

TFM to be great industry asset

THE Ministry of Tourism's innovative Tourism Flows Model (TFM) has just been released - and is available for anyone to use.

TFM is a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software tool that allows users to study the movements of international and domestic travellers in New Zealand. Users can identify trends and potential capacity constraints before they occur by accessing forecasting data with the model.

"We've taken the use of our existing data to a new level," says research manager Bruce Bassett. "Applying it to highly visual interactive maps gives the user a new freedom to study tourist flows nationwide and in their particular area. The tool will be indispensable to a range of people from infrastructure planners through to environmental managers, transport planners, tourism marketers and tourism businesses."

Awards benefits

THE Tourism Industry Awards are about improving business practices as well as recognising organisations which have already achieved a level of excellence, says TIA CEO Fiona Luhrs.

40 selected for luxury travel show

A group of more than 40 top operators have been selected to take part in Pure Luxury New Zealand at Treetops Lodge and Estate, Rotorua, from May 19-21. TIA says they will promote the best luxury product during meetings with 40 selected international travel specialists who already sell, or have plans to sell, New Zealand tourism products targeted at the luxury sector.

Go-ahead soon for frigate sinking?

NORTHLAND Regional Council is close to granting a resource consent allowing the former naval frigate *Canterbury* to be sunk at Deepwater Cove near Cape Brett.

Most domestic increase went on fuel

MOST of the increased spend identified in the latest domestic travel survey (*IT622*) was on transport costs - which points to fuel, confirms the Ministry of Tourism.

Qualmark - exciting?

QUALMARK is the fourth most exciting New Zealand company, according to *NBR*. The newspaper's survey is based on interviews with senior industry professionals, including owners, GMs and directors.

Mt Cook to get Queenstown air link

AN air service between Queenstown and Mount Cook is being introduced by The Hermitage Hotel and Air Milford marking the first scheduled service to operate between the two destinations since 2001.

Wellington conferences up 25 percent

WELLINGTON'S efforts to attract large multiple day conferences is paying off, with research showing strong growth over the past year.

Airline uses latest technology to target

AIRNZ is using pioneering technology to reach a new generation of stressed-out Americans - positioning a Kiwi holiday as better value than a session with their therapist.

Minister speaks his mind on travel tax

THE imposition of a travel tax on accommodation and/or air travel will not be a threat to the industry's viability, Tourism Minister Damien O'Connor said when he fronted up for questions at Friday's ITOC forum in Auckland.

No decision has been made on how the proposed Rugby World Cup stadium will be paid for. "There will be money from lotteries, government and local authorities. But tourism faces greater threats than a travel tax."

Mr O'Connor said there's a high risk of "biosecurity incursions" as the number of international visitors increase. And low yield is also a major threat.

Mr O'Connor said an extra charge on flying will not be a threat, either - but lack of capacity could be.

ITOC VP Warren Harford said after the Minister's lengthy and impassioned answer to a question from HAPNZ CEO Fergus Brown: "If only you had just said yes or no..." to laughter. "Very though provoking!" added president Stuart Neels.

Single destination may see rates rise

WITH the launch of AirNZ's Shanghai-Auckland services New Zealand can promote itself as a single-destination - and charge prices that reflect the true cost of the experience.

Tourism Minister Damien O'Connor told ITOC members that one of his main interests is to ensure a quality tourism experience by finding the right balance of promotion, marketing and delivery.

O'Connor courageous, believes president GOOD on him! That was the opinion of ITOC president Stuart Neels after Tourism Minister Damien O'Connor gave his views on travel taxes at the ITOC forum. Mr Neels says the whole issue of funding and infrastructure needs to be talked about.

What World Cup will do for NZ...

ABOUT 66,000 overseas visitors will likely fly into New Zealand for the Rugby World Cup in 2011. "Although this sounds like a large number, given it is the off-season, New Zealand will be hosting 80,000 visitors less than we do in the peak February period," says TNZ. "

Fyfe to mow your lawn - if price right!

AIRNZ CEO Rob Fyfe is offering to mow lawns for the highest bidder in his company's online charity auction, said to be the largest ever.

Interactive time tunnel for gondola

A new ride experience is due to open at the Christchurch Gondola. The new and improved "Time Tunnel Ride Experience" will take visitors on an interactive journey to learn about the geological evolution and history of Christchurch and Canterbury.

Luhrs, Hickton reply

THE industry is aware of a growing international demand for sustainable, environmentally responsible travel experiences, points out TIA CEO Fiona Luhrs. "The industry has identified environmental sustainability as a top issue for the New Zealand Tourism Strategy update process to address. We are pleased to see the renewed government support for emission-friendly technologies and biofuels."

TIA members last year said the environment was the most important issue for government to address - after increased funding for international marketing.

She was commenting on a media report that TNZ's 100%Pure marketing campaign may end up being the country's Achilles heel as governments and consumers around the world focus on the contribution that air travel makes to global warming.

TNZ CEO George Hickton says that the environment is a vital part of what New Zealand has to offer, but the campaign extends beyond this.

Law changes to benefit industry - TIA

TOURISM will benefit from proposed immigration law changes, says TIA.

AirNZ Pacific Premium to be enhanced
AIRNZ is to re-launch its Pacific Premium Economy class to provide enhanced in-flight services on long-haul routes.

Old Christchurch Town and Pa - at last!

COUNTDOWN to the opening of the long awaited Tamaki Heritage Experience, Old Christchurch Town and Pa, has begun. It will open in the second week of January.

Ezy Rentals can now get radical

FOLLOWING a five-year restraint of trade from THL, Ezy Rentals can now start hiring out its radical new campervans.

Guest nights rise five percent

TOTAL guest nights in short-term commercial accommodation were 2.5 million in October 2006, a five percent increase compared with the same month the previous year and a seven percent increase compared with October 2004.

Go-ahead for take-over of \$1 casino

THE \$4 million sale of Queenstown's Wharf Casino to a Malaysian-owned casino company has been approved by the Internal Affairs Department.

Building blitz may hit Christchurch

FOUR new hotels are on the cards for central Christchurch next year, with another three potential sites to be confirmed in coming months.

MRI celebration in March

RUAPEHU, Wanganui and Rangitikei's new joint branding under their MRI will be "celebrated" in early March, according to executive director Greg Howe.

Wanaka has 10 international events in 07

LAKE Wanaka is fast establishing itself as an attractive venue for high profile events with 10 international events taking place during 2007.

Queenstown population "explosive"

QUEENSTOWN'S growth is the most "explosive" in the country, says Statistics New Zealand principal demographer Mansoor Khawaja.

Marae tourism studied

THE opportunity to share Maori culture is as important as, if not more so, than money or profit when it comes to marae visits according to a paper by AUT's Keri-Anne Wikitera.