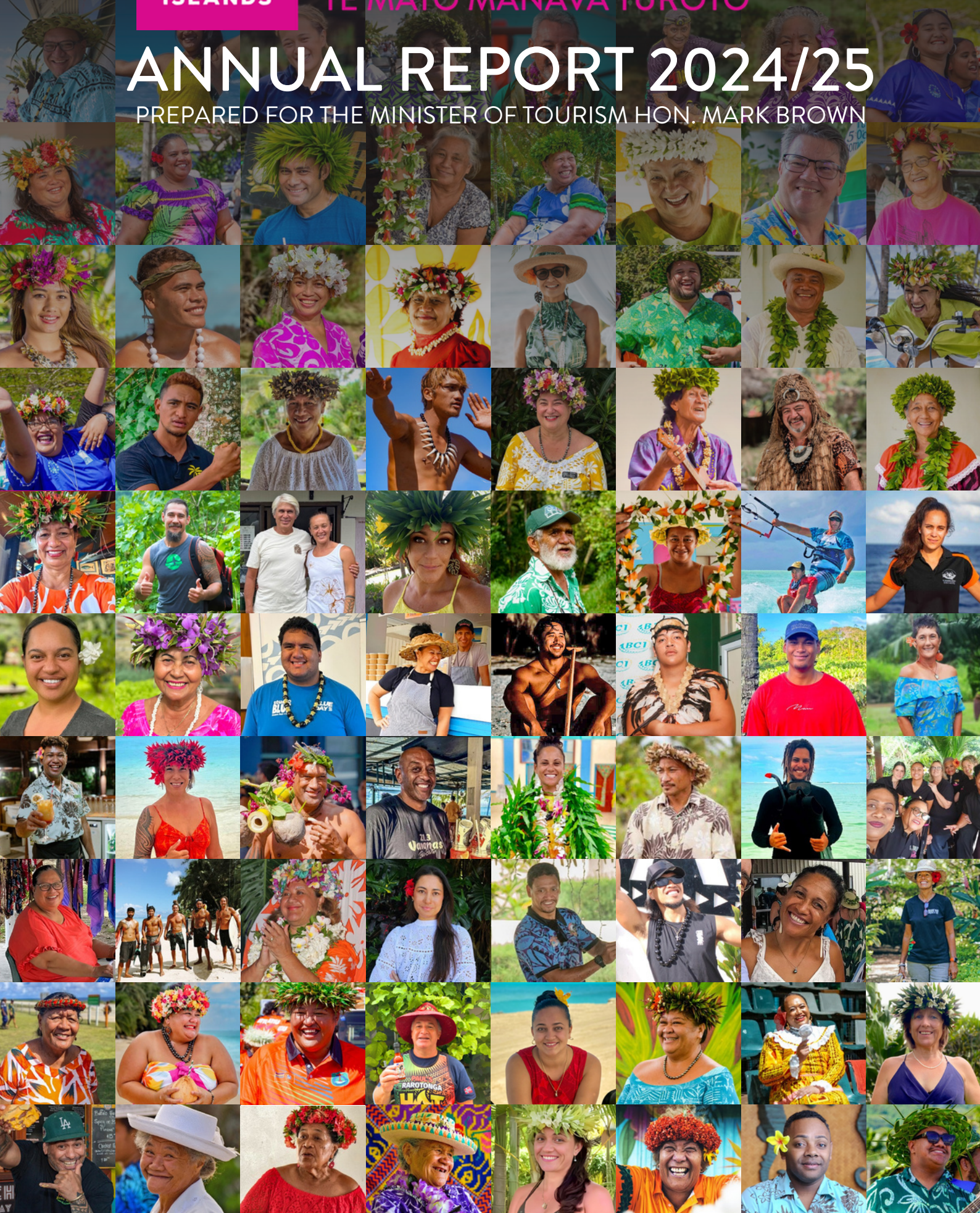




COOK ISLANDS TOURISM CORPORATION TE MATO MANAVA TUROTO

ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 PREPARED FOR THE MINISTER OF TOURISM HON. MARK BROWN



Show your Mana, say

Kia Orana

COOK
ISLANDS

Love our little paradise

This year's annual report cover is a tribute to the heartbeat of our tourism sector – our people.

The faces you see represent the many men and women who greet our visitors with warmth, who share our stories, protect our natural and cultural heritage, and in doing so, carry the very spirit of the Cook Islands to the world.

They are the people who bring our Kia Orana values to life – the dreamers, the doers, the guardians of our little paradise. From the front desk to the lagoon, from the taro patch to the tour van, they are the ones who make our little paradise come alive every single day.

At Cook Islands Tourism, our vision has never wavered:

Tourism advances the well-being of resident Cook Islanders.

Na te kimi puapinga turoto e akameitaki i te oraanga mataora o te tangata e noo nei ki te ipukarea.

This vision guides everything we do—because tourism, for us, is not just about arrivals and statistics.

It's about making sure every Cook Islander has the opportunity to thrive.

It's about ensuring that the benefits of tourism are felt in our homes, in our communities, and in the futures of our tamariki.

Our mission reminds us to pursue this relentlessly: to grow tourism in a way that is economically sound, socially enriching, and culturally and environmentally sustainable. And in doing so, to remain grounded in what truly matters—our people.

This cover is a celebration.

A celebration of resilience, of pride, of community.

A reminder that tourism is not something that happens to us, but something we shape, protect, and lead together.

The smiles on this cover are more than portraits — they are symbols of connection, of hospitality, and of hope.

They remind us that every visitor experience begins with a human story, and that behind every journey is a Cook Islander who has given a part of themselves to create a memory.

Together, we ensure that Kia Orana is not just spoken, but lived.

To all those in our sector – our operators, guides, hosts, artisans, and advocates – meitaki ma'ata.

Thank you for sharing our little paradise with the world in a way that reflects the best of who we are as an industry.

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- A background image of a tropical beach with a row of palm trees and clear turquoise water under a blue sky.

Message from the Chairman

HON. PRIME MINISTER MARK BROWN

Minister For Tourism
Government Of The Cook Islands

The Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT) is pleased to present its Annual Report for the financial year 2024/25, fulfilling the statutory requirements of the Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation Act 1998 and its 2007 Amendment.

This year has been marked by steady growth. Total visitor arrivals for 2024/25 reached 175,757 an 7% increase over 2023/24, and a new high for the Cook Islands. According to the International Visitor Survey (July 2024 - June 2025), visitor expenditure direct into the local economy was estimated at NZD \$422 million, reaffirming tourism as the cornerstone of the national economy and the primary contributor to community wellbeing, cementing the sector's role as the primary driver of national GDP and community wellbeing.

Airlift capacity continues to strengthen, with total international seat supply rising from 229,114 in FY2023/24 to 260,524 in FY2024/25 (+13.7%). This growth has been underpinned by the commitment of our airline partners. Air New Zealand remains the backbone of access through its Auckland–Rarotonga services, while Jetstar continues to operate three Auckland–Rarotonga flights weekly and has expanded its Sydney–Rarotonga schedule to four weekly services, with a fifth seasonal flight introduced in March 2025. Looking to the Northern Hemisphere, our partnerships extend our global reach: the Honolulu–Rarotonga service by Hawaiian Airlines acts as our bridging link into broader North America, while the Papeete–Rarotonga route operated by Air Rarotonga (GZ) and Air Tahiti (VT) provides vital connectivity to the U.S. West Coast and Europe.

Accommodation capacity remains an important foundation for growth. With 675 properties and 7,376 beds, including continued growth in Cook Islander-owned holiday homes.

Holiday homes continue to form a significant portion of accommodation, representing 91% of all properties, and 21% of beds. 1 in 3 visitors are now staying in holiday homes.

These numbers highlight the opportunity and low barriers to entry for Cook Islanders into the tourism economy. It demonstrates that our industry is not only welcoming visitors but also belongs to Cook Islanders themselves, with benefits spread directly to families and communities across the country. We should make every effort to ensure this inclusive tourism model and trend continues.

Challenges remain, however, as we navigate the balance between expanding development opportunities in the Pa Enua and sustaining the private sector's growth on Rarotonga and Aitutaki. Each island has distinct needs, and while Pa Enua investment is essential for dispersal and inclusivity, the capacity and resilience of our major tourism hubs cannot be overlooked. We also face wider sectoral issues: workforce constraints, housing shortages, and rising operational costs that continue to place pressure on businesses and communities alike.

At the same time, we must continue to balance growth with stewardship. The Board is committed to guiding the sector towards a value-over-volume model, embedding responsible tourism principles that ensure the Cook Islands remains competitive, sustainable, and uniquely itself.

As we approach the close of 2025, the tourism sector is projected to welcome 181,000 visitors, an 8.1% increase over 2024. Looking ahead to 2026, we anticipate continued economic expansion, with tourism receipts projected to reach NZD \$550 million, contributing to robust GDP growth and reinforcing tourism's central role in national prosperity. These positive trends provide a foundation for future planning and long-term growth. Tourism remains the cornerstone of the Cook Islands economy and will continue to play a central role in achieving our national development goals.

On behalf of the Board, I extend my gratitude to our management team and staff for their unwavering commitment, and to the Minister and Prime Minister, Hon. Mark Brown, for their enduring support.

Kia Manuia,

Sir. Ewan Smith
Chairman
Cook Islands Tourism Board

Statement of Intent

This Statement of Intent establishes the framework for the Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation (CITMC) Annual Report, reinforcing our commitment to transparency, accountability, and alignment with the expectations of the Government and our stakeholders.

GOVERNMENT EXPECTATIONS:

CITMC acknowledges the formal expectations from the Honourable (Mr) Mark Brown, Minister for Cook Islands Tourism Corporation, and our Chief Executive Officer, Karla Eggelton. This commitment links CITMC's work to the National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+ (NSDA+), national priorities, and the Medium-Term Budget Framework, ensuring that our efforts are in harmony with broader governmental objectives.

EXPENDITURE PLANS:

In alignment with the strategic objectives outlined in the CITMC Business Plan, the content of this Annual Report aligns with our strategic goals, agency objectives, and key programme deliverables, consistent with Government expectations.

ORGANISATIONAL OBLIGATIONS:

CITMC's Chief Executive Officer and staff pledge to fulfill the expectations outlined in the Medium-Term Business Plan while performing mandated functions and organisational obligations. These efforts remain dedicated to achieving our goals and advancing the Cook Islands tourism sector.

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS:

CITMC remains committed to meeting the needs of all stakeholders and clients. We pledge to provide clear, professional, effective, and timely service, offering honest advice while treating everyone with courtesy, dignity, and respect.

COMPLIANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

CITMC upholds high standards of corporate governance, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and policies. We commit to preparing annual reports as mandated and maintaining various corporate documents and guidelines. This includes business plans, staff work plans, performance agreements, and internal policies. CITMC will remain agile, adapting to changes in legislative frameworks, and fostering a culture of ongoing training and efficient operations.

LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

CITMC's Chief Executive Officer, directors, and managers reaffirm their commitment to clear leadership, sound employer principles, staff capability building, effective communication, adherence to public service values, and maintaining productive stakeholder relationships. We also pledge to uphold fiscal responsibility by ensuring public funds are spent as intended, creating value for taxpayers.

REVIEW:

This Statement of Intent will undergo annual reviews or adjustments as circumstances require, ensuring ongoing alignment with our commitments and the evolving needs of the Cook Islands tourism industry.

Karla Eggelton
Chief Executive Officer of
Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation

Honourable (Mr) Mark Brown
Portfolio Minister

Sir. Ewan Smith
Chairperson

Mandate, Responsibility & Structure

The Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT) operates as a crown agency and is mandated under the Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation Act 1998 and Amendment 2007. The primary objective of the CIT is to encourage and promote the development of tourism in the Cook Islands in such a manner as will achieve sustained growth, and in a manner that is economically viable, socially acceptable, and environmentally sustainable.

OUR VISION:

Tourism advances the well-being of resident Cook Islanders.

Na te kimi puapinga turoto e akameitaki i te oraanga mataora o te tangata e noo nei ki te ipukarea.

OUR MISSION:

To ensure resident Cook Islanders benefit from CIT economically, socially and that we sustain our environment and culture through relentless pursuit of our goals.

Te kaveinga; kia rauka mai te au mea me meitaki no te iti tangata Kuki Airani, mei ko mai i te kimipuapinga turoto mate tau e te tano, e na roto i te tautaanga no te au re i rauka ei te akamatutuanga no to tatou reo, peu, e te ao natura.

The tourism mandate gives CIT the power to promote and market the Cook Islands internationally. This policy has proven successful with the significant increase in tourism's contribution to the Cook Islands economy through its aviation, marketing, and destination development strategies.

The Corporation has a 7-member board appointed by the Minister of Tourism from the private sector. The following are the current board members:

- Sir. Ewan Smith (Chairman) - reappointed 22.07.2024 (2 years)
- Rohan Ellis - reappointed 22.07.2024 (2 years)
- Dianna Clarke - reappointed 22.07.2024 (2 years)
- Apii Porio - reappointed 22.07.2024 (2 years)
- Teonu Hewitt - reappointed 22.07.2024 (2 years)
- Ani Thomson - appointed 22.07.2024 (2 years)
- Halatoa Fua - appointed 22.07.2024 (2 years)

There are 3 departments within the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation:
Total staff count of 31. Head Office based 26 staff.

- Destination Marketing
- Destination Development
- Corporate Services (Finance & Admin)

Additional Support supplemented through representation:

- United Kingdom and Nordic States
- Northern Europe - Germany, Switzerland and Austria
- Southern Europe - Italy, France and Spain
- Japan – reduced to 5 hours per week until access is realised.

APPENDIX A provides the Organisation Structure as at 30 June 2025.



Performance Dashboard

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION



\$477M

VISITOR EXPENDITURE
LOCAL ECONOMY DIRECT
vs \$520M 2023/24



\$2,808

PREPAID SPEND PER VISITOR
vs \$2,462 2023/24



8.7

AVERAGE LENGTH
OF STAY (NIGHTS)**
vs 8.9 2023/24



\$183

IN-COUNTRY SPEND PER VISITOR
vs \$247 2023/24

Source: International Visitors Survey, July 2024 - June 2025

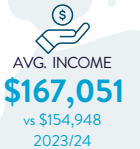
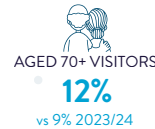
VISITORS



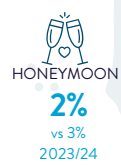
175,757

VISITOR ARRIVALS
FOR 2024/25
+7%
vs 2023/24

VISITOR INSIGHTS



PURPOSE OF VISIT



Source: International Visitors Survey, July 2024 - June 2025

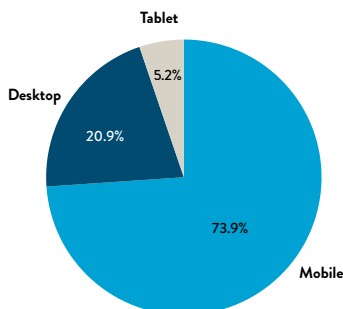
DIGITAL DESTINATION MARKETING: WEBSITE

www.cookislands.travel

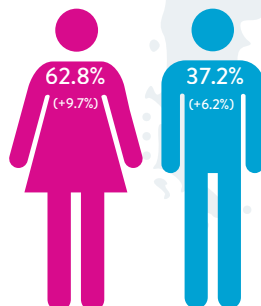


While Artificial Intelligence (AI) has reshaped content consumption, leading to fewer website events, users, and leads, this global disruptor is powered by the very information on our website — which continues to inform, direct, and provide reliable and authoritative information.

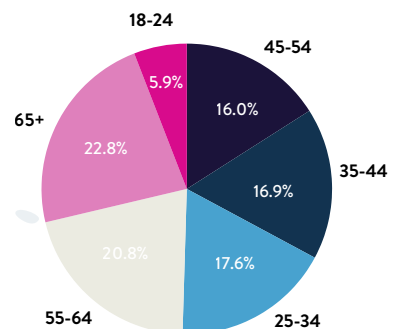
USERS BY DEVICE



USERS BY GENDER



USERS BY AGE



Source: Google Analytics 4, www.cookislands.travel

TOURISM CAPACITY



82%
AIR CAPACITY
LOAD CAPACITY FILLED
VS 85% CY 2023



187,102
INBOUND
PASSENGERS
VS 157,040 CY 2023



227,792
TOTAL SEATS
AVAILABLE
VS 184,907 CY 2023

AIR NEW ZEALAND
144,970
VS 131,824 CY 2023

Jetstar
68,544
VS 47,040 CY 2023

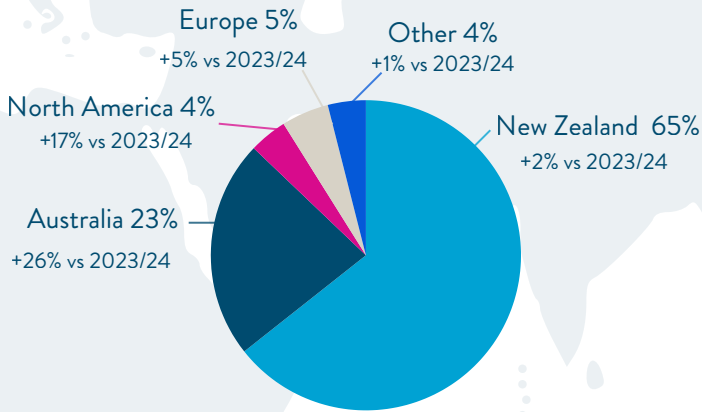
HAWAIIAN AIRLINES
9,672
VS 6,138 CY 2023

Air Rarotonga
2,704
VS 1,378 CY 2023

AIR TAHITI
3,224
VS 3,326 CY 2023

Source: Cook Islands Tourism, Airline Data

VISITOR ARRIVALS BY MARKET SHARE



ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY

ACROSS ALL ISLANDS



675
TOTAL
PROPERTIES



2,995
TOTAL #
OF ROOMS



7,376
TOTAL #
OF BEDS

DIGITAL DESTINATION MARKETING: SOCIAL MEDIA

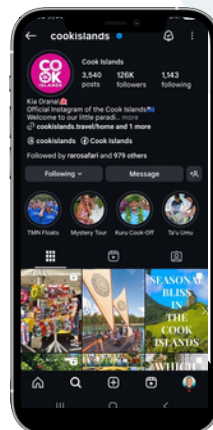
2024/25 vs 2023/24

1.2M TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS
+10% vs 2023/24

1M FOLLOWERS +10% vs 2023/24
123K FOLLOWERS +7% vs 2023/24



<http://WWW.COOKISLANDS.TRAVEL>



629,319
+43% ENGAGEMENTS
vs 2023/24

1.31%
ENGAGEMENT RATE
INDUSTRY BENCHMARK 0.15%



694,352
+242% ENGAGEMENTS
vs 2023/24

6.04%
ENGAGEMENT RATE
INDUSTRY BENCHMARK 1.13%

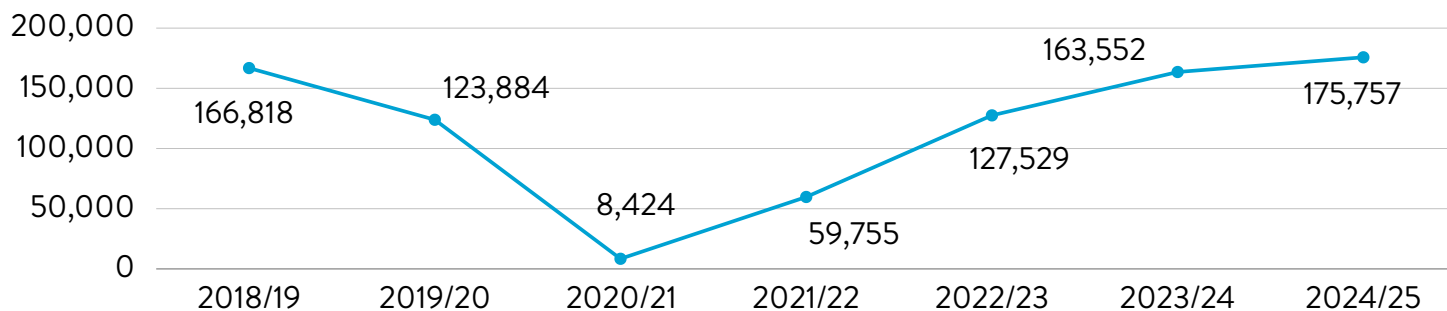
Visitor Arrivals

The Cook Islands concluded the financial year 2024/25 with a total of 175,757 visitor arrivals, marking a 7% increase from the previous year's 163,552.

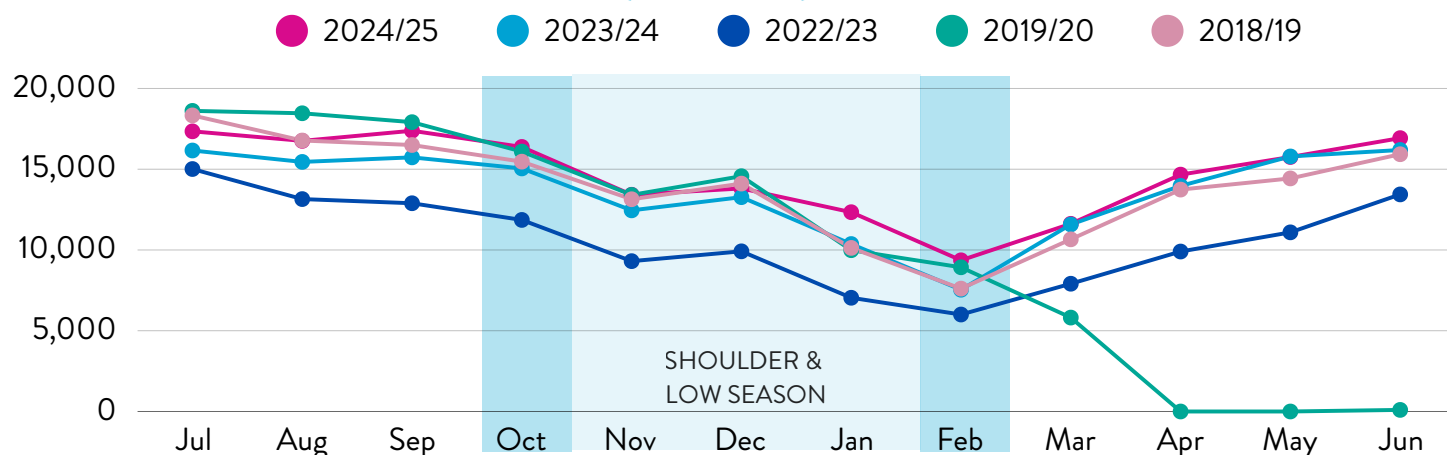


175,757
VISITOR ARRIVALS
2024/25
+7%
vs 2023/24

ANNUAL VISITOR ARRIVALS BY FINANCIAL YEAR (JUL-JUN)



VISITOR ARRIVALS BY MONTH (JUL-JUN)



FINANCIAL YEAR	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
2024/25	17,346	16,755	17,381	16,380	13,419	13,809	12,339	9,361	11,620	14,665	15,757	16,925	175,757
2023/24	16,159	15,452	15,734	15,049	12,453	13,270	10,368	7,539	11,579	13,968	15,790	16,191	163,552
2022/23	15,012	13,151	12,893	11,860	9,308	9,916	7,041	6,003	7910	9,904	11,091	13,440	127,529
2019/20	18,612	18,464	17,913	16,092	13,410	14,567	9,986	8,928	5,814	0	0	98	123,884
2018/19	18,332	16,777	16,499	15,468	13,141	14,109	10,128	7,608	10,659	13,739	14,430	15,928	166,818

COUNTRY	FY25	FY24	% +/-	FY25 % SHARE
New Zealand	113,879	111,252	2%	65%
Australia	40,899	32,377	26%	23%
Europe/UK	7,849	7,529	4%	5%
USA	7,427	6,369	17%	4%
Canada	1,176	1,140	3%	1%
Asia	1,635	1,674	-2%	1%
French Polynesia	701	1,111	-37%	0%
Other	2,191	2,100	4%	1%
TOTAL	175,757	163,552	8%	100%

Source: Cook Islands Tourism Arrival Card Data

Airlift

Key to the increases in visitor arrivals has a direct bearing on significant changes in airlift. With the conclusion of additional airline and route support programmes, this is expected to stabilise baseline airlift to the Cook Islands for the next 24-36 months.

AIRLINE INVENTORY: SEATS INTO COOK ISLANDS BY CALENDAR YEAR

Origin	2019	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
New Zealand	202,479	157,267	174,046	192,120	192,120
Australia	16,972	17,496	39,498	51,192	63,772
Honolulu	16,777	5,312	9,672	9,672	9,672
Pape'ete	3,593	4,832	4,576	7,540	9,152
TOTAL	239,821	184,907	227,792	260,524	274,716

* Predicted
 Source: Cook Islands Tourism Airlift Capacity Analysis September 2025

SEAT CAPACITY BY CARRIER CALENDAR YEAR



Source: Cook Islands Tourism, Airline Data



ACCOMMODATION

The short-term holiday accommodation sector continues to play a central role in shaping the Cook Islands’ tourism carrying capacity and airlift strategies. Cook Islands Tourism conducts biannual audits to monitor room stock, supporting data-informed planning and destination development. As at June 2025, total accommodation capacity has grown to 7,376 beds (pax), 2,995 rooms, across 675 properties – made up of approximately 630 holiday homes and 45 hotels/resorts. Together, these two accommodation types reflect the options available to visitors: holiday homes offering space, privacy, and authentic connections to local communities, and hotels and resorts delivering premium amenities, and iconic Cook Islands hospitality. This mix ensures we can meet the needs of a wide range of travellers, while maximising value and benefits for our people.

ACCOMMODATION INVENTORY: ROOM STOCK

	TOTAL	RAROTONGA	AITUTAKI	ATIU	MANGAIA	MAUKE	MITIARO	MANIHIKI
NUMBER OF PROPERTIES	675	598	63	5	2	2	3	2
NUMBER OF ROOMS	2,995	2,644	298	19	6	10	8	10
NUMBER OF BEDS (PAX)	7,376	6,439	792	61	19	26	20	19

Cook Islands Brand Evolution

Te Mato Manava Turoto, Cook Islands Tourism Corporation presents the brand evolution from "Love a little paradise" to "Love our little paradise." Rooted in the Kia Orana values, this update champions a collective commitment to responsible tourism, and destination stewardship, nurturing authentic

experiences that reflect the values of our Cook Islands residents and visitors while still maintaining our playful spirit. 'Love our little paradise' invites you to share in our commitment to developing a sustainable approach that ensures the ongoing benefits of tourism.

“ If you look after our little paradise, she will look after you too.

**Akaperepere ia to tatou parataito,
kia vai ruperupe te reira.**

”

Here is a breakdown of each word in the updated tagline:

Love

A deep, active appreciation and care for the Cook Islands, urging Cook Islanders, residents and visitors to cherish and protect its natural beauty and cultural richness.

our

Shifting from "a" to "our" represents a collective commitment among Cook Islanders, residents and visitors, reinforcing a shared responsibility for our little paradise.

little

Rather than being about size, "little" speaks to the intimate, personal experiences that the islands provide, where everyone can feel a personal connection to the place and its people.

paradise

What the Cook Islands offers, a tropical, idyllic escape, complete with friendly locals, lush landscapes, vibrant culture, and white sandy beaches - a place to do as little or as much as you like.



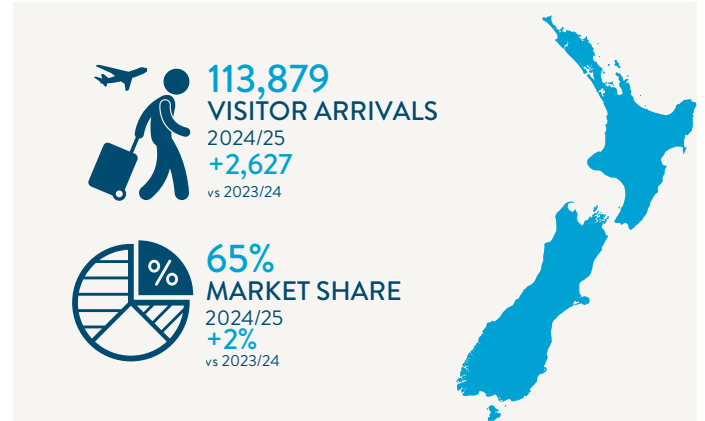
Source Market Performance

The following section provides a structured breakdown of performance and insights across our key source markets.

NEW ZEALAND

DIRECT ACCESS SINCE 13 JANUARY 2022

New Zealand remained the top-performing market for the Cook Islands in FY25, contributing 113,879 visitor arrivals and accounting for 65% of total international arrivals. Despite reduced airlift from Auckland, the market grew by 2% over FY24, achieving its strongest financial year on record – even exceeding 2018/19 levels. This success was largely driven by continuous digital and social visibility, high-impact broadcast content, and effective trade collaboration.



COVID RECOVERY

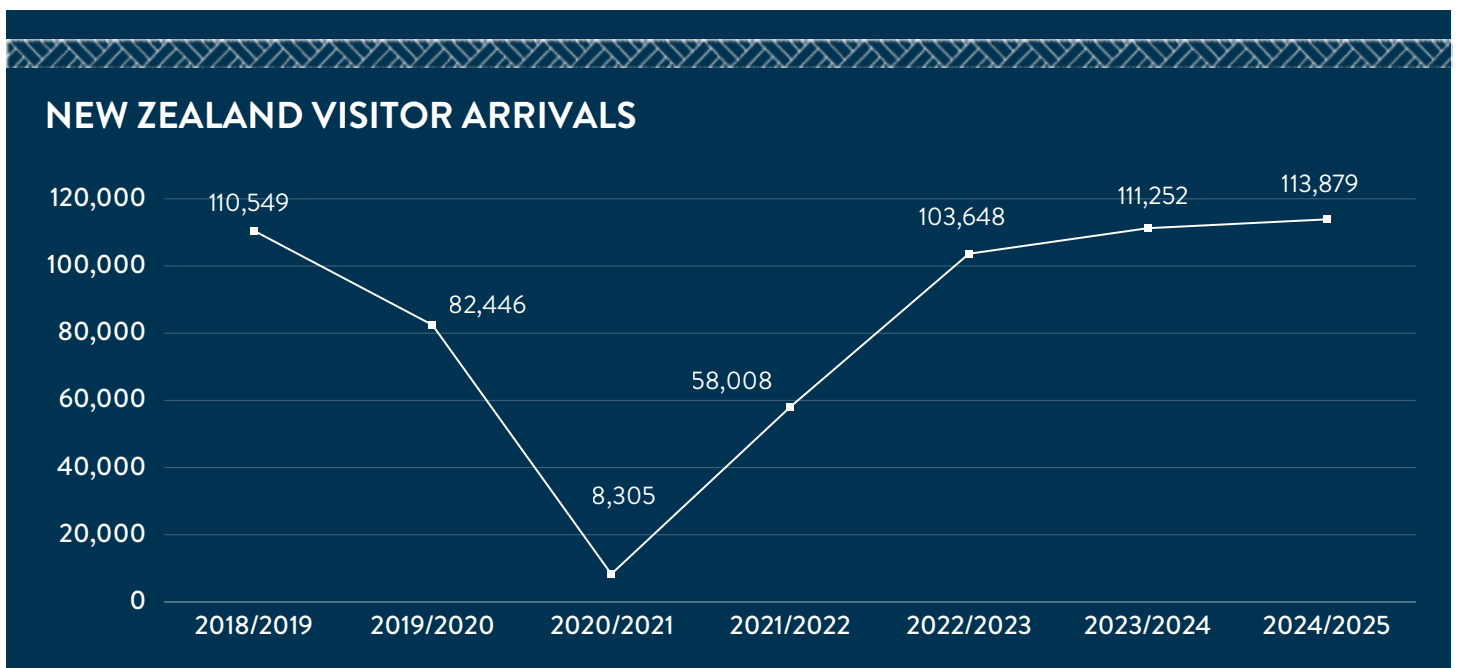
New Zealand has fully recovered from the impacts of Covid-19, with FY25 outperforming both FY24 and FY19. This growth was achieved despite reduced airlift from Auckland, highlighting the effectiveness of sustained digital and social media activity in maintaining destination visibility and intent.

TRAVEL GUIDES TV EPISODE

The Cook Islands featured in an episode of Travel Guides NZ, earning the show’s first-ever 5/5 rating. The episode reached 793,500 live viewers and 23,709 On Demand, generating significant momentum. A two-month mainstream campaign followed, supported by tactical airfare promotions from Jetstar and Air NZ.

AIR NEW ZEALAND TRIP STARTER

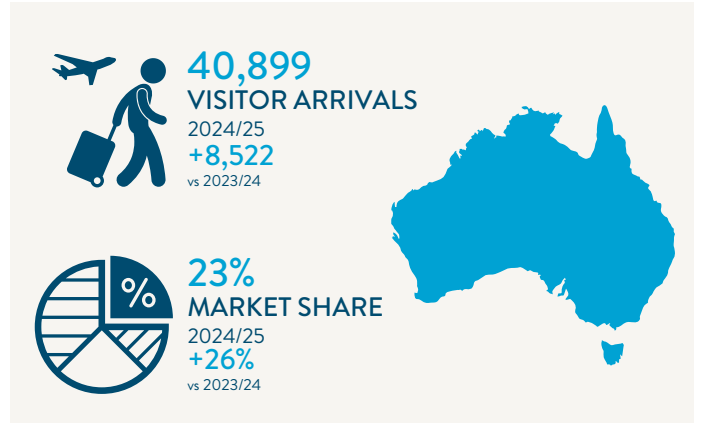
In partnership with Air New Zealand, CIT launched the Rarotonga Trip Starter – an interactive digital tool designed to inspire travel by highlighting over 50 experiences across Rarotonga and Aitutaki. The tool was hosted on Air NZ’s website and promoted through their digital channels, while CIT reinforced reach with paid and organic social media support. Notably, 97% of sessions were generated through CIT’s paid social activity, demonstrating strong targeting and audience engagement. The campaign successfully drove traffic to the Rarotonga destination page and positioned the islands as diverse, experience-rich destinations for Kiwi travellers.



AUSTRALIA

DIRECT ACCESS SINCE 13 JANUARY 2022

Australia continued to deliver strong growth for the Cook Islands in FY25, driven by increased air capacity, targeted market research, and high-impact media coverage. The addition of a fifth weekly Sydney–Rarotonga service has been pivotal in positioning Australia as a materially significant market, while research insights and national television exposure have further sharpened our competitive edge.



AIR CAPACITY EXPANSION

Securing a fifth weekly SYD/RAR flight between May and October 2025 was a critical milestone. This move not only boosted visitor confidence and accessibility but also demonstrated to Jetstar the market’s long-term viability. As a result, arrivals surged, with July 2024–May 2025 visitor numbers up 30% on the previous year, reaching 37,339 visitors — an additional 8,400 Australians compared to 2023/24.

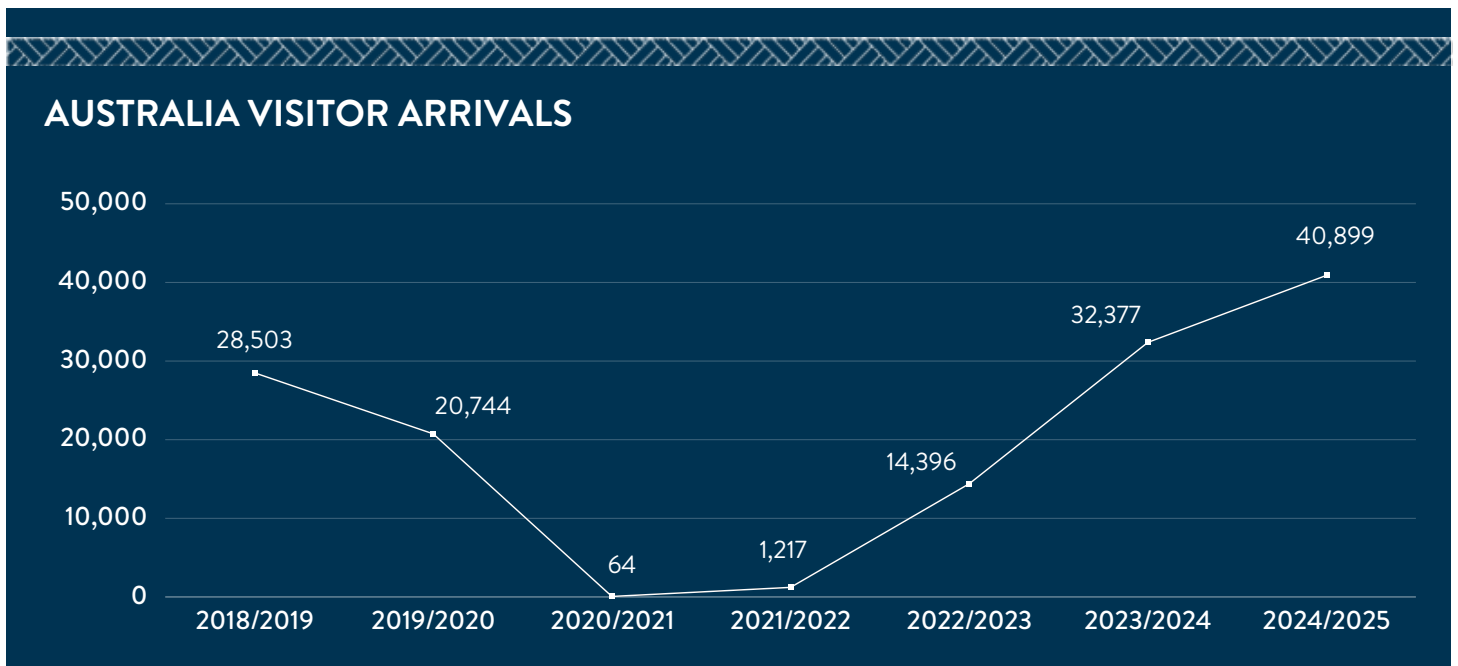
MARKET RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Dedicated market research in Australia provided valuable insights into consumer behaviour and preferences. Through focus groups and surveys with 600 participants, the study validated the effectiveness of our current creative approach and media channels. Importantly, it identified the need to

emphasise how the Cook Islands differ from other Pacific destinations. This learning is now actively informing advertising campaigns to sharpen positioning and visitor intent.

CHANNEL 9 SUNRISE BROADCAST

In February 2025, Sunrise, Australia’s #1 breakfast program with an average daily audience of 363,000, broadcast live from Rarotonga and Aitutaki. Over four days, the crew delivered 21 live crosses featuring activities such as the Vaka Cruise, a sunset cruise in Aitutaki, jet ski tours, an Ika Mata cooking demo, and SUP yoga in Muri Lagoon. This extensive exposure placed the Cook Islands in front of a primetime national audience, reinforcing brand awareness and inspiring travel among key Australian demographics.



NORTH AMERICA

ACCESS SINCE 20 MAY 2023. OPTIONS VIA HNL / PPT

North America continues to show strong momentum, with visitor arrivals increasing to 8,603—up +1,094 from the previous year—and market share rising to 5%, a +2% increase year-on-year. This growth was driven by performance-led digital campaigns, strengthened trade and airline partnerships, and impactful media exposure through high-profile influencer collaborations. Together, these efforts are delivering sustained growth, deeper engagement, and stronger conversion from this valuable long-haul market.



PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS BOOSTED VISITOR GROWTH

Targeted digital campaigns delivered strong results, with the July 2024 Pulse campaign driving a 123% YoY sales increase (855 segments at \$43 COA) and the June 2025 Flash Sale adding 632 segments at just \$27 COA. From April–May 2025, campaigns reached 6M impressions, with 829K video completions and 16K Hawaiian Airlines clickouts. GDN was the most efficient channel (\$1.36 CPA), followed by social media (\$5.25 CPA).

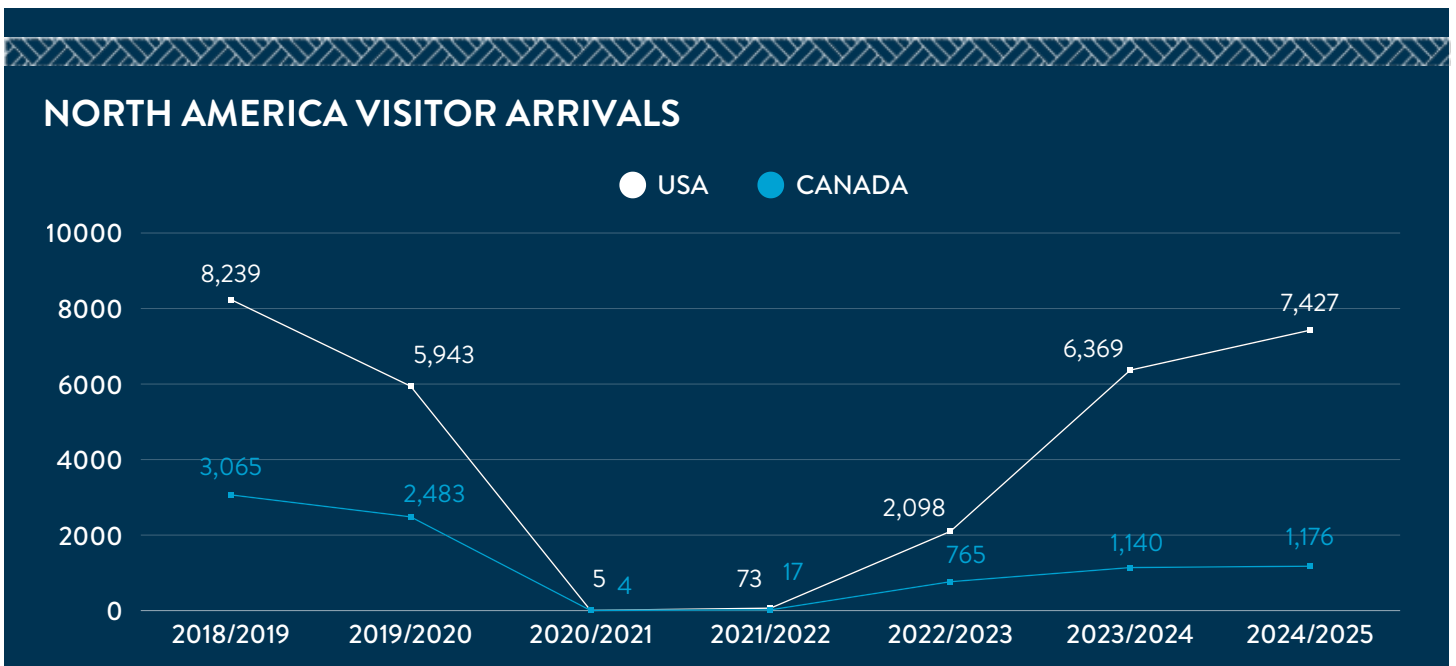
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS STRENGTHENED DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS

Distribution and air access improved through key partnerships. Costco Travel led indirect bookings with 1,480 segments, while AlaskaAir.com now offers HNL–RAR

flights via the Hawaiian merger. Air Tahiti Nui and Air Rarotonga introduced new thru-fares and doubled capacity (Jul–Dec 2025), enabling dual-destination itineraries with Tahiti.

INFLUENCER & MEDIA COLLABS DELIVERED HIGH-IMPACT EXPOSURE

Media and influencer collaborations boosted brand visibility. A celebrity famil with Crystal Hefner & James Ward secured features in US Weekly, People, and Page Six. Influencers like Devon achieved strong results (\$0.15 CPLPV, >4% LPV rate), while a live TV appearance on KFOX Good Day LA amplified exposure during the LA Travel Show.



NORTHERN EUROPE (NE)

NO DIRECT ACCESS. OPTIONS VIA PPT/ HNL/ AKL/ SYD

Visitor arrivals from Northern Europe reached 3,390 in 2024/25—an increase of +260 compared to the previous year. Market share rose to 1.9%, reflecting growing interest and stronger conversion across key countries like Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Belgium. Strategic trade engagement and innovative brand exposure helped raise awareness and drive quality leads from this steadily growing long-haul market.



TRADE FAMILIS STRENGTHENED INDUSTRY RELATIONSHIPS

Two back-to-back trade famils (NET01 and NET02) were delivered across November–December 2024, maximising efficiency and reach. Top wholesalers and selling agents from Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Belgium experienced Rarotonga, Aitutaki, and Atiu firsthand, reinforcing product knowledge and converting frontline sellers into Cook Islands advocates.

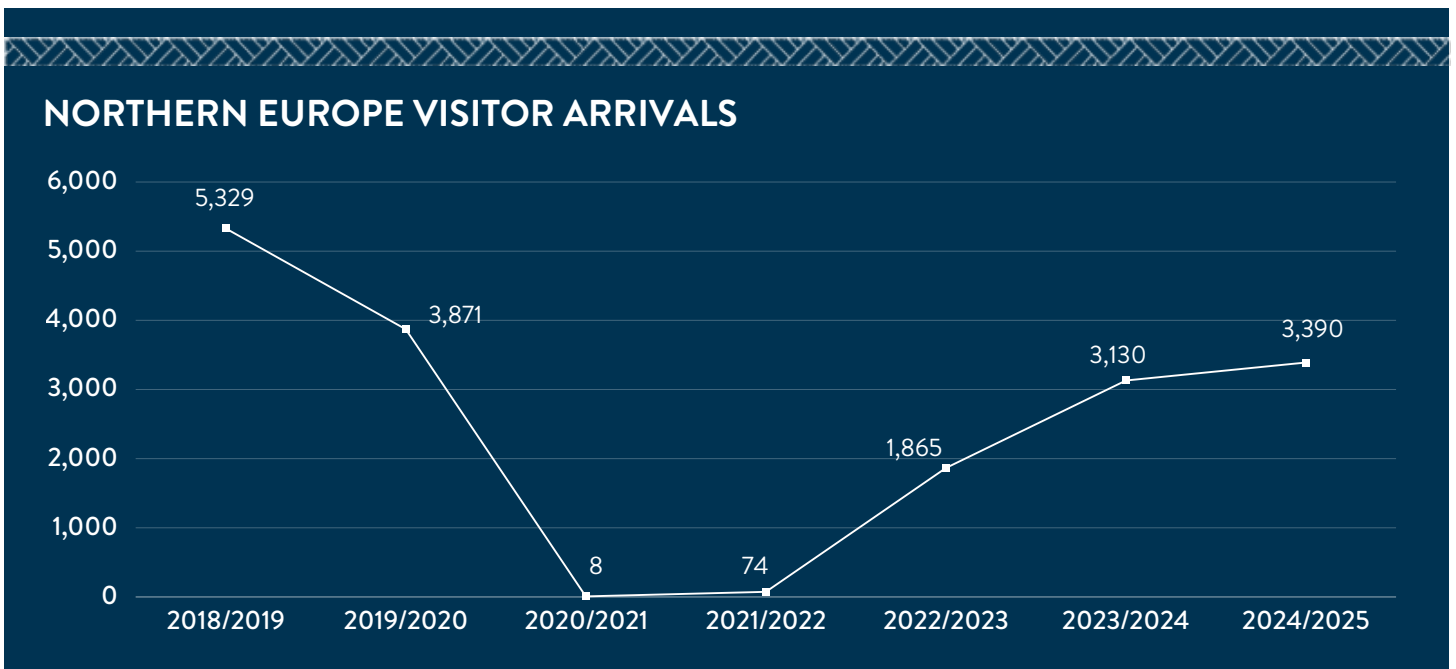
HIGH-IMPACT EXPOSURE VIA MCDONALD’S IN-STORE TV IN GERMANY

The Cook Islands featured prominently on 3SIXTY-TV screens across 850+ McDonald’s restaurants in Germany from January to March 2025. A sustainability-focused

video showcasing culture, nature, and people was broadcast over 500,000 times, with an estimated reach of 35 million monthly viewers—a powerful brand presence secured free of charge through direct industry collaboration.

OCEANIA ROADSHOW DROVE TRADE ENGAGEMENT ACROSS GERMANY

In March 2025, CIT joined Tourism Australia, TNZ, Tahiti, and key airline partners for a four-city Oceania Roadshow across Munich, Freiburg, Mannheim, and Cologne. CIT stood out with a visually immersive presentation, connecting with 200 top-selling agents and reinforcing destination awareness in a competitive long-haul landscape.



UNITED KINGDOM / NORDIC (UK)

NO DIRECT ACCESS. OPTIONS VIA PPT/ HNL/ AKL/ SYD

The UK and Nordic markets continue to show resilience and long-term potential as valuable contributors to Cook Islands tourism. In 2024/25, the region recorded 2,230 visitor arrivals, a modest dip of -303 compared to the previous year, with market share holding at 1.3%. While long-haul travel from Europe remains competitive and cost-sensitive, consistent trade engagement and strong consumer-facing activity have helped maintain brand visibility, deepen industry relationships, and lay the foundation for future recovery and growth. Momentum is building through focused events, strategic partnerships, and renewed traveller interest in unique, experience-led destinations like the Cook Islands.

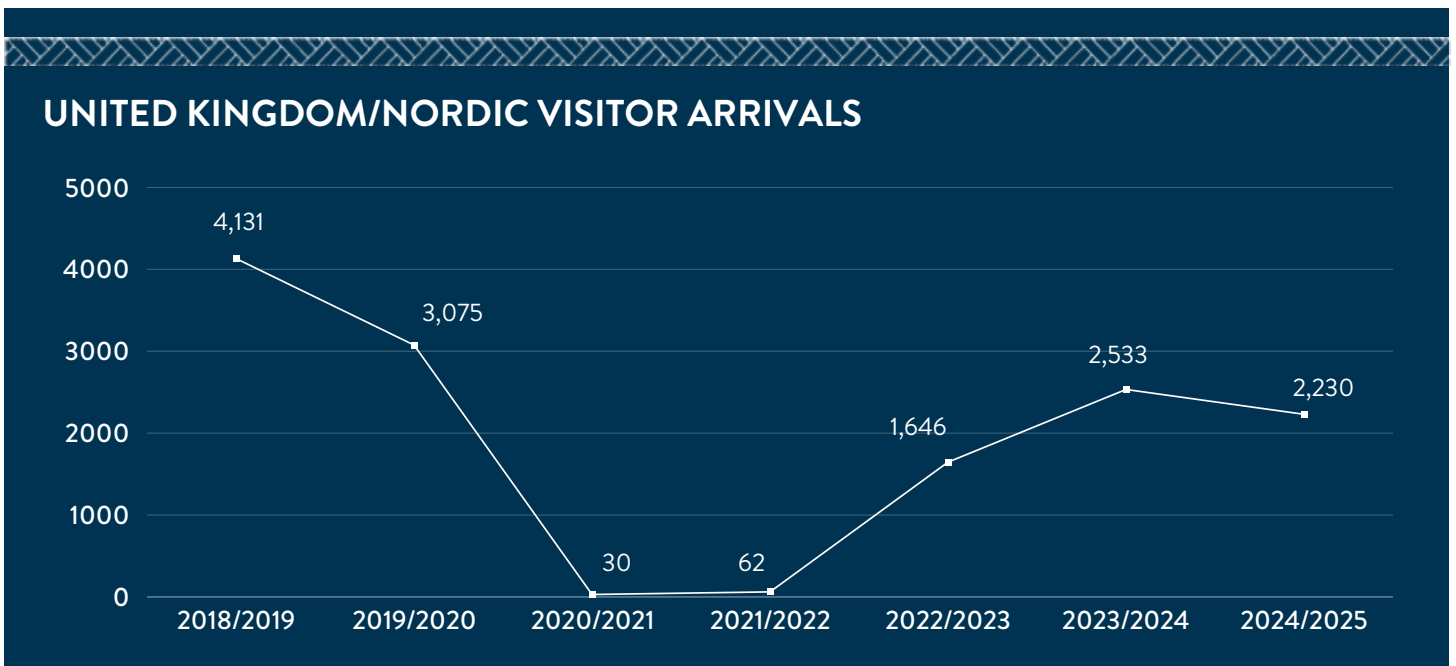


TRADE TRAINING REACHED KEY SELLERS ACROSS THE UK AND NORDICS

CIT actively engaged with the trade throughout the year, presenting to over 500 travel agents across major events like PATA Finland, TravelTalks Australasia, If Only Events, and ANZCRO sessions. Participation in Meet the Pacific and Selling Travel Connect further expanded reach across the UK, while the IMM media event in London connected CIT with over 50 media professionals, building media interest and coverage potential.

CONSUMER EVENTS BOOSTED DIRECT AWARENESS IN MULTIPLE MARKETS

The destination was well represented at leading consumer-facing events across the UK and Nordics. Highlights included Destinations London, Go Touring in Gothenburg, and the Adventure Travel Show, where CIT interacted directly with hundreds of motivated travellers. Presence at the Makta Finland Fair and Danish Travel Fair further extended reach, while partner events with Sodehavsresor brought the Cook Islands story to life for Swedish consumers in Stockholm and Helsingborg.



SOUTHERN EUROPE (SE)

NO DIRECT ACCESS. OPTIONS VIA PPT/ HNL/ AKL/ SYD

The Southern Europe market showed strong growth momentum in 2024/25, recording 1,608 visitor arrivals, a +324 increase from the previous year. Market share rose to 1%, reflecting renewed interest from countries like Italy, Spain, and France. This growth was driven by highly targeted trade engagement, destination education, and collaborative route promotion efforts. Strategic activities focused on authentic storytelling, sustainability messaging, and dual-destination itineraries, helping to position the Cook Islands as a unique and meaningful long-haul option for European travellers.



ITALY AGENT EVENTS BOOSTED TRADE LOYALTY AND LOW-SEASON BOOKINGS

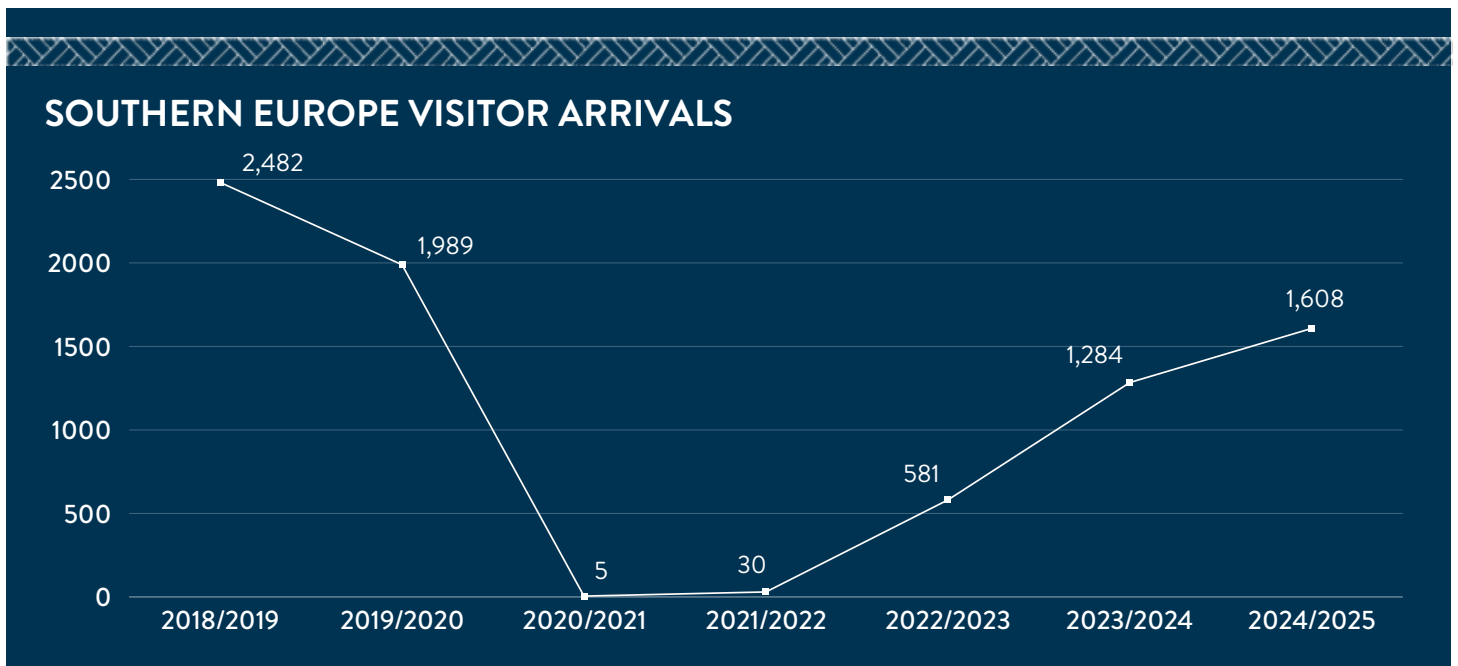
Through the “Love a Little Kai Kai” series, CIT hosted intimate dining events in six Italian cities in partnership with Cathay Pacific, Idee per Viaggiare, and Quality Group Tours. The events focused on Mana Tiaki storytelling and authentic experiences, strengthening agent loyalty, securing low-season bookings, and reinforcing long-term brand advocacy.

SELF-FAMILS DROVE CONVERSION THROUGH LOW-COST, HIGH-IMPACT TRADE ENGAGEMENT

The ongoing Southern Europe Self-Famil Programme supported 16 agents with self-funded itineraries, exclusive rates, and upgrades, in collaboration with Turama Pacific, Air Rarotonga, and local suppliers. The initiative—featuring high-visibility agents like Lara and Michele—delivered impressive results, contributing to a 43% YoY increase in Southern Europe arrivals.

ROUTE PROMOTION RAISED AWARENESS VIA AIR TAHITI NUI PARTNERSHIP

Between March and June 2025, CIT participated in trade events across Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Milan, and Rome to promote the new PPT–RAR route. With 80+ key Tahiti specialists in attendance, the campaign successfully positioned the Cook Islands as a compelling dual-destination extension to French Polynesia and the USA.



Market Insights & Considerations

VISITOR BEHAVIOUR INSIGHTS

- **Booking Behaviour:** North America and Europe exhibit long lead times and thorough research behaviour, while Australia and New Zealand trend towards short-notice, event-driven planning.
- **Platform Preference:** NZ and AU audiences are heavily influenced by social media (especially video), while the UK and EU markets remain trade-reliant.
- **Key Travel Motivations:** Visitors from long-haul markets are increasingly driven by environmental integrity, wellness, cultural authenticity, and social responsibility.
- **Trip Planning Tools:** AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Overviews) are shifting search behaviours. Web traffic is decreasing, but intent from engaged users remains high.

EMERGING RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Website & AI:** Declining web traffic due to AI search trends requires SEO and metadata optimisation to maintain visibility.
- **Infrastructure Pressure:** Over concentration of arrivals in Rarotonga during peak season signals a need to better distribute volume to the Pa Enea.
- **Cultural Alignment:** Mana Tiaki-themed content outperformed promotional content — reinforcing the demand for real, local stories.
- **Demographic Growth:** Women aged 55+ remain a high-yield, mobile-first planning demographic across most markets.

INTERNATIONAL VISITOR SURVEY (IVS)

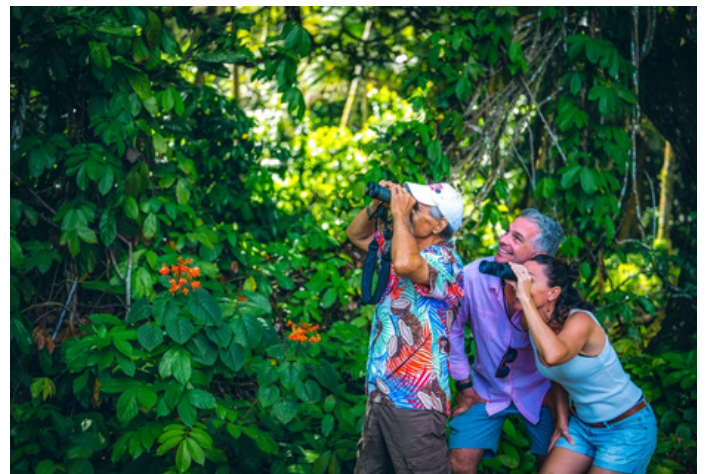
HIGHLIGHTS

- **Top Appeal Factors:** Visitors consistently cited the Cook Islands' natural environment and the warmth of its people as their favourite aspects.
- **Experience Value:** Visitors are not just looking for activities — they want meaningful, connective, and responsible experiences.

FORWARD FOCUS

- Optimise campaign timing to reflect market-specific planning cycles.
- Invest in short-form storytelling and video to build audience trust and emotional engagement.
- Promote cultural depth and dispersal through tactical off-season campaigns.
- Prepare for AI-first digital behaviour by future-proofing digital content, metadata, and discoverability.
- Air Access and Content Synergy were key drivers of success in Australia and North America, showing the need to link flight accessibility with high-impact storytelling.
- Trade Engagement remains critical in long-haul markets.
- Mobile-first Planning Behaviour dominated across markets, with women aged 55+ emerging as a growth audience segment.
- Authentic Cultural Content consistently outperformed commercial-style material, affirming our commitment to Mana Tiaki storytelling.
- Off-season compression is becoming visible, with quieter months less quiet, an early sign that year-round visitation is beginning to stabilise.
- French Polynesia's decline signals competitive pressure and the importance of perceived value and flight connectivity in small regional markets.

These insights will inform future investment priorities and campaign timing, ensuring CIT remains agile, focused, and deeply aligned with the values of the Love Our Little Paradise brand.



Destination Development

OVERVIEW

The Destination Development (DD) division plays a central role in shaping a sustainable and responsible future for Cook Islands tourism. In FY2024/25, the division balanced progress on long-term strategic planning with the delivery of tangible operational programmes. This dual approach ensured that while the Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP)

was advanced as the emerging framework for managing tourism, immediate outcomes were also achieved through visitor servicing, workforce development, and regenerative community initiatives. Together, these complementary strands highlight the division's commitment to ensuring tourism delivers enduring value for people, place, and culture.

Strategic Management

OBJECTIVES FOR FY2025

To progress the Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP) as the emerging framework in which the Destination Development work operates within, while strengthening governance, mobilising resources, broadening the evidence base, advancing donor and partner projects, and contributing to sector leadership through representation and advocacy.



REPORT

The DSP remained the central strategic focus of the year. Key milestones included Board sign-off to proceed with development and the subsequent formal Cabinet endorsement of the DSP development process, marked by the establishment of a donor-funded Project Management Unit (PMU) and a Destination Stewardship Advisory Group (DSAG) with pillar leads appointed. These structures provide the foundation for coordinated design and delivery of the DSP.

Enabling and complementary strands of work also advanced. A governance audit and a resource mobilisation plan progressed to strengthen long-term capability. Baseline and benchmarking activities were undertaken through the STAR resident sentiment survey, the GSTC Destination Assessment, and expanded airport surveys and feedback mechanisms, creating a strong evidence base to inform priorities and measure progress.

Donor and regional partnerships played an important role, with the Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), Asian Development Bank (ADB), and NZMFAT's Climate Finance Capacity Support Programme (CFCSP) providing technical expertise and resources that both informed the DSP and supported delivery across the wider Destination Development portfolio. Representation and advocacy ensured Cook Islands Tourism's voice was heard regionally and domestically.

Finally, corporate communications were strengthened, with more consistent reporting, clearer alignment of Board updates, and improved messaging across internal and external channels. This work reinforced visibility and accountability for the division's initiatives

KEY OUTPUTS

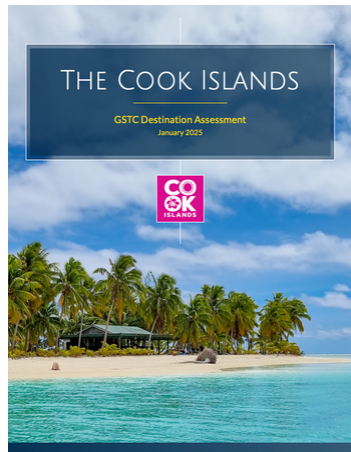
- Cabinet endorsement of DSP development
- Donor-funded Project Management Unit (PMU) established.
- Destination Stewardship Advisory Group (DSAG) formed, with pillar leads appointed.
- Governance audit initiated.
- Resource mobilisation workstream advanced.
- STAR resident sentiment survey completed.
- Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) membership and destination assessment completed.
- Expanded airport surveys and feedback mechanisms implemented.
- Donor partnerships (STEP, ADB, CFCSP) advanced.
- Regional leadership strengthened
- Domestic engagement and cross-sectoral collaboration advanced
- Corporate communications strengthened

LEARNINGS

Progress was slowed by contracting lags and the complexity of aligning donor-funded initiatives. However, the combination of DSP development, governance work, resource mobilisation, and research built a stronger platform for long-term planning and strengthened the Cook Islands' visibility in key conversations.

FOCUS FOR FY2026

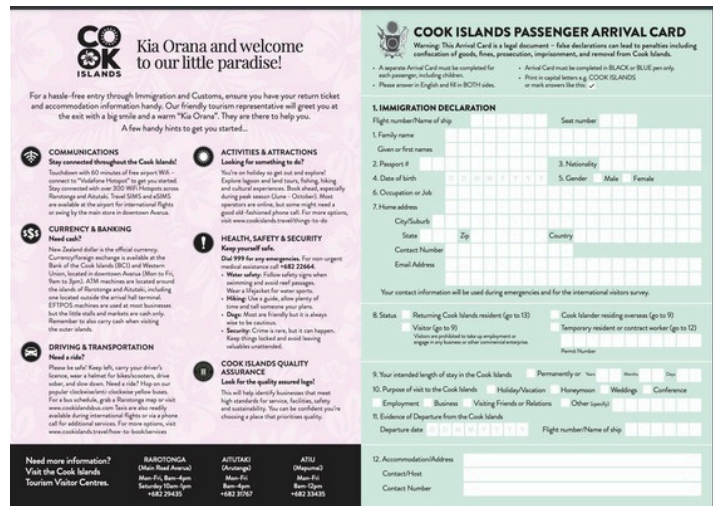
The priority will be to finalise and launch the DSP as a government-aligned framework delivering island plans, a resource mobilisation strategy, climate risk analysis, policy audits, and a progress dashboard. Supporting this will be the continuation of enabling workstreams, donor partnerships, strengthened communications, and active representation. New emphasis will also be placed on research and insights, and on embedding community-led product development into DSP island implementation plans.



Launch of Environmental Sustainability Projects



GSTC Destination Assessment - Dr Kelly Bricker



Visitor Experience

OBJECTIVES FOR FY2025

To provide a warm welcome to visitors through entertainment, information and guidance; to equip them with resources and support; to complete legacy infrastructure projects while identifying future improvements in partnership with others; and to embed a more structured approach to visitor risk management.

KEY OUTPUTS

- Visitor Information Centres operated in Rarotonga, Aitutaki and Atiu
- Visitor activations delivered at Punanga Nui, Muri and Orongo markets
- Over 1,200 enquiries serviced, generating close to \$100,00 in bookings
- Meet & Greet programme delivered at key arrival points
- Four entertainers engaged for airport and cruise arrivals
- Cruise branding and new wayfinding signage installed
- Small-scale infrastructure projects delivered, including eco-toilets
- Pa Enea projects advanced in Mauke, Mitiaro and Mangaia
- Draft Tourism Crisis Readiness Framework developed
- Ongoing safety messaging included in visitor print publications
- Seven desexing clinics were delivered, treating 102 dogs

LEARNINGS

Infrastructure maintenance proved difficult without funding, and Pa Enea delivery was hampered by contractor availability. Limited capacity at headquarters also created pressure on servicing demands.



Mangaia Eco-Toilet

REPORT

Visitor servicing remained central to the VE workstream's work. The Visitor Information Centres in Rarotonga, Aitutaki and Atiu continued to operate, supported by activations at Punanga Nui, Muri and Orongo markets. Collectively, these outlets serviced more than 1,200 enquiries and generated close to \$100,000 in confirmed bookings, demonstrating their importance as consistent visitor touch-points.

The Meet & Greet programme was maintained, with CIT staff assisting visitors at key arrival points across both air and sea ports of arrival. This was complemented by entertainment, with four entertainers engaged throughout the year. Infrastructure improvements included new cruise branding and wayfinding signage, alongside small-scale projects such as eco-toilets. Pa Enea projects in Mauke, Mitiaro and Mangaia also progressed, though contractor shortages constrained delivery speed.

Visitor safety was strengthened through the draft Tourism Crisis Readiness Framework, developed with national agencies, while core safety messaging continued in visitor print publications. Community safety was also supported through regular community dog desexing clinics.

FOCUS FOR FY2026

The focus will be on consolidating and strengthening the visitor servicing model, with particular emphasis on developing the new Visitor Information Centre at Punanga Nui Market and expanding initiatives to drive visitor dispersal, increase on-trip spending and encourage responsible visitor behaviour.



Punanga Nui Markets Visitor Information Centre

Industry Development

OBJECTIVES FOR FY2025

To strengthen workforce pathways and training, enhance industry engagement and support, build operator capability, and prepare for the refresh of the Cook Islands Quality Assured (CIQA) programme to better align with responsible tourism principles.

REPORT

Workforce development emerged as the strongest focus of the year. The Te Mana Turoto Internship, the Cook Islands Tourism Leadership Programme, and Careers Expos in both Rarotonga and Aitutaki created tangible opportunities for young Cook Islanders to engage with tourism pathways. Training initiatives, including the Kia Orana Service Training Series, the Tourism Academy pilot, and specialist workshops in Atiu and the Pa Enea, built capability within the existing workforce.

Industry engagement also progressed, with HubSpot CRM software implemented to streamline communications and regular industry meetings sustaining dialogue. Collaboration with BTIB extended tailored support to Pa Enea operators, linking tourism readiness with broader business development. Work toward the CIQA refresh was deliberately paused until the DSP is finalised, but operator consultations and needs assessments were undertaken to prepare for its relaunch as the sector’s main quality and sustainability tool.

KEY OUTPUTS

- Te Mana Turoto Internship launched in Rarotonga and Aitutaki.
- CIT Leadership Programme delivered (two recipients).
- Careers Expos supported in Rarotonga (727 students, 50 exhibitors) and Aitutaki (250 students, 16 exhibitors).
- Kia Orana Service Training delivered 105 sessions to 1,772 participants
- Atiu Tour Guide Training delivered to 25+ participants.

- BTIB workshops in Mauke and Aitutaki supported 30+ participants.
- HubSpot CRM implemented to manage operator communications.
- CIQA maintained with 252 members; consultations undertaken to guide its refresh.

LEARNINGS

Balancing training, engagement, and programme development stretched the small team’s capacity. Strong demand confirmed the value of workforce initiatives, while operator consultations reinforced the need to align CIQA with DSP objectives and to design incentives that ensure long-term industry uptake.

FOCUS FOR FY2026

The focus will be to relaunch the refreshed CIQA framework as a streamlined digital self-assessment and benchmarking tool that also functions as a rolling needs analysis to better inform capability building and industry support. The refreshed model will serve both as a quality assurance mechanism and as a channel to integrate operators into the LOLP marketing strategy, aligning standards, responsible practices, and visibility. Workforce development will remain a parallel priority, with the first pilots of the Tourism Academy commencing alongside continued delivery of internships, leadership programmes, and Careers Expos to build clear career pathways and strengthen the sector’s talent base.



Regenerative Tourism

OBJECTIVES FOR FY2025

To identify and support the development of visitor experiences that contribute positively to communities and the environment; to use the Love Our Little Paradise (LOLP) brand to educate visitors on responsible behaviour; and to support and showcase community initiatives that build cultural pride and strengthen tourism's social licence.

KEY OUTPUTS

- Mana Tiaki Community Support Programme strengthened
- Kia Orana Ambassador Programme reached 70% of schools and extended to churches and community groups.
- Local delivery capability established in Aitutaki and Atiu.
- Year 9 Mana Tiaki speech competition sponsored with Ministries of Education and Culture.
- Woman of the Month initiative supported
- World Ocean Day "Sustaining What Sustains Us" delivered, including a motu cleanup (63kg rubbish) and school activities.
- Aitutaki Night Market launched, held fortnightly as a community-visitor gathering.
- Edgewater Resort Market hosted, giving small businesses direct exposure.
- Cultural storytelling progressed through story capture and translations, storyboard design and Avana revitalisation.

REPORT

The Mana Tiaki Community Support Programme remained the foundation of regenerative tourism activity and was significantly strengthened during the year. Processes were formalised to create clearer pathways for engagement and delivery, ensuring community priorities continued to guide projects across the islands while maintaining a clear connection to tourism. Rebuilding relationships and deepening trust with community groups gave the programme renewed credibility as a bridge between tourism and local life.

The Kia Orana Ambassador Programme was extended and delivered widely across schools, churches, and community groups, with new capacity established in Aitutaki and Atiu. The Year 9 Mana Tiaki speech competition and Woman of the Month initiatives provided additional avenues to celebrate Cook Islands culture and leadership, while World Ocean Day brought partners and schools together in education and action.

The incubator programme expanded opportunities for community-visitor connection. The Aitutaki Night Market was launched in partnership with the Island Council, and the Edgewater Resort Market created new exposure for small businesses.

Cultural storytelling advanced in parallel, with progress on story capture, translations, refreshed storyboards, and the Avana revitalisation project, supported by landowner and community blessing. Planning began to extend storytelling across Rarotonga and the Pa Enua, embedding cultural narratives more deeply into the visitor experience.



Mana Tiaki Speech Competition



World Ocean Day 2025



Woman of the Month 2024

LEARNINGS

The year ahead will build on progress by advancing cultural storytelling, developing mechanisms for tourism give-back, and exploring opportunities in agri-tourism. These initiatives will focus on unearthing how local communities across the Cook Islands, including the Pa Enea, can share more directly in the benefits of tourism. A strong emphasis will also be placed on celebrating Cook Islands people through storytelling – linking community projects and local narratives with Destination Marketing’s LOLP strategy.

FY2025 highlighted both the breadth and depth of the Destination Development division’s role. At the strategic level, the DSP advanced as the emerging framework for guiding tourism’s future, supported by governance, donor partnerships, and research. At the operational level, tangible progress was achieved through visitor servicing, workforce initiatives, and regenerative community engagement.

In FY2026, the priority will be to bring these strands more closely together: finalising and operationalising the DSP, relaunching CIQA as both a quality mechanism and industry support tool, piloting new workforce pathways, and strengthening community connections through mana tiaki initiatives and storytelling. Collaboration across divisions will be central, with Destination Development and Destination Marketing now working in closer alignment.

With responsible tourism principles and authentic storytelling at the core of the LOLP marketing strategy, strategic direction and operational delivery will reinforce one another, ensuring tourism continues to generate meaningful benefits for the people, culture, and environment of the Cook Islands.

FOCUS FOR FY2026

The year ahead will build on progress by advancing cultural storytelling, developing mechanisms for tourism give-back, and exploring opportunities in agri-tourism. These initiatives will focus on unearthing how local communities across the Cook Islands, including the Pa Enea, can share more directly in the benefits of tourism. A strong emphasis will also be placed on celebrating Cook Islands people through storytelling – linking community projects and local narratives with Destination Marketing’s LOLP strategy.



Research & Statistics

Research and statistics remain central to Cook Islands Tourism Corporation, guiding data-driven decisions that shape our strategy and ensure benefits flow to our people. With NZTRI's closure, CIT has transitioned into the regional SPTO data programme, supported by MFAT, strengthening our ability to benchmark and share insights across the Pacific.

In 2024/25, visitor arrivals grew to 175,757 (up from 163,418), highlighting continued demand for our little paradise. Prepaid expenditure per visitor rose strongly to

\$2,808, reflecting confidence in forward bookings and solid trade and airline partnerships. While in-country spend per day (\$183) and average length of stay (8.7 nights) eased slightly, these shifts present opportunities to enhance yield through dispersal, cultural experiences, and higher-value products.

The overall economic impact remains significant at \$477 million, with an average of \$2,715 per visitor trip. These results confirm that the Cook Islands continues to attract committed travellers and underline the importance of focusing future growth on value, not just volume.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$477 MILLION

VISITOR EXPENDITURE
LOCAL ECONOMY DIRECT
FROM 175,757 VISITORS

vs \$520 MILLION FY 2023/24



PREPAID EXPENDITURE

\$2,808

PREPAID PER TRIP
vs \$2,462 FY 2023/24

40%

FLOWING INTO LOCAL ECONOMY RATE

\$1,123

PREPAID PER TRIP
vs \$984 FY 2023/24



IN-COUNTRY SPEND

\$183

IN-COUNTRY SPEND PER DAY
vs \$247 FY 2023/24

x8.7

NIGHTS AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY
vs 8.9 nights FY 2023/24

\$1,592

IN-COUNTRY SPEND PER TRIP
vs \$2,197 FY 2023/24



ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$2,715

PER TRIP vs \$3,181 FY 2023/24

\$312

PER DAY vs \$357 FY 2023/24

Source: International Visitors Survey, July 2024 - June 2025

Destination Marketing

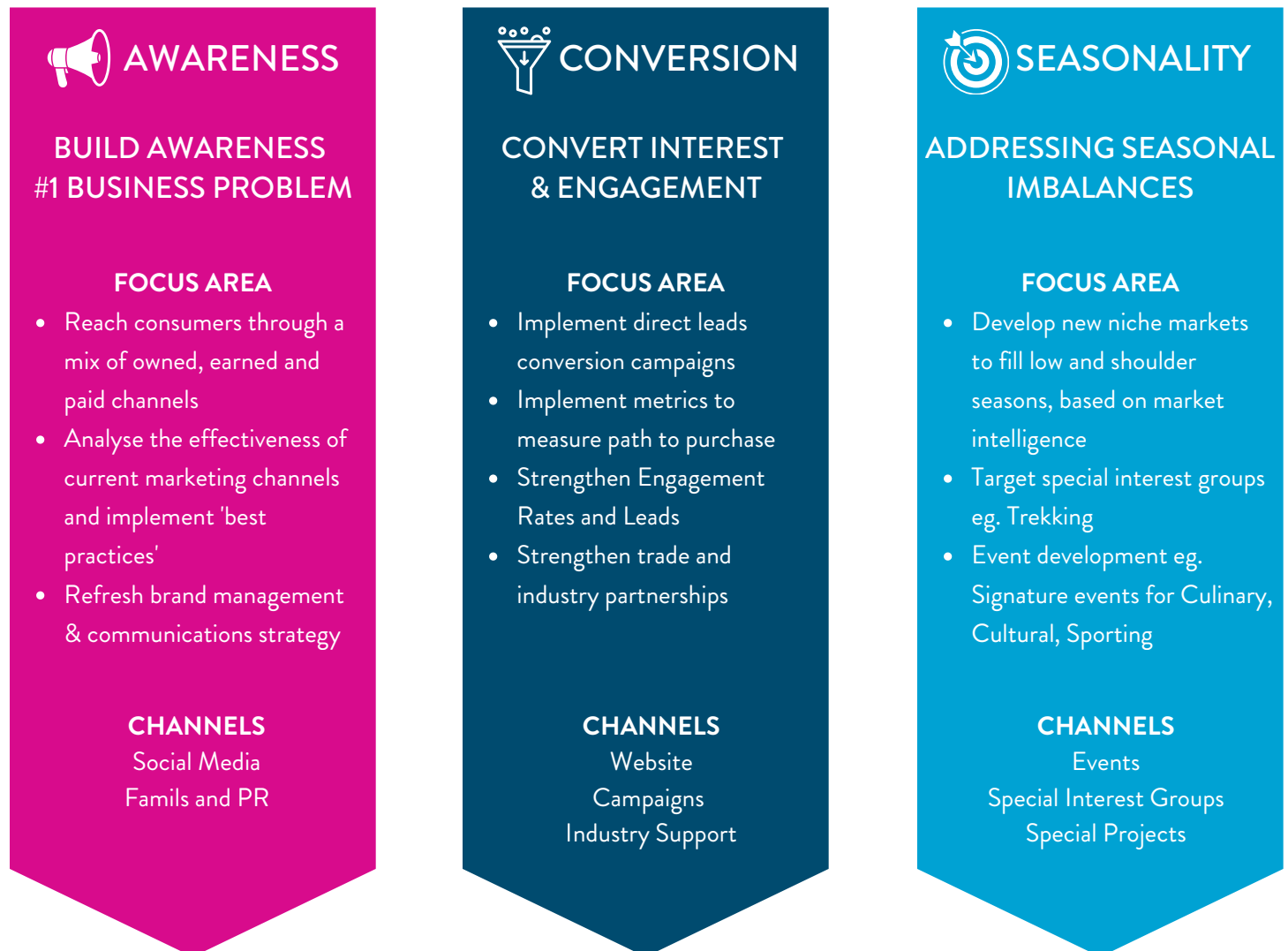
OVERVIEW

Destination Marketing continues to be central to how we connect the Cook Islands with the world. Guided by our Strategic Framework, our focus is on three priority areas: building awareness, converting interest into action, and addressing seasonality. Together, these pillars ensure that our marketing efforts not only attract visitors but also create balanced, sustainable growth for our destination. Through a mix of owned, earned, and paid channels, we deliver targeted campaigns, strengthen trade and dusty partnerships, and invest in digital engagement to generate high-value leads. Our familiarisation

programme remains a cornerstone for both media and trade engagement, while niche market development and event initiatives continue to play an important role in smoothing seasonal peaks and valleys.

In 2024/25, our work focused on ensuring the Cook Islands remained visible, compelling, and competitive in a changing global travel environment. By prioritising awareness, conversion, and seasonality, we are reinforcing our position as a premium, values-led destination that delivers meaningful benefits for our people and our economy.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



Destination Marketing Highlights

The following key initiatives executed in 2024/25 help to inform and shape our future work plans, ensuring continued alignment with our strategic framework.

DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING STRATEGY

In 2025, Cook Islands Tourism developed a new Marketing Strategy to provide a clear, long-term framework for sustainable tourism growth. The strategy was designed to align with the destination’s values and aspirations, focusing on attracting high-quality visitors, encouraging dispersal beyond Rarotonga, and fostering greater visitor retention.

The strategy’s development was a collaborative process, led by CIT Head Office with support from RUN Aotearoa and the Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI). It brought together valuable perspectives from international market offices, local industry stakeholders, and technical experts to ensure a strategy that is both locally grounded and globally informed.

Underpinned by extensive research and consultation, including visitor surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder interviews, the final strategy is data-driven, market-informed, and community-shaped. It aligns closely with the refreshed brand, Love our little paradise, and is guided by clear strategic objectives: Brand Awareness, Audience Fit, and Responsible Growth.



ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE: PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS 2024

The second installment of the People's Choice Awards in 2024 delivered record-breaking engagement and international recognition. Nominations surged from 177 to 907 – a 412% increase in just one year – with business entries climbing from 109 to 606 and individual nominations rising from 68 to 301. Overall, more than

29,000 votes were cast, with strong participation from New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Australia, and international audiences. The campaign's success was further underscored by a MarCom Gold Award, recognising the event's outstanding digital strategy and innovation.



COOK ISLANDS PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS 2024 WINNERS ARE...

INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY

ALI MAAO "KIA ORANA CHAMPION"



Ali Maa, a dedicated team member of the Vaka Cruise in Aitutaki. Ali was described in nominations as an exceptional guide and storyteller with a heart for tourism. His generosity in sharing the Cook Islands' unique culture and traditions demonstrates the value our visitors have on authentic interactions in the activities they choose to do.

"This is our hard work... What I do is not just for me, but for the people of Aitutaki, for my family, for the company itself. Like what the Prime Minister said, you've gotta do it with passion. Do something that you're passionate about, do something that you love and you gotta love what you do. I believe that each one of us are here because we love what we do (within) the tourism industry" - Ali Maa.

BUSINESS CATEGORY

CAPTAIN TAMA'S LAGOON CRUIZES



Captain Tama's Lagoon Cruises based in Muri, Rarotonga took home the business category award. Nominees for Captain Tama's noted the authenticity displayed by every member of Captain Tama's team,

many noting they didn't stop smiling throughout the experience. Nominations spoke to the team embodying the Cook Islands' spirit and providing life-long memories that visitors continue to share.

"We work alongside a lot of passionate, young people that deliver services to our tourists. It's a testament to our colleagues... We (try to) deliver a service that we are so passionate about. Rain or shine, we carry with us our culture, our families, our people, those in the past and (those with us) today. We honour them, this is for them. Without them, instilling in us children, tamariki, na koutou kare e matou e autu teia korona na teitei i teia ra" - Martha Nikou, Captain Tama's Cruises

ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE: TAKURUA - THE TASTE OF THE SEASON

Takurua: Taste of the Season 2025 was a standout cultural and culinary activation that brought together food, tradition, and community in a way that deeply resonated with both locals and visitors. The Mystery Taste Tour was a sell-out success, with 90 diners transported across three surprise venues to experience creative kuru-inspired dishes that celebrated seasonal produce in innovative ways. The Kuru Cook-Off added a competitive edge, drawing seven contestants, engaging 100 public voters, and awarding a \$1,000 prize to the winning chef from Mauke – a moment that highlighted the richness of outer island talent.

The campaign’s reach extended well beyond the dining table, with more than 400,000 views and 150,000 engagements across social media platforms. This digital momentum was further strengthened by strong organic media coverage, ensuring the story of Takurua reached diverse audiences both locally and internationally. By blending food, culture, and tourism, Takurua reinforced the Cook Islands’ identity as a destination of authenticity and creativity. Building on this success, the event will return in 2026 with a fresh seasonal theme, promising even greater opportunities to showcase the unique flavours and traditions of the islands.

COOK ISLANDS
Love our little paradise

TAKURUA

TASTE OF THE SEASON

As part of the Cook Islands’ 60th Anniversary of Self-Governance celebrations, Cook Islands Tourism is proud to present *Takurua – Taste of the Season*, a culinary celebration of identity, heritage, and connection to our homeland through food. This year’s event brings together food, culture, and community through three special experiences.

INTRODUCING THIS YEARS TASTE OF THE SEASON - KURU (BREADFRUIT)

SECONDARY SCHOOLS TAKURUA TA’U UMU
Friday 21st February
TePuna Korero - National Culture Centre Grounds, 7:30am - 1:30pm
Takurua - Ta’u Umus will feature secondary students going head-to-head, preparing a traditional umu featuring kuru while battling it out in cultural activities and traditional games.

KURU COOK-OFF
Saturday 22nd February
Punanga Nui Market, 9am - 11am
A cooking competition at Punanga Nui Market, where home cooks compete for the title of Best Tapua Kuru (Breadfruit Stew) in the Cook Islands! Market goers will get to sample the dishes and vote for their favourite! Who will take home the \$1000 cash prize?

MYSTERY TASTE TOUR
Tuesday 25th February
Mystery Locations, 5pm - 9:30pm
A ticketed food experience where guests will travel by bus to visit mystery locations, each serving a kuru-inspired taster. The evening will feature live entertainment, storytelling, and a Takurua feast.

Love
our little paradise

TAKURUA
TASTE OF THE SEASON

Cook Islands
Tohu Turanga, Tohu Awhai
Whakari, Whakari Te Pahi

MYSTERY TASTE TOUR

Tuesday 25 February 2025 | 5pm - 9.30pm

Cultural Storytelling | Mystery Locations | Live entertainment

Kuru-inspired tasters | Takurua Feast

A food adventure where guests will hop aboard the Kuru Express to explore the taste of the season - kuru (breadfruit) - at several mystery locations!

Tickets are \$90 each.
Email: takurua@cookislands.travel or call 29435 to buy a ticket.
Scan the QR code to learn more about Takurua: The taste of the season.

Scan the QR code

BOND | **CIPS** IMAGE & COPY CENTRE | **CIC** LEADING THE WAY | **TE TANGI ENUA**

Scan QR Code for more information or contact Cook Islands Tourism: +682 29435 or takurua@cookislands.travel



SOCIAL MEDIA KEY METRICS AND TOP POSTS

	CHANNEL	ENGAGEMENTS	FOLLOWERS	IMPRESSIONS	AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	POSTS
PRIMARY		629,319 VS 440,923	1,070,577 VS 975,940	119,917,445 VS 135,937,962	1.31% Industry Benchmark = 0.15% VS 0.6%	869 VS 1669
		694,352 VS 286,834	123,310 VS 115,158	13,140,587 VS 12,396,713	6.04% Industry Benchmark = 1.13% VS 6.07%	111 VS 124
		135,040 VS 140,548	21,540 VS 14,762	1,910,824 VS 1,514,052	7.07% Industry Benchmark = 5.7% VS 14.4%	145 VS 123
		41,265 VS 70,789	3,269 VS 3,233	1,109,538 VS 1,688,874	3.72% Industry Benchmark = 2.0% VS 2.15%	666 VS 665
SECONDARY		4,428 VS 3,188	5,636 VS 5,349	653,856 VS 780,948	6.9% Industry Benchmark = 3.5% VS 6.5%	86 VS 86
		702 VS 4,365	2,753 VS 2,431	15,828 VS 20,709	6.1% Industry Benchmark = 2.0% VS 4.95%	16 VS 38
		27,190 Unique Viewers VS 129,801	102,771 Views VS 778,410	221,248 VS 664,799	22,439 Finishes VS 25,974	337 VS 144

IN-HOUSE CREATED CONTENT



HIGHLIGHTING OUR 2024 PCA WINNER - ALI MAAO



PUNANGA NUI MARKET'S 'VENDOR VOICES'



TAKURUA FESTIVAL - KURU COOK-OFF



COOK ISLANDS LANGUAGE WEEK

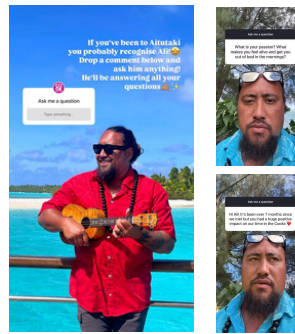


MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM CAPTAIN TAMAS

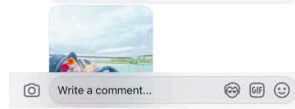


LOVE OUR LITTLE PARADISE CAMPAIGN SHOOT

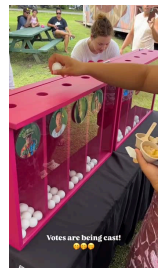
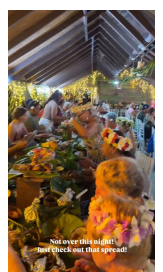
ANSWERING FAQ WITH ALI MAAO



to the experience that we felt was missing on the main island. A true guardian of his slice of heaven. Respected by all and passionate about improving his local economy. Sending lots of love from Australia 🇦🇺



TAKURUA RECAP



EASTER EGG HUNT

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM RANKING

FACEBOOK RANKING

Page	Page likes ↓
Australia.com Tourism Australia's official Facebook page. Post your best photos to our wall to ...	8.6M
Hawaii - gohawaii.com Hawaii is our home. Learn more about how you can mālama (care for) Hawai'i w...	1.9M
Cook Islands Kia Orana and Welcome to the official Cook Islands Tourism Corporation Faceb...	980.4K 3rd
Tourism Fiji Bula! Official account of Fiji. Where Happiness Comes Naturally.	641.7K

INSTAGRAM RANKING

Account	Followers (lifetime) ↓
australia Australia	5.7M
gohawaii Hawaii	324.8K
tahitourisme Tahiti Tourisme	190K
tourismfiji Tourism Fiji	172.3K
cookislands Cook Islands	106.7K 5th

GLOBAL WEBSITE

Our website continues to play a vital role in converting destination interest into real-world action. The most important metric we track is leads—users clicking through to tourism operators, booking platforms, or making direct enquiries. On average, we’re generating 500+ leads per day, with the majority going to tours and activities, highlighting the strong demand for visitor experiences.

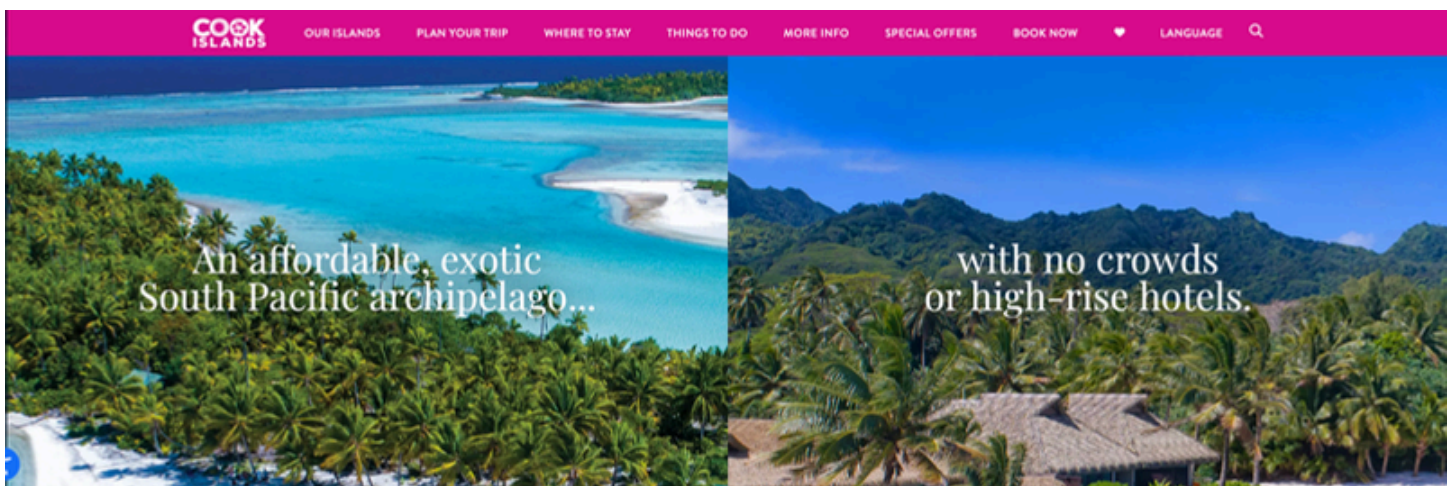
The site is also designed for global accessibility, providing destination information in six languages—English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, and Swedish—across 32 countries, including all key source markets. This ensures we remain visible and relevant to international audiences in the way they prefer to search and plan.

Like many in the global tourism industry, we’re navigating major shifts in how people find and absorb information online. Tools like ChatGPT and Google’s AI Overviews now provide answers directly—often without users visiting a

website. While this trend is reshaping digital behaviours, our focus remains on quality engagement and strong conversion intent.

Despite a decrease in total traffic and leads compared to last year, engagement has remained high. Engaged users dropped by 10%, showing that the audience reaching our site is still highly motivated and interacting with purpose. Most visitors continue to come from mobile devices, and our audience skews female—aligning with our key trip planner demographic.

As the digital landscape evolves, so has our strategy. We’re optimising content for AI visibility while continuing to serve as a trusted, high-value referral hub for the Cook Islands tourism industry. These insights directly inform campaign partnerships, product prioritisation, and co-operative marketing opportunities—ensuring we meet travellers where they are and guide them where they want to go.



GLOBAL WEBSITE KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

www.cookislands.travel

Our global website continues to be a critical platform for visitor engagement and industry referrals. In 2024/25, while overall traffic metrics saw a modest decline, performance remained strong with over 1.3 million users, 1.7 million sessions, and 3.4 million page views.

These figures highlight the ongoing interest in the Cook Islands as a destination, even as user behaviour continues to shift in response to evolving digital trends and AI-powered search tools.



TOTAL USERS

A person who is accessing, browsing, or interacting with your website

1,346,345

-10.26% VS 1,500,266 (2023/24)



PAGE VIEWS

Total number of pages viewed

3,455,084

-17.31% VS 4,178,352 (2023/24)



TOTAL SESSIONS

User interactions on your website within a given time frame

1,793,644

-8.08% VS 1,951,208 (2023/24)

ENGAGEMENT METRICS AND LEADS

SOURCE: GOOGLE ANALYTICS 4



1,286,670

-43% TOTAL EVENTS



654,784

-14% ENGAGED USERS



213,301

-39% LEADS GENERATED

GLOBAL WEBSITE TRAFFIC & AQUISITION

2024/25 VS 2023/24

TOP 12 TRAFFIC BY COUNTRY

LOCATION	2024/25	% +/-
UNITED STATES	387,899	-44.52%
AUSTRALIA	376,651	+27.76%
NEW ZEALAND	330,425	-4.9
CANADA	104,852	+475.67%
GERMANY	16,840	-14.28%
UNITED KINGDOM	11,348	-15.77%
ITALY	8,431	+0.86%
SWITZERLAND	3,818	+15.52%
FRANCE	3,346	-6.67%
SPAIN	2,839	-11.06%
NETHERLANDS	2,317	-8.99%
FRENCH POLYNESIA	2,159	+15.02%

TOP 12 VIEWED PAGES

PAGE	2024/25	% +/-
ACCOMMODATION	445,379	-16.4%
ACTIVITIES	169,574	-2.59%
RAROTONGA	162,097	-49.35%
AITUTAKI	136,092	+6.02%
TRAVEL TO RAR & AIT	128,547	N/A
TRAVEL TO CI	99,732	N/A
ISLAND DREAMING	94,747	N/A
SPECIAL OFFERS	83,597	+15.75%
AUS HOMEPAGE	78,266	-56.98%
ESCAPE TO PARADISE	77,592	+3,787.37%
MARKETS	55,383	-5.08%
WEATHER & SEASONS	52,055	-4.03%

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The 2024/25 Famil Programme continues to be one of our most strategic initiatives—designed to educate the travel trade and deliver high-impact media exposure for the Cook Islands.

This year, the programme represented a \$1 million investment, combining contributions from Cook Islands Tourism (CIT) and our industry partners. We successfully delivered 87 famils, hosting 234 participants, with 63% experiencing the Pa Enea—supporting our goal to encourage visitor dispersal beyond Rarotonga.

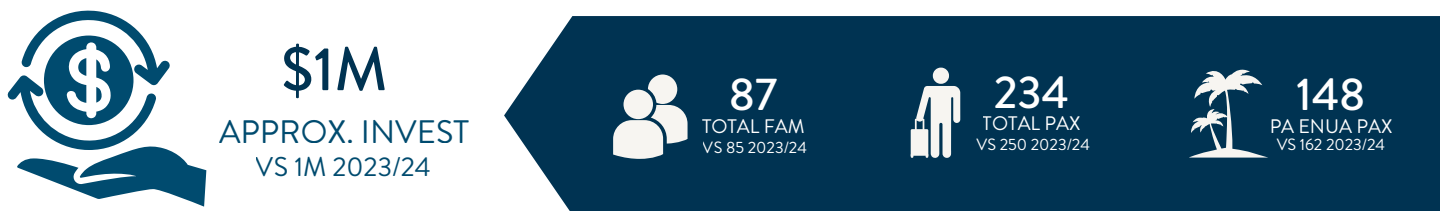
The programme’s focus continues to evolve, with the majority of famils now targeting media and PR outcomes, particularly from long-haul markets. These curated

experiences help generate rich content and earned media that showcase our destination to global audiences.

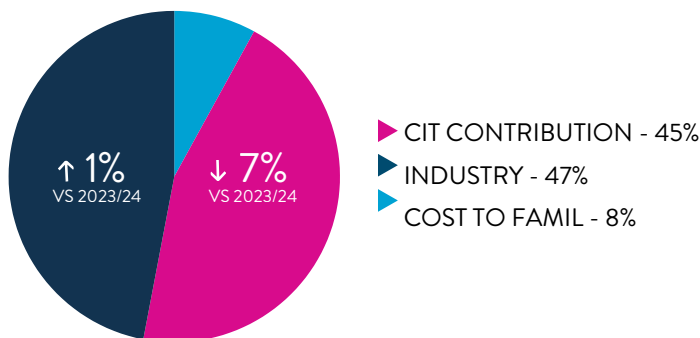
Importantly, CIT’s contribution decreased, while industry support increased, reflecting growing alignment and shared value across the sector. This year, we partnered with 77 local operators, up from 66 in the previous year—demonstrating stronger collaboration and trust in the programme.

Top contributors included Air Rarotonga, Hawaiian Airlines, and leading accommodation providers such as Edgewater Resort & Spa, Nautilus Resort, and Pacific Resort Aitutaki—whose ongoing support ensures our destination is represented with authenticity, depth, and excellence.

FAMILIARISATION PROGRAMME RESULTS



TOP INDUSTRY PARTNERS	%
Air Rarotonga	21%
Edgewater Resort	14%
Hawaiian Airlines	14%
Nautilus Resort	12%
Pacific Resort Aitutaki	11%
Tamanu Beach	10%
Sea Change Villas	7%
The Vaka Cruise	5%
MOTU Villas	3%
Manuia Beach	3%



FAMIL PAX BY MARKET

MARKET	FAMS	PAX
New Zealand	11	37
Australia	36	94
North America	18	41
UK / Nordic	3	5
NE	3	14
SE	11	25
Head Office	5	18

EVENT SUPPORT

Supporting events to boost visitor numbers during the low and shoulder seasons remains a vital strategy. An effective event development approach is required for Cook Islands Tourism to attract international visitors by offering unique

and culturally immersive experiences. Additionally, events provide significant economic benefits by stimulating industries like hospitality, retail, and transportation, supporting local businesses, and driving overall economic growth.



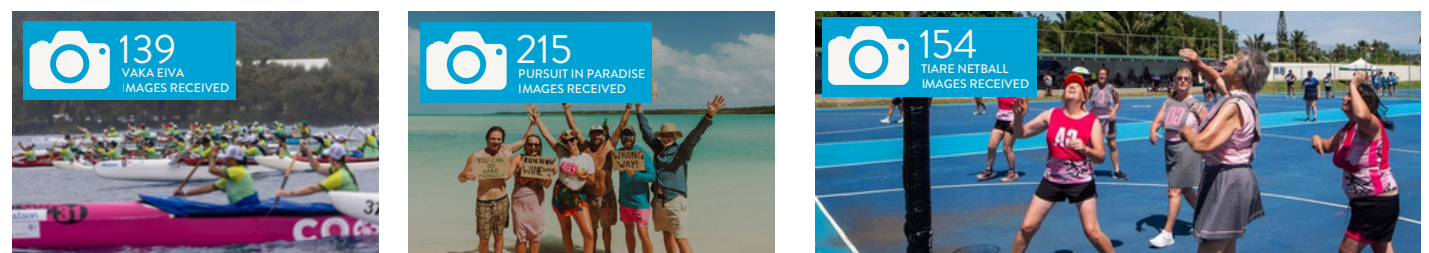
MARKETING SUPPORT SUMMARY



EVENTS SUPPORTED



DELIVERABLES



OWNED ASSETS & USER GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)

User-generated content (UGC) refers to content, such as photos and videos, that has been posted by users online. This UGC significantly enhances the promotion of the Cook Islands. Over the past year, our Media Hub held 6.6K

assets and registered 4.7K downloads. Meanwhile, our UGC website plugin showcased 2.6K approved assets across 52 galleries, attracting over 407K views and 386K interactions.

MEDIA HUB

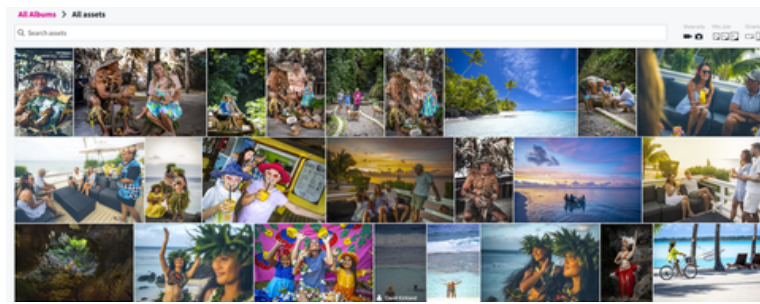
WWW.COOKISLANDSIMAGES.COM



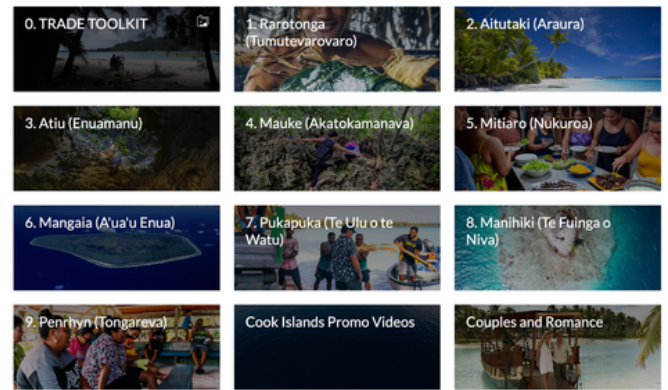
6.6K
MEDIA HUB ASSETS
VS 5.7K 2023/24

4.7K
DOWNLOADS
VS 5.8K 2023/24

928
TOTAL REGISTERED USERS
VS 757 2023/24



All Albums



WEBSITE UGC GALLERIES

WWW.COOKISLANDS.TRAVEL



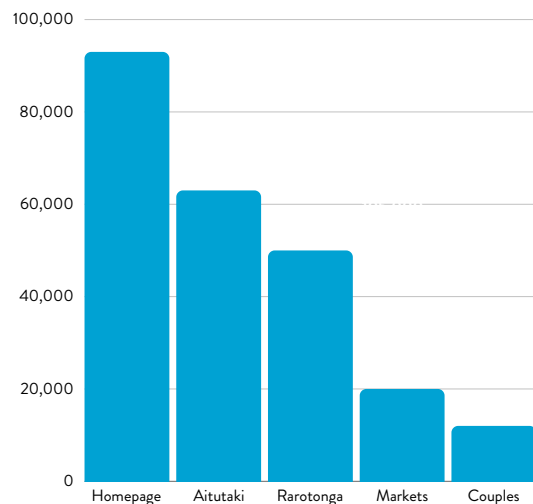
2.6K
UGC RIGHTS
APPROVED ASSETS
VS 1.8K 2023/24

52
GALLERIES
VS 47 2023/24

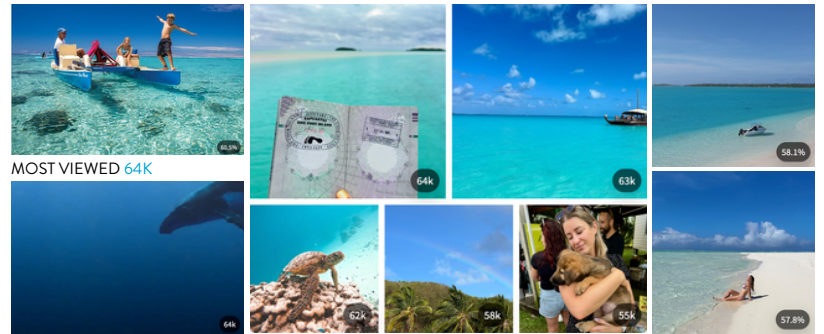
407K
VIEWS
VS 502K 2023/24

386K
INTERACTION
VS 487K 2023/24

TOP 5 GALLERIES BY VIEWS



MOST ENGAGING 60.5%



MOST VIEWED 64K

Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP)

OVERVIEW

The Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP) is the emerging framework for how tourism in the Cook Islands will be managed in the years ahead. As a holistic model, it spans all of Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT)'s work – from marketing to development – and provides a shared platform for government, industry, and communities to align around sustainable outcomes. FY2025 marked a turning point, with

governance, resources, and baseline data established to move the DSP from concept to practice. A key outcome for CIT is also the clarification of roles and responsibilities of the Corporation itself, ensuring that its mandate and contributions are clearly defined within the broader stewardship framework.

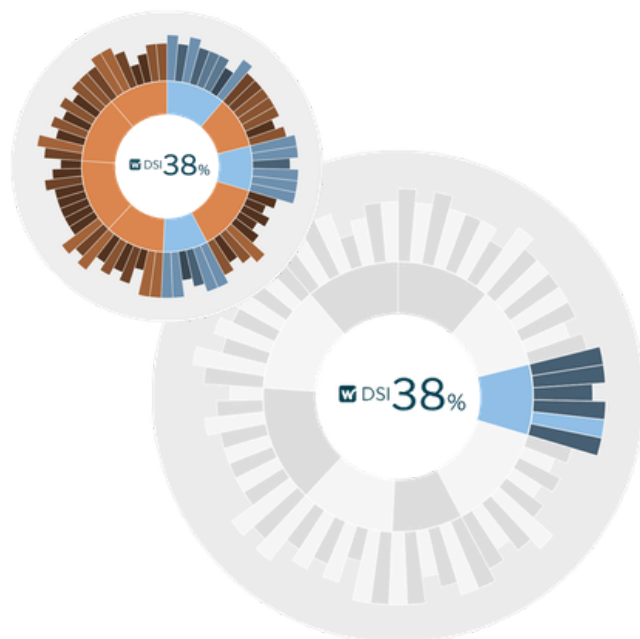
ACHIEVEMENTS IN FY2025

- Governance and Endorsement:** The DSP process advanced significantly during the year. The Board confirmed its commitment, and Cabinet endorsed the development of the DSP through the establishment of a donor-funded Project Management Unit (PMU) and a Destination Stewardship Advisory Group (DSAG). Pillar leads were appointed to guide thematic areas, creating a foundation for coordinated delivery once the DSP is finalised.
- Evidence and Baselines:** Robust evidence gathering underpinned DSP development. The STAR Resident Sentiment Survey, GSTC Destination Assessment, and a programme of stakeholder engagement workshops across islands and sectors provided vital insights and baselines. These activities captured both resident and visitor perspectives, strengthened local ownership, and ensured the DSP reflects community and industry priorities.
- Donor and Partner Alignment:** Through the NZMFAT-funded Climate Finance Capacity Support Programme (CFCSP), CIT secured dedicated expertise – two full-time staff (Project Manager and Project Coordinator) and one part-time senior advisor – to drive DSP development. Broader regional partnerships and technical agencies also contributed resources and insights, reinforcing the framework and preparing it for delivery.
- Enabling Work:** Complementary initiatives such as the PSDI governance audit and the Climate Tourism RiskScan project with The Travel Foundation were progressed, providing essential enabling structures. Together, these strands are designed to strengthen long-term capability and ensure the DSP can be implemented effectively.

TRACKING AND MONITORING

Effective monitoring and reporting are central to the credibility of the DSP. In FY2025, the Destination Wayfinder tool was adopted as the primary mechanism for measuring progress across stewardship domains. This framework provides structured benchmarking, identifies gaps, and enables transparent reporting back to government, industry, and community stakeholders. It also supports adaptive management, giving CIT the flexibility to refine actions as evidence emerges.

Wayfinder
Chart Your Course



FOCUS FOR FY2026

- In FY2026, the priority will be to move the DSP from development into full operation as the central framework guiding tourism in the Cook Islands. This means finalising the plan, embedding governance through the DSAG and pillar leads, and translating priorities into island-level stewardship plans. Alongside this, work will continue on resource mobilisation, climate risk analysis, policy alignment, and the introduction of a transparent progress dashboard. Another critical step will be refreshing reporting frameworks for tourism within the National Sustainable Development Agenda (NSDA 2020+), ensuring that the sector's benefits and pressures are assessed through a more holistic lens.
- Industry engagement will be advanced through the relaunch of the Cook Islands Quality Assured (CIQA) programme. Positioned as the DSP's primary industry-facing mechanism, CIQA will act both as a quality assurance system and as a platform connecting operators to the LOLP brand and DSP principles. This dual function will ensure that strategic goals are implemented in practice while also strengthening marketing visibility for responsible operators. For CIT itself, the DSP will deliver clear action points across all divisions, ensuring alignment between long-term strategy and operational delivery.
- A major focus will also be clarifying institutional arrangements. To date, CIT has operated in many ways as a pseudo tourism authority, with the DSP and the linked legislative review acting as a de facto audit of roles and mandates. The year ahead will determine how the PMU and DSP functions transition from a donor-funded project into structures permanently embedded within government. This will require collaboration across the public sector to agree where stewardship responsibilities should sit – whether within CIT as a new division or elsewhere – and to identify any legislative or policy changes needed to secure a clear and enduring mandate.



Research & Insights

SETTING THE SCENE

Research & Insights is the backbone of how Cook Islands Tourism (CIT) understands performance, measures impact, and shapes strategy across both Destination Development (DD) and Destination Marketing (DM). FY2025 was a year of progress, with key systems modernised, new tools rolled out, and innovation pilots launched. These advances began to establish a stronger platform for evidence-based decision-making, ensuring that future strategy can be grounded in reliable data and genuine stakeholder perspectives.

WHAT WE DID IN FY2025

- **Modernising Data Systems:** We strengthened our core data infrastructure. Approximately 150,000 Passenger Arrival Cards were processed, redesigned to include visitor education. HubSpot was integrated with airport Wi-Fi systems, creating an automated International Visitor Survey (IVS) pipeline set to eliminate manual data entry in FY2026. Domestic arrival logs in Aitutaki (~1,960/month) and Atiu (~131/month) added much-needed Pa Enea coverage, while short-form Wi-Fi questionnaires went live to capture visitor insights at point of departure.
- **Generating Deeper Insights:** The STAR Resident Sentiment Survey provided a national baseline of community perspectives, directly informing the Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP). Extensive stakeholder engagement workshops conducted as a core step in the DSP development supplemented these insights, surfacing priorities from across communities and industry. The IVS achieved its most robust coverage to date, with the sample size increasing from 1,881 in FY2024 to 8,872 in FY2025. This expansion was enabled by improved data collection mechanisms and survey optimisation tools. The questionnaire itself was refreshed, and three quarterly reports plus an annualised version were delivered — improving both accuracy and relevance. Under the CIQA refresh, a Responsible Tourism Self-Assessment (RTSA) was finalised, ready for pilot testing in FY2026, and the first safety KPI was introduced to track visitor incidents and accidents.
- **Testing New Approaches:** CIT scoped a partnership with Data Appeal to pilot real-time analytics, including sentiment tracking and visitor flow heatmaps. These initial investigations demonstrated the potential to complement survey-based systems with live digital insights, even as AI-driven changes to online planning highlighted the need for more adaptive tools and measures.

WHAT WE LEARNED

FY2025 confirmed the value of investing in modern, integrated systems and of combining detailed surveys with lighter, always-on insight tools. Data pipelines are becoming more reliable, stakeholder perspectives are shaping strategy, and innovation pilots are pointing to new ways of working.

At the same time, this progress revealed a critical reality: our current measures of success - focused heavily on arrivals - are no longer fit for purpose. While useful during the post-COVID recovery phase, increasing visitor numbers is no longer the primary goal. To remain true to CIT's Mission Statement - "...to encourage and promote the development of tourism in the Cook Islands in such manner as will achieve sustained growth, and in a manner which is economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sustainable" - and to the LOLP brand, success must now be defined in terms of holistic value, quality, and impact.

Refreshing our Research & Insights approach is therefore essential not only to more accurately and holistically monitor the benefits of tourism to the Cook Islands, but also to track and evaluate CIT's own performance as the national tourism office. A key part of this will be ensuring that tourism's impacts, both positive and negative, are better measured and embedded within key national strategies such as the NSDA2020+. Without this shift, our ability to deliver on our mandate is at risk.

LOOKING AHEAD TO FY2026

FY2026 will be a foundational year for reimagining Research & Insights. Priorities include embedding HubSpot as the core integration point for visitor and industry data, piloting the Responsible Tourism Self-Assessment within CIQA, and expanding sentiment tracking across residents, visitors, and operators. We will also deliver automated IVS dashboards and trial real-time analytics to complement traditional surveys.

Most importantly, CIT will begin the critical process of redefining what success looks like. This shift — from arrivals to impact, from numbers to value — is essential to ensuring that the LOLP brand and the DSP vision are reflected not only in how we market the Cook Islands, but also in how we measure the benefits tourism delivers to people, culture, and place, as well as how we hold ourselves accountable for performance as an organisation.

Key Challenges & Mitigation Strategies

The Cook Islands tourism sector has entered a period of both record performance and critical reflection. Renewed global interest has positioned our islands as a leading destination, but sustaining this momentum requires deliberate management of growth, dispersal, and long-term strength. Cook Islands Tourism, in partnership with airlines, accommodation providers, tour operators, hospitality businesses, and local communities, has not only welcomed record numbers of visitors but also worked to lengthen stays and deepen the quality of engagement. These efforts provide short-term stability while creating the space to plan strategically for the future, ensuring that tourism continues to deliver value for our people, economy, and environment.

The next step is to look inward and reposition the tourism sector to remain prepared for external shocks and aligned with a value-led model of development. With the rollout of the Marketing Strategy 2025–2027 and the formalisation of the Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP), the sector is shifting toward yield and value over volume. This requires confronting current challenges directly, with mitigation strategies that ensure long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

1. DEFINING AND MANAGING VISITOR CAPACITY

Challenge: Traditional carrying capacity modelling focused primarily on airlift and accommodation. However, pressure on infrastructure, communities, and the environment in Rarotonga and Aitutaki—contrasted with underutilised capacity in the Pa Enua—demands a more holistic approach.

Mitigation: Phase II of the ADB-supported programme will broaden the framework to include environmental sustainability, infrastructure limits, social impacts, and Pa Enua perspectives. Stakeholder engagement will ensure decisions reflect both community and industry priorities.

2. RETHINKING HOW WE MEASURE TOURISM VALUE

Challenge: Current tourism performance metrics remain overly focused on arrivals. This is misaligned with CIT’s value-over-volume strategy and the National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+.

Mitigation: Build on the STAR Resident Sentiment Survey, the GSTC Destination Assessment, and strengthened IVS pipelines to introduce modern data systems. Collaborate with MFEM and CPPO to establish cross-cutting metrics, while piloting new platforms such as real-time analytics and Responsible Tourism Self-Assessments under the CIQA refresh.

3. SECURING AIR ACCESS FOR THE FUTURE

Challenge: Airlift has underpinned growth, yet volatility in the aviation sector presents ongoing risk. Short-haul routes (NZ, AU) remain stable, but diversification through long-haul markets (NA, EU) requires careful management.

Mitigation: Maintain the Airline Committee as the coordinating mechanism for government engagement with carriers. Adopt a “Cook Islands Incorporated” approach to maximise leverage with airlines, strengthen negotiation capacity, and align route development with market strategies. Review support programmes to ensure best return on investment.

4. UNLOCKING TOURISM POTENTIAL IN THE PA ENUA

Challenge: The Pa Enua remain underdeveloped relative to Rarotonga and Aitutaki, despite strong potential to relieve pressure and diversify experiences. Infrastructure gaps (airports, sanitation, water) remain the key barrier.

Mitigation: Prioritise enabling infrastructure such as sealed runways and utilities as preconditions for tourism investment. Develop a “Pa Enua Playbook” to guide sequencing and viability assessments. Explore a debt/equity fund to support private sector-led ventures including holiday homes, cultural tourism, and small-scale businesses.

5. MODERNISING TOURISM POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Challenge: CIT’s remit has evolved from marketing to destination management, yet the legislative framework remains outdated. Gaps exist around visitor and public safety, sustainability obligations, and governance.

Mitigation: Undertake a phased review of the Tourism Act, aligning CIT’s role with its new Destination Stewardship mandate. Establish an enabling policy and legislative framework that protects visitors, empowers communities, and future-proofs the industry. Review CIT organisational framework is fit for purpose and Human Resources is strengthened to deliver on these objectives.

6. DRIVING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM THROUGH THE DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN

Challenge: Global travellers increasingly demand destinations that demonstrate genuine sustainability, while the risk of “greenwashing” threatens credibility.

Mitigation: Position the Destination Stewardship Plan as the central framework for leading cross-sector partnerships. Guided by the four C’s (Commerce, Conservation, Culture, Community), the DSP will formalise a Destination Stewardship Model and deliver an actionable Destination Management Plan. This ensures responsible tourism is not just a vision but an operational reality across government, industry, and communities.

7. STRENGTHENING PUBLIC SECTOR DELIVERY

Challenge: Fragmented service delivery and regulatory enforcement create inefficiencies and sometimes conflict with tourism growth.

Mitigation: Strengthen public sector coordination, embed tourism priorities into wider infrastructure and service planning, and ensure regulations are enforced consistently. Position the public sector as both enabler and guardian of sustainable tourism, in partnership with industry and communities.

8. DEEPENING COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY

Challenge: Industry operators vary widely in capacity, and alignment with responsible tourism principles remains inconsistent.

Mitigation: Establish collaborative platforms for joint problem-solving, capacity-building, and innovation. Support adoption of responsible practices through incentives, co-developed programmes, and access to funding opportunities. Strengthen CIQA as a channel for raising standards and linking operators to the LOLP brand.

9. BUILDING CAREER PATHWAYS FOR COOK ISLANDERS

Challenge: Workforce shortages, housing pressures, and migration trends constrain industry growth. Tourism remains an attractive career for some, but pathways are unclear and limited.

Mitigation: Expand the Tourism Trades Academy, internships, leadership programmes, and Careers Expos to attract young Cook Islanders. Relaunch the CIQA framework as both a quality tool and career development channel. Collaborate with education and training providers to establish clear entry points and progression pathways within the sector.



Financial Management & Performance

AUDIT OPINION

The Cook Islands Tourism Corporation financial accounts have been audited to 30 June 2024. The audit performance of the Corporation has improved in the last 10 years. An unmodified audit opinion has been obtained for 14 consecutive years since 2010/11 with minimal audit issues and achieved 'zero' audit management issues for the last 8 consecutive years.

AUDIT OPINION KEY

Disclaimer:

Expressed when there is a limitation on the auditor's work as a result of the lack of audit evidence

Modified opinion:

Expressed when there is a limitation on the scope of the auditor's examination or when the auditor disagrees with the treatment or disclosure of a matter is or may be material

Unmodified opinion:

Expressed when the auditor is satisfied in all material respects with the matters which an overall conclusion is required to be drawn.

Financial Year	Audit Opinion	No. of Audit Issues
2004/05	Modified	18
2005/06	Disclaimer	Excessive
2006/07	Disclaimer	Excessive
2007/08	Modified	11
2008/09	Modified	9
2009/10	Modified	15
2010/11	Unmodified	15
2011/12	Unmodified	8
2012/13	Unmodified	4
2013/14	Unmodified	1
2014/15	Unmodified	3
2015/16	Unmodified	1
2016/17	Unmodified	0
2017/18	Unmodified	0
2018/19	Unmodified	0
2019/20	Unmodified	0
2020/21	Unmodified	0
2021/22	Unmodified	0
2022/23	Unmodified	0
2023/24	Unmodified	0

The Audit engagement letter for the audit of the 2024/25 financial statements was signed 15 September 2025.

The Audit opinion is expected October 2025.



COOK ISLANDS TOURISM MARKETING CORPORATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

In New Zealand Dollars	Notes	al	2025	al	2024
			\$		\$
Assets					
Current Assets					
Cash and Equivalents	5	-	17,107	-	27,538
Prepayments		-	44,952	-	203,713
Debtors and Other Receivables	6	-	503,497	-	432,444
Total Current Assets		-	565,556	-	663,695
Non-Current Assets					
Property, Plant, and Equipment					
Total Non-Current Assets	9	(128,943)	-	154,086
Total Assets		(128,943)	-	154,086
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities					
Creditors and Other Payables					
Employee Entitlements	7	-	407,809	-	523,216
Total Current Liabilities	8	-	149,521	-	125,758
Total Liabilities		-	557,330	-	648,974
Net Assets		-	557,330	-	648,974
Equity					
Contributed Capital					
Accumulated Surplus / (Deficit)					
Total Equity		(89,442)	-	89,442
		(48,481)	-	79,362
	10	-	137,923	-	168,804

The accompanying notes should be read in conjunction with the Financial Statements and are available on request.

COOK ISLANDS TOURISM MARKETING CORPORATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

In New Zealand Dollars	Notes	Actual 2025 \$	Budget 2025 \$	Actual 2024 \$
Revenue				
Funding from the Crown	2	- 3,772,000-	3,772,000-	3,672,000-
Trading Revenue	2	- 20,439-	- 20,000-	- 19,918-
Total Revenue		- 3,792,439-	3,792,000-	3,691,918-
Expenditure				
Personnel Expense				
Depreciation Expense	3	- 2,203,988-	2,203,192-	1,987,317-
Other Expense	9	- 46,269-	- 52,000-	- 65,458-
Total Expenditure	4	- 1,511,079-	1,536,808-	1,578,665-
Operating Balance before Gains and Losses (OBEGAL)		- 3,761,335-	3,792,000-	3,631,440-
Other Gains / (Losses)		- 31,103	- 0.00	- 60,479
Gain / (Loss) from Foreign Exchange				
Gain / (Loss) on Disposal of Assets		(10,266)--	- --	7,430_
Total Other Gains / (Loss)		- 280	- --	84
Net Surplus / (Deficit)		(9,986)--	- --	7,514-
		21,117-	0.00	67,993-

The accompanying notes should be read in conjunction with the Financial Statements and are available on request.

Conclusion – Future Priorities & Direction

As we reflect on the performance of this financial year, the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT) acknowledges both the achievements and the responsibilities that lie ahead. Visitor arrivals have reached record levels, and the economic benefits are flowing into our communities, businesses, and families. Yet while this growth is welcome, it is not the sole measure of success. The real challenge lies in ensuring that our prosperity is sustainable, responsible, and firmly anchored in the wellbeing of our people, our environment, and our culture.

The tourism sector is now at an inflection point. With the Marketing Strategy 2025–2027 and the Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP) in place, we are shifting from a model defined by numbers to one centred on value, impact, and long-term benefit. This means investing in policies, partnerships, and programmes that enable tourism to enrich Cook Islanders' lives while protecting the unique attributes that make our little paradise so distinctive.

Looking ahead, the following priorities will guide our work:

- **Sustainable Air Access & Market Reach:** Ensuring relevant and economically viable connections to source markets while managing volatility in the aviation sector through strategic planning and a “Cook Islands Incorporated” approach.
- **Destination Stewardship & Responsible Development:** Embedding the DSP as the cross-sector framework for aligning government, industry, and community priorities. This includes managing visitor capacity, modernising legislation, and ensuring cultural, environmental, and climate considerations are integral to decision-making.
- **Quality over Quantity in Visitor Growth:** Targeting high-yield, values-aligned visitors and dispersing them across seasons and islands to reduce pressure on Rarotonga and Aitutaki while unlocking opportunities in the Pa Enea.
- **Industry Capability & Partnerships:** Strengthening collaboration with the private sector through CIQA and other platforms, supporting adoption of responsible practices, and ensuring local businesses are well-positioned to innovate and compete globally.
- **Workforce Pathways for Cook Islanders:** Expanding the Tourism Trades Academy, internships, and leadership programmes to attract and retain talent, ensuring Cook Islanders remain at the heart of the industry.

- **Embedding Mana Tiaki in Tourism Delivery:** Reaffirming our cultural ethos of guardianship as the guiding principle for tourism. Mana tiaki ensures that the Cook Islands' environment, culture, and people remain at the centre of every visitor experience.

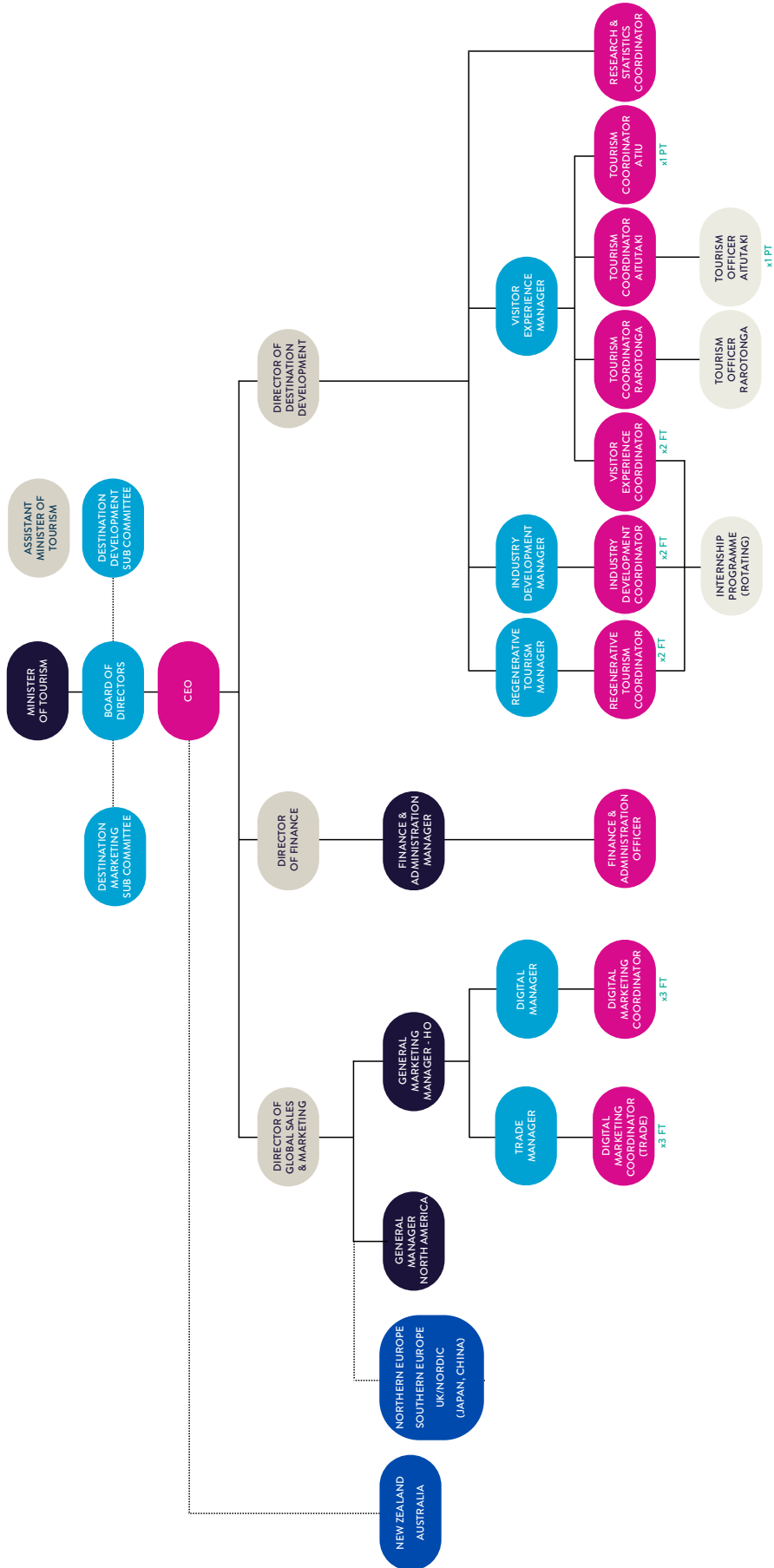
Our shared responsibility is clear. Under the Love Our Little Paradise brand, operators, government agencies, local communities, NGOs, and visitors themselves must work together to safeguard what makes the Cook Islands extraordinary. By focusing on responsible development, nurturing our people, and protecting our environment and culture, we can build a tourism model that thrives not just today, but for generations to come.

Tourism in the Cook Islands must always be more than an industry; it must be a legacy. Together, we are creating a future where tourism gives back to our people and preserves our little paradise.

Akaperepere ia to tatou parataito, kia vai e motukore uatu.



Appendix I: Organisational Structure











It's all good when we say

Meitaki

COOK
ISLANDS

Love our little paradise

Love

our little paradise

COOKISLANDS.TRAVEL

