of national confidence and identity and a front window for "New Zealand Incorporated". Indeed, the authentic offer that is synonymous with New Zealand has been widely adopted and used to promote exports in a range of other industries as well.

The same can be said for the industry's contribution at a regional level. The visitor industry takes a lead in promoting our regions to the country and to the world – creating a sense of all that is unique and desirable in our regions. The qualities that attract visitors are also those that attract people to return and live, to work, to do business and to build new businesses in our regions.

## Visitors – calculating value

The visitor industry was directly responsible for nearly 97,000 jobs in 2009: that's 5.2% of New Zealand's total workforce or more than one in every 20 jobs.<sup>1</sup> Direct GDP added by the visitor industry was \$7.13 billion, or 3.8% of total GDP.

However, like all other parts of the economy, the visitor industry doesn't just create jobs and GDP within its own sector – it also purchases supplies from other industries, creating employment and GDP there as well. In addition, workers in the sector spend their wages across a wide range of industries in New Zealand, creating more jobs and GDP. Once these indirect impacts are taken into account, the visitor industry creates around one in ten jobs and contributes close to 10% of GDP. Meanwhile, total tourism expenditure in the year to March 2009 reached \$21 billion.

The share of the workforce employed by the visitor industry – and its contribution to regional GDP – varies across the country. Much as would be expected, the South Island in particular derives a large share of employment from the visitor industry. For example, the Queenstown-Lake Wanaka, Mt Cook-Mackenzie and West Coast regions all have high levels of employment directly attributable to the visitor industry.

In the North Island, areas such as the Coromandel, Rotorua, Taupo and Ruapehu have similarly high numbers of jobs that are directly attributable to the visitor industry.

<sup>1</sup> Employment is measured in terms of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), where a part-time worker is calculated as half an FTE. Given the part-time and casual nature of employment in the industry, the total number of people employed is likely to be much higher. (Source: BERL)

# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Welcoming people, well-managed communities and quality products and services collectively underpin great visitor experiences and a vibrant visitor industry.

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**Councils** provide many of the products, services and experiences and much of the infrastructure required to support great visitor experiences – from signage and toilets, to visitor information centres, art galleries and museums. Through their Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs), councils also contribute to the marketing effort that attracts visitors to their region and, by virtue of their policies, signal a community's support for visitors and the visitor industry.

Individual **businesses** provide quality products and services that attract visitors, add to the appeal of a region and enhance the visitor experience, while also supplementing marketing efforts with their own promotional campaigns.

**Community** organisations also play a vital role in visitor industry development, with the likes of sporting clubs, event committees, performing arts organisations and garden societies all extending the fabric of the industry by creating and delivering activities that attract visitors and extend their stay.

Visitor industry impacts and outcomes are most positive when all parties work together: strengthening the contribution of visitors to regional economies while also securing the wider social benefits that can come from diversity, interactions between community and visitors, and access to an enhanced set of community facilities and services made possible by visitor expenditure.



(Photo Source: Tourism Auckland) (Photo Source: Lance Godfrey, Kaikoura Wilderness Experience)

## PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

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The visitor industry sees a positive partnership with local government being built around the following priorities.

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### 1. ENGAGEMENT

– central government has recognised the importance of the visitor industry to New Zealand's economy. We now seek a closer working relationship with councils, underpinned by a shared appreciation of the visitor industry's value and the opportunities it presents for regional economic growth.

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### 2. INVESTMENT

– we seek to partner with councils on investment decisions that will maximise community benefits while also enhancing the quality of visitor experiences.

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### 3. ENVIRONMENT

– we seek to work more closely with councils to enhance environmental management in the regions and to deliver on the environmental promise that is so important for visitors and for other industries.

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### 4. REGIONAL PROFILE

– we endorse council investment in regional promotion and wish to engage in joint initiatives that will maximise the return from promotional efforts.

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### 5. REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

– we seek to partner with councils to ease the compliance burden on businesses of all types and sizes and to foster a business-friendly regulatory environment for high quality operators.

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## Priority 1

# ENGAGEMENT

Central government has recognised the importance of the visitor industry. The visitor industry now seeks a closer working relationship with councils, underpinned by a shared appreciation of the visitor industry's value and the opportunities it presents for regional economic growth.

In the past few years, central government has recognised the importance of the visitor industry with the Prime Minister himself taking the tourism portfolio. The government has not only said that this industry is important to New Zealand's future but has actively engaged with, and invested in, the sector. To capitalise on this, and to drive visitor growth in the regions, the visitor industry is now seeking to strengthen partnerships with local government and communities.

Visitors to most regions of New Zealand have almost doubled in the past decade with expenditure by visitors, both domestic and international, bringing in millions of dollars to cities and regions throughout the country. In recent decades, a number of regional economies have experienced rapid economic growth on the back of the visitor industry.

To maximise the opportunities brought by increasing numbers of visitors, the visitor industry wants to work with local government and communities in ways it has not done before. While the industry knows the critical role visitors play in regional economic development, visitor-related businesses have not always been effective in conveying this message at a community level. This needs to change if communities are to plan effectively for visitor opportunities and impacts.

A community that plans the type of visitor industry it wants and can successfully manage its impacts will not only instil pride and identity in its community but will also benefit economically from the extra spending of visitors. Visitors can also make a community more active and vibrant, or revitalise otherwise dormant regions.

## Wellington City Council

Wellington's reputation was once characterised by its wet and windy weather, its dull bureaucracy and a lack of anything interesting to do. In the 1990s, Wellington set about changing this. The city (and regional) council invested in waterfront redevelopment, upgraded visitor attractions and pedestrian areas, backed new infrastructure such as the construction of a stadium and put money into visitor marketing and promotion. With a new marketing slogan, Absolutely Positively Wellington (established by the city's Mayor), supported by a burgeoning

café and restaurant culture, things started to change and the city was transformed. What followed was a dedicated effort to attract festivals and events as the council realised the economic value that visitors could bring to the city. The Rugby Sevens, the International Festival of the Arts and World of Wearable Arts (WOW) became permanent fixtures on the Wellington events calendar. More than a decade later, the capital city is frequently rated as the most popular destination to visit by other New Zealanders.

## WESTPAC STADIUM



(Photo Source: Wellington City Council)

"The retail food and beverage and accommodation sectors are key beneficiaries of the increased spending in the region. The revenue they generate before, during and after Westpac Stadium events provides a substantial boost to the regional economy."

In its 10 years of operation, Wellington's Westpac Stadium has hosted a multitude of local and international events, attracting visitors from throughout the country and abroad. 2010 kicked off at an astonishing pace, with 11 major event days in a 30 day period. The 5 millionth patron passed through the gates in 2009, a milestone it hadn't expected to achieve until 2017.

Development of the \$130m Westpac Stadium was championed by Wellington City Council, with the city and regional councils contributing \$40m in loans towards its construction. Its performance has exceeded all expectations in terms of numbers of events, profitability and attendance, with the economic benefit to the region more than double what was projected.

Source: Westpac Stadium.

# ACTIONS

## 1. Get to know each other

Effective partnerships require regular, constructive communication. The visitor industry will reach its potential where councils, community interests and industry talk frequently on issues that matter.

**The visitor industry seeks to build close working relationships with council decision-makers who are able to assist in strengthening the industry and its contribution to regional economic development.**

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## 2. Embed the visitor industry in council processes

It is critical that councils and the visitor industry work together to ensure council planning processes address how to maximise the value of visitors to regions. As part of this, consideration should be given to the formulation of regional policy statements to guide councils on the issues which are currently challenging the visitor industry. These statements could be included in council planning documents, such as annual plans and long term council community plans.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with councils to ensure planning documents clearly detail the visitor industry's contribution to the region and address how the industry can deliver extra economic value to the community.**

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## 3. Get involved in decision-making

The visitor industry recognises that regional decision-making would be assisted by more visitor industry representation on council. To have a successful and enduring partnership, the visitor industry will encourage local visitor industry leaders to stand for election and to be otherwise represented on council working groups.

**Visitor industry representatives seek to get more closely involved and to help councils enhance their knowledge and understanding of the visitor industry and what can be done to develop it.**

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## Priority 2

# INVESTMENT

The visitor industry seeks to partner with councils on investment decisions that will maximise community benefits while also enhancing the quality of visitor experiences.

In regional New Zealand, the visitor industry provides employment and business activity that enhances the rating base of local communities. The visitor industry:

- supports local services, such as shops, supermarkets, cafes, bars, restaurants and service stations;
- supports investment in public services, such as hospitals and schools;
- sustains a wide range of cultural and sporting events;
- provides a variety of employment options for residents; and
- is a catalyst for new capital investment and infrastructure.

Thus the economic value of visitors to regions is much wider than the tariff paid to an accommodation provider or the fare paid to a transport operator. The visitor industry has an impact at every level of every community in New Zealand. The return on investment made by local government in support of the visitor industry filters down to all parts of the community and to all residents.

The visitor industry wants to play a part in the investment decisions that impact it. It supports a contribution via the use of targeted rates and/or other rating options, provided the revenue collected in this way is reinvested in development and promotion of the sector. It would like to work with councils on ways that it can help achieve this.

## Central Otago District Council

The visitor industry has historically been one of the smaller industries in Central Otago. The district has been dominated by agricultural and horticulture with viticulture growing in importance over the last few years. Traditionally Central Otago has been a domestic visitor destination, but international visitor numbers have been increasing steadily from a low base over the last five to ten years.

A recent survey indicated that visitor industry promotion was seen as very important by 94% of residents who supported their council's role

in this promotion. The visitor industry is seen as an innovative sector that engages people. Being people-dependent and therefore labour intensive, it offers unique opportunities for youth and adults to train and work within their local community. The sector also enables people and communities to share their unique stories and hospitality in return for social, economic and cultural benefits.

## OTAGO CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL



(Photo Source: Tourism Central Otago)

When the railway between Clyde and Middlemarch closed in 1990, it was destined to become a rusting line of metal across the Central Otago countryside. Despite opposition from some local landowners and farmers, a group of residents recognised the potential offered by the old railway line and set about creating a new visitor product.

A decade later the trail opened and with the help of the Department of Conservation and locals who came on side, it has now become an iconic visitor activity. The trail has revitalised communities it passes through with cafes, restaurants and accommodation starting up along the route. The support of the local council has also been instrumental in the development of the trail.

The Otago Central Rail Trail (OCRT) is an example of how a visitor venture has helped strengthen and grow relationships with a local community leading to strong economic benefits for the residents and region. A 2009 user survey of the OCRT found it generates:

- \$7.2 million per annum
- \$3.6 million in GDP
- The equivalent of 75 full time jobs
- Exceptionally high levels of visitor satisfaction.

Source: OCRT and Central Otago District Council media release 16 June 2009

# ACTIONS

## 1. Invest in infrastructure

While New Zealand's natural environment provides the backdrop for many visitor experiences, councils provide the regional backdrop with the investment they make in infrastructure. While councils invest in basic services like roads, water and waste disposal, many also operate attractions such as museums, art galleries, gardens, stadia and events. Infrastructure of this nature also benefits the local community.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with councils to ensure that council decision-makers have the information they need to make decisions on infrastructure that satisfies visitor demand, helps in the management of impacts and meets community expectations.**

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## 2. Rating

Visitor businesses acknowledge that they must share the rates burden. A range of rating tools are available to local authorities, including targeted rates, user charges, development contributions and local levies or taxes. The visitor industry supports the use of targeted rates for marketing and development, but only if this is fairly and equitably managed, if the revenue collected is "ring-fenced" for reinvestment in visitor industry development and promotion, and if visitor businesses are involved in these investment decisions.

**The visitor industry seeks to work closely with councils on rating options which will directly fund tourism development and promotion.**

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## 3. Invest in People

People are the visitor industry's most valuable asset. Alongside those who work in the visitor industry, people who live in host communities help to shape the quality of the visitor experience and add depth and richness through the local stories they tell. The visitor industry wants to work with councils on a range of strategies to ensure consistent, high quality hospitality, and welcoming host communities, especially in the lead up to events such as Rugby World Cup 2011.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with councils on strategies to improve skills, enhance visitor experiences, and encourage communities to take pride in the sharing of their unique stories.**

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## 4. Invest in Broadband

Online technology and booking systems already dominate the way in which visitors book and obtain information and competitive e-capability has become essential to visitor businesses in a highly connected world. Broadband services and mobile networks are often inadequate, especially in remote or rural areas. Councils are well placed to influence where and how central government invests in broadband and, with the help of the visitor industry, can make a better case to government for investment in the infrastructure required.

**The visitor industry seeks to partner with councils to advocate to central government for improved broadband and mobile services in rural and remote areas.**

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## Priority 3

# ENVIRONMENT

The visitor industry seeks to work more closely with councils to enhance environmental management in the regions and to deliver on the environmental promise that is so important for visitors and for other industries.

The natural environment is one of New Zealand's primary drawcards for international visitors and these visitors have high expectations of the reality they will encounter. In the next few years the environment is likely to become even more important as concern about environmental issues continues to intensify.

The visitor industry has responded in its own way to this, with a number of businesses adopting sustainable practices in their operations and seeking environmental accreditation. But the visitor industry can't meet environmental expectations alone – it needs the support of central and local government.

Recognising the importance of New Zealand's environment to visitor and other industries, a number of councils have implemented sustainability initiatives. These range from the introduction of recycling and waste stations, to education of visitors on camping practices, and support of businesses implementing their own energy efficiency initiatives.



(Photo Source: Dave Dennis, Aoraki Balloon Safaris) (Photo Source: Venture Hawke's Bay)

## Kaikoura District Council

Kaikoura has become a magnet for international visitors off the back of a whale watching operation. Even though it has a small rating base, it has recognised that New Zealand's environment is the main reason visitors come here and has implemented a range of environmental initiatives.

"Kaikoura has a stunning environment which is important to the community and attracts close

to one million visitors each year. Throughout the Kaikoura community, the value in looking after the environment, for the community, the tourists and the next generation, has become increasingly important," Kaikoura District Council.

## KAIKOURA - LEADER IN ZERO WASTE



(Photo Source: Brian Bett)

Kaikoura is recognised nationally and internationally for its commitment to environmental sustainability and recycling innovation.

The region has imposed a zero waste policy and has made huge inroads into recycling innovation. This includes putting more recycling bins in public places and increasing the frequency of rubbish pick-ups from a high use site.

The region has also achieved benchmark standards in climate change protection and became the first council in the world to achieve Green Globe certification in recognition of its commitment to protecting its local environment and working toward sustainability for residents and visitors for generations to come.

# ACTIONS

## 1. Recycling

A lack of recycling facilities is frequently mentioned by visitors as one of their main concerns. The visitor industry wants to work with councils to explore practical, economic ways of reducing, reusing and recycling waste so that visitors' expectations are met and communities may enjoy a better quality of life.

**The visitor industry seeks to partner with councils and commercial providers to address waste management and to ensure that there are practical, accessible and visible recycling programmes available to communities and visitors.**

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## 2. Camping

Along with many communities, the visitor industry has been concerned about the environmental impact from inappropriate vehicle-based camping. Local government has actively supported the efforts of a forum established in 2007 to better manage camping but the opportunity exists for further action on this issue.

**The visitor industry seeks to partner with councils to help develop clear guidelines for camping in their regions and a nationally consistent enforcement regime.**

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## 3. Land and Water Management

Land use, landscapes and water resources are integrally linked and their protection is important to the visitor industry, to local communities and New Zealand. Councils have a lead responsibility to protect and enhance water bodies for the next generation, but also to ensure that residents and visitors enjoy water that is suitable for drinking and swimming and available for a wide range of commercial and non-commercial recreation. The visitor industry welcomes the opportunity to work with councils to ensure New Zealand's water and the wider environment is well managed.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with councils to provide a visitor perspective on the management of land and water resources.**

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# REGIONAL PROFILE

The industry endorses council investment in regional promotion and wishes to engage in joint initiatives that will maximise the return from promotional efforts.

To maximise visibility and the benefits of the visitor industry for communities, collaboration between councils and operators is required on regional promotion. Collaboration between RTOs and other visitor promotion agencies and their counterparts in nearby regions is also beneficial, not only because it allows the pooling of resources but also because it enables regions to offer a seamless experience to visitors. Southern Lakes is an example of a successful joint regional marketing initiative with Fiordland, Queenstown and Lake Wanaka coming together to promote the wider region.

In the past decade, many councils around the country have also adopted strategies to invest in festivals and events. For example, the New Plymouth District Council has brought some key events to the Taranaki region and these have not only attracted more visitors to the region but have also revitalised community spirit. The same can be said for the Scallop Festival in Whitianga which attracts a large number of visitors each year and provides a welcome boost to the visitor industry and to community spirit in the off-peak winter season.

i-SITE Visitor Information Centres, many of which receive council support, also promote their regions and add economic value. Research conducted in 2009 showed visitors who use i-SITES do and spend more than other visitors. Around 900,000 international visitors used an i-SITE last year and they spent 45% more than other visitors on average. More than 85% of visitor industry businesses said they were already working with i-SITES and regarded these as critical to their businesses' success.

Regional Tourism Organisations, i-SITES and festivals and events are all great examples of council investment in regional profile and the benefits that accrue to the communities they serve.

## New Plymouth District Council

"Major events support the local economy by creating income from running the event as well as attracting visitors who spend in the district. Major events also help to promote New Plymouth District as a great place to live, work and visit..." New Plymouth District Council

In 2005, the New Plymouth District Council resolved to adopt key principles for a District Events Strategy to focus on large strategic events. The purpose was to change local, national and international perceptions of New Plymouth to reflect a strong Taranaki brand.

Other key objectives were aimed at addressing seasonal gaps in visitor numbers and using event venues and infrastructure that would otherwise remain empty in the low season.

With great support from the council, Sport Taranaki, the Taranaki Arts Festival Trust and the Venture Taranaki Trust, as well as businesses, the community and local residents, a strong partnership was formed that attracted a number of large events to New Plymouth.

## WOMAD



(Photo Source: TAFT - Taranaki Arts Festival Trust)

WOMAD (World of Music Arts and Dance) has been a regular feature in New Plymouth for some years, contributing \$24.7m to the region's economy from 2003 to 2009. It is run by TAFT (Taranaki Arts Festival Trust), which is supported by the council, in the council-owned TSB Bowl of Brooklands.

WOMAD in 2010:

- Attracted 13,500 people
- Generated a direct economic impact of \$2.89 million to Taranaki
- Generated a flow-on economic impact of \$6.43 million.

# ACTIONS

## 1. Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs)

A Regional Tourism Organisation is the main agency tasked with promoting its region and bringing visitors to its area. For the most part, an RTO is funded by council, with this funding sometimes supplemented by a mix of private sector investment. RTOs also produce collaborative advertising campaigns, maps, guides, websites and promotional material in conjunction with operators to enhance the overall marketing effort.

**The visitor industry endorses council investment in regional promotion and seeks to work with councils to maximise return on funds invested.**

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## 2. i-SITES

There are 90 i-SITES throughout New Zealand, each dedicated to providing free and objective information on visitor products and services under the official 'i-SITE' brand. In some instances they are self-funded – especially those located in the major cities and key tourism locations – but for the most part rely on local government investment.

**The visitor industry endorses the role played by i-SITES in enhancing the visitor experience and seeks to work with councils to ensure top quality i-SITE and information systems are provided for visitors.**

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## 3. Festivals and Events

Festivals and events are receiving more local government support as councils recognise the economic benefit these activities bring to their regions. Wellington has transformed itself as a visitor destination on the back of some major events, such as the International Festival of the Arts, the International Rugby Sevens and the World of Wearable Art Awards Show. Other examples include Taranaki's WOMAD Festival, Hokitika's Wildfoods Festival, Warbirds over Wanaka and Hamilton's V8 supercar race.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with councils to maximise the opportunities presented by festivals and events.**

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## 4. Joint Ventures

There is a need to better coordinate marketing efforts and planning across some regions and RTOs to maximise the benefits of scarce funding and other resources.

**The visitor industry seeks to partner with councils in the development of appropriate and relevant cross-regional alliances and coordination of joint marketing activities.**

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## 5. Visitor Safety

New Zealand has a reputation as a relatively safe destination – a reputation that is becoming increasingly attractive to international visitors but is also important to the domestic market. Councils' approaches to safety – such as good urban planning and the fostering of community intolerance to crime against visitors – will be critical to maintaining a vibrant visitor industry.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with councils and other relevant agencies to implement practical actions aimed at improving visitor safety.**

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## Priority 5

# REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

The visitor industry seeks to partner with councils to ease the compliance burden and to foster a business-friendly regulatory environment for high quality operators.

As is the case with many industries in New Zealand, the visitor industry is dominated by small-to-medium sized enterprises (SMEs). This means that, while important, compliance issues – from RMA consents to food hygiene guidelines – can weigh heavily on business owners and managers and detract from other work required to effectively manage and grow a business.

## Resource Management Act (RMA)

While the RMA is recognised by the visitor industry for the protection it affords the community and environment, the time taken for resource consents to be granted can be a barrier to sustainable development. As well as time delays, visitor businesses are often stymied in their ability to make capital investment because of high costs associated with applying for and appealing resource consents.

### EXCERPT FROM TIA SUBMISSION TO THE REVIEW OF THE RMA IN 2009.

"I appreciate its sustainability intent – to consider all aspects of the environment in any development. It also supports the principle that development takes place within a context of consultation and community participation. But it takes too long, is too expensive and defaults to the lowest denominator. Our business was successful in obtaining a resource consent for a new development which was then appealed by one neighbour. This isolated objection held up the confirmed resource consent for 18 months and added a further \$100k to the cost of obtaining the resource consent. There would have been added and significant cost implications if we had programmed construction to immediately follow the resource consent process."

TIA member, April 2009

# ACTIONS

## 1. Recognise small business realities

The visitor industry is dominated by small businesses. Central and local government compliance requirements can be time-consuming and onerous, impacting the ability of businesses to deliver a high quality visitor experience.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with local and central government to reduce any unnecessary administrative burden inherent in meeting compliance requirements.**

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## 2. Council consents, regulations and by-laws

While not alone in this respect, visitor businesses can find the consent process time-consuming, if not bewildering. In some cases, visitor businesses have been stymied in efforts to expand their operations because of council processes or have faced significant and unanticipated costs due to delays in the granting of consents.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with local government on the steps both parties can take to streamline, simplify and speed up consent processes.**

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## 3. Resource Management Act

In 2009 central government passed reforms to streamline the Resource Management Act. While retaining the environmental integrity of the Act, the visitor industry would like to see both central and local government further refine the application of the RMA so that timely and consistent decisions are made.

**The visitor industry seeks to work with local government on the steps both parties can take to streamline, simplify and speed up the RMA process.**

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(Photo Source: Jean Goodbrand, Sealink)



(Photo Source: Simon Tanner, Sky Dive Abel Tasman)

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## Who is TIA?

The Tourism Industry Association (TIA) is the lead association representing the interests of more than 1700 visitor-related businesses in New Zealand. These businesses cover a range of activities – hospitality, transport, accommodation, adventure and activities, attractions and retail – as well as related tourism services.

The primary role of TIA is to be **the voice of the visitor industry**, but its other main aims include:

- Adding value for members and the industry through increased profile, support and development
- Providing networking opportunities and facilitation services
- Advocacy for members on the issues facing them
- Assisting members' businesses to be profitable and improve industry performance
- Supporting the long term sustainable future of the New Zealand visitor industry

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## Who is RTONZ?

Regional Tourism Organisations of New Zealand (RTONZ) is the name of the unincorporated collective of the 29 existing Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs). As the peak body for RTOs, RTONZ aims to encourage co-ordination and to ensure RTOs are engaged and consulted on issues critical to the development of the regional tourism sector.

Key activities of RTONZ include:

- Developing submissions on issues and draft plans that impact the collective
  - Providing advice and assistance to members
  - Developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholder agencies
  - Negotiating and executing project-based funding contracts
  - Implementing projects on behalf of RTONZ
  - Coordination of media enquiries
  - Advocacy of the RTO sector and the important role it plays in the New Zealand tourism landscape.
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(Photo Source: Simeon Patience, Bush and Beach)

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