



CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA

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TO THE GOVERNOR

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

March 2019

This report is a monthly release of the latest available indicators on the tourism sector and private remittances, with information sourced from the Central Bank, Samoa Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Revenue.

Report No.9: 2018/19

March 2019

Visitor Arrivals

Total number of **visitor arrivals** decreased by 4.6 percent to 11,163 visitors over March last year but was 23.4 percent higher compared to the previous month.

By country, the overall reduction over a year ago was underpinned by decreases in visitors from:

- New Zealand (down 1,138 visitors)
- American Samoa (down 97 visitors)
- United States of America (USA) (down 40 visitors)

By purpose of visit, the drop in the number of visitors was recorded for those who were here for:

- Visiting Families and Relatives (VFR) (down 1,050 visitors)
- Other (down 373 visitors)
- Business and Conference (down 238 visitors)

Nevertheless, **total arrivals in the first nine months of 2018/19** were 9.2 percent higher (to 134,394 visitors) compared to the same period last year. This increase was underpinned by higher arrivals from Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Other Countries and the USA, by 5,238 visitors, 4,666 visitors, 1,269 visitors, 678 visitors and 327 visitors in that order. By purpose, a notable expansion was recorded for 'VFR' (up 11,466 visitors) followed by increases for 'Others' (up 2,139 visitors) and Sports (up 55 visitors).

Although the average visitor expenditure rebounded by 1.5 percent, **total visitor receipts** decreased by \$1.1 million (or 3.2 percent) to \$32.9

million compared to the same month last year but was 37.9 percent higher than February 2019.

Total visitor receipts in the first nine months of 2018/19 also grew by 13.4 percent to \$380.2 million over the same period of 2017/18. Largely responsible for this improvement were higher visitor earnings from Australia (up \$19.7 million), New Zealand (up \$17.6 million), Other Countries (up \$4.8 million), USA (up \$1.6 million) and Europe (up \$1.3 million). Proceeds from visitors that were here for 'VFR' (up \$44.4 million), 'Others' (up \$6.8 million) and 'Sports' (up \$0.2 million) while visitor earnings for those who were here for 'Holiday' and 'Business and Conference' were reduced by \$3.9 million and \$2.6 million in that order.

The **tourism price index** grew by 1.5 percent over March 2018 due to increases in the 'Meals and Drinks sub-index' (up 4.5 percent) and a 2.3 percent hikes for both 'Family Obligations' and 'Miscellaneous' subgroups.

Private Remittances

Total private remittances in March 2019 recorded a 25.0 percent increase to \$55.6 million over March 2018 and was 38.7 percent higher compared to the previous month.

Responsible for the expansion in private remittances were increases in receipts from USA (up \$12.2 million) and American Samoa (up \$0.4 million) in light of a 0.2 percent depreciation of US dollar against Samoan Tala. In terms of recipients, increases were recorded for 'Non-Profit Institutions

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Serving Households' (NPISH) (up \$5.3 million), 'Others' (up \$4.3 million), 'In kind' (up \$1.3 million), 'Families and Households' (up \$0.2 million) and 'Hand carried cash' (up \$0.04 million).

As a result, **total inflow of private remittances in the first nine months of 2018/19** increased further by 14.3 percent to \$407.9 million over the same period last year. Responsible for the overall increase in the first nine months were gains in transfers from USA (up \$23.7 million), New Zealand (up \$12.7 million), Australia (up \$11.2 million) and American Samoa (up \$3.5 million). By recipient, increased funds were recorded for 'Family and Households' (up \$17.5 million), 'Hand carried cash' (up \$17.3 million) and 'NPISH' (up \$12.0 million).

The monthly share of remittances inflows received through Money Transfer Operators (MTO's) fell further to 67.5 percent from 80.2 percent in March

2018. The above drop was absorbed by funds that were sent through commercial banks; increasing to 32.5 percent share from 19.8 percent in the same month last year.

The **average cost of sending** NZD\$200.00 to Samoa increased to 13.14 percent from 12.59 percent in March 2018 whereas the average cost of sending AUD\$200.00 to Samoa contracted to 8.16 percent of total funds from 8.92 percent in March of the previous year.

CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA
26th April 2019

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Table 1. TOURISM EARNINGS, AVERAGE EXPENDITURE AND TOURISM PRICE INDEX

	Mar-17	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19
Total arrivals (persons)	9,490	11,707	10,819	13,156	16,315	19,241	16,321	14,843	14,523	11,483	24,021	13,755	9,044	11,163
Arrivals, by market (persons)														
American Samoa	1,226	1,186	994	1,308	1,845	1,694	1,907	1,049	1,207	860	2,586	1,116	968	1,089
Australia	1,651	2,239	1,867	2,476	2,777	3,978	3,308	3,616	3,238	2,306	6,990	3,434	1,820	2,481
Europe	396	449	678	631	640	666	712	493	676	678	542	612	458	716
New Zealand	3,890	5,538	5,004	6,274	7,725	9,349	7,775	7,215	6,869	5,252	11,016	6,290	3,645	4,400
USA	917	1,021	830	1,075	1,651	1,866	1,080	878	1,022	908	1,424	862	594	981
Other Countries	1,410	1,274	1,446	1,392	1,677	1,688	1,539	1,592	1,511	1,479	1,463	1,441	1,559	1,496
Cruise ships	4,608	627	0	106	1,905	0	0	264	265	266	267	268	269	270
Arrivals, by purpose (persons)														
Holiday	2,741	2,810	4,202	2,360	4,540	5,964	7,851	6,966	6,788	4,217	9,355	4,855	2,263	3,938
VFR	3,032	6,128	4,104	8,084	8,782	8,495	5,606	5,086	4,747	4,338	11,573	5,583	3,455	5,078
Business & Conference	1,058	1,013	575	649	645	1,614	765	740	815	912	615	759	780	775
Sport	83	67	25	90	173	223	123	241	85	132	84	20	325	56
Other	2,576	1,689	1,913	1,973	2,175	2,945	1,976	1,810	2,088	1,884	2,394	2,538	2,221	1,316
Cruise ships	4,608	627	0	106	1,905	0	0	264	265	266	267	268	269	270
Total earnings (tala million)	25.27	34.08	30.71	44.25	43.96	48.31	46.15	43.07	42.68	36.67	70.75	35.62	23.92	32.98
Earnings, by market (tala million)														
American Samoa	2.44	2.55	2.67	4.67	4.34	3.82	3.54	1.77	1.67	1.55	6.42	2.39	1.05	2.32
Australia	5.66	8.04	6.54	8.07	8.83	10.20	11.40	11.51	12.55	10.49	24.46	10.40	6.78	8.98
Europe	0.52	0.63	0.81	0.63	0.52	0.50	0.84	0.48	0.58	0.92	0.82	0.60	0.41	0.98
New Zealand	10.35	15.50	14.99	22.77	19.23	23.56	23.86	21.69	21.39	17.15	29.58	16.26	9.31	12.58
USA	3.20	3.99	1.52	2.93	4.89	5.29	2.39	3.41	2.26	2.35	4.24	2.08	2.03	3.82
Other Countries	3.10	3.37	4.18	5.18	6.16	4.94	4.12	4.20	4.21	4.22	5.24	3.90	4.33	4.30
Cruise ships	0.65	0.09	0.00	0.01	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
Earnings, by purpose (tala million)														
Holiday	6.92	7.96	11.46	7.71	12.02	14.33	22.53	21.31	16.16	10.46	26.56	13.45	6.28	11.53
VFR	7.32	16.77	12.25	31.22	27.47	25.80	17.77	15.56	16.62	20.80	36.27	16.35	9.07	14.54
Business & Conference	3.31	3.51	2.03	1.86	1.94	3.73	2.66	2.35	2.18	3.28	2.10	2.75	2.79	2.77
Sport	0.26	0.23	0.07	0.31	0.28	0.72	0.26	0.81	0.18	0.26	0.19	0.06	0.69	0.20
Other	7.46	5.60	4.91	3.16	2.26	3.73	2.93	3.04	7.54	1.87	5.63	3.01	5.09	3.94
Cruise ships	0.65	0.09	0.00	0.01	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
Average expenditure (tala, per person)	2,663	2,911	2,839	3,364	2,695	2,511	2,828	2,902	2,939	3,194	2,945	2,590	2,645	2,955
Tourism Price Index	142.6	146.9	147.7	149.7	151.3	152.5	152.1	151.2	151.1	148.7	148.5	146.7	147.4	149.2
First Number of Months up to	9 months	9 months	10 months	11 months	12 months	1 months	2 months	3 months	4 months	5 months	6 months	7 months	8 months	9 months
Total Visitor Arrivals (persons)	109,503	123,033	133,852	147,008	163,323	19,241	35,562	50,405	64,928	76,411	100,432	114,187	123,231	134,394
Over the past year (%)	-1.0%	12.4%	10.5%	11.3%	11.6%	4.6%	7.5%	9.2%	11.2%	8.4%	10.1%	9.9%	10.7%	9.2%
Past 3 year average	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	3.6%	3.7%	8.7%	6.0%	5.2%	5.1%	5.1%	5.4%	5.3%	4.9%	5.2%
Past 5 year average	2.5%	2.5%	2.6%	2.1%	1.9%	4.6%	5.5%	5.0%	4.9%	5.0%	5.1%	5.3%	5.1%	5.3%
Arrivals, by market (persons)														
American Samoa	12,976	13,293	14,287	15,595	17,440	1,694	3,601	4,650	5,857	6,717	9,303	10,419	11,387	12,476
Australia	21,695	25,933	27,800	30,276	33,053	3,978	7,286	10,902	14,140	16,446	23,436	26,870	28,690	31,171
Europe	3,392	4,284	4,962	5,593	6,233	666	1,378	1,871	2,547	3,225	3,767	4,379	4,837	5,553
New Zealand	50,859	57,145	62,149	68,423	76,148	9,349	17,124	24,339	31,208	36,460	47,476	53,766	57,411	61,811
USA	7,327	9,288	10,118	11,193	12,844	1,866	2,946	3,824	4,846	5,754	7,178	8,040	8,634	9,615
Other Countries	13,254	13,090	14,536	15,928	17,605	1,688	3,227	4,819	6,330	7,809	9,272	10,713	12,272	13,768
Cruise ships	17,260	1,212	1,212	1,318	3,223	0	0	264	529	795	1,062	1,330	1,599	1,869
Arrivals, by purpose (persons)														
Holiday	43,014	53,632	57,834	60,194	64,734	5,964	13,815	20,781	27,569	31,786	41,141	45,996	48,259	52,197
VFR	37,430	42,495	46,599	54,683	63,465	8,495	14,101	19,187	23,934	28,272	39,845	45,428	48,883	53,961
Business & Conference	8,838	8,639	9,214	9,863	10,508	1,614	2,379	3,119	3,934	4,846	5,461	6,220	7,000	7,775
Sport	929	1,234	1,259	1,349	1,522	223	346	587	672	804	888	908	1,233	1,289
Other	19,292	17,033	18,946	20,919	23,094	2,945	4,921	6,731	8,819	10,703	13,097	15,635	17,856	19,172
Cruise ships	17,260	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Visitor Earnings (tala million)	284.9	335.3	366.0	410.3	454.2	48.3	94.5	137.5	180.2	216.9	287.6	323.3	347.2	380.2
Over the past year (%)	-1.3%	17.7%	15.2%	16.6%	17.2%	12.7%	16.1%	17.9%	18.9%	14.8%	16.0%	15.4%	15.3%	13.4%
Past 3 year average	5.9%	5.7%	5.7%	2.2%	5.9%	10.4%	5.1%	5.0%	6.0%	6.5%	7.1%	5.3%	4.0%	12.0%
Past 5 year average	2.9%	3.8%	4.9%	3.6%	1.1%	9.9%	8.5%	5.4%	7.4%	8.2%	7.8%	8.4%	6.1%	10.6%
Earnings, by market (tala million)														
American Samoa	24.5	24.7	27.4	32.0	36.4	3.8	7.4	9.1	10.8	12.4	18.8	21.2	22.2	24.5
Australia	70.8	87.1	93.7	101.7	110.5	10.2	21.6	33.1	45.7	56.2	80.6	91.0	97.8	106.8
Europe	3.5	4.8	5.6	6.2	6.8	0.5	1.3	1.8	2.4	3.3	4.1	4.7	5.2	6.1
New Zealand	135.4	157.7	172.7	195.5	214.7	23.6	47.4	69.1	90.5	107.7	137.2	153.5	162.8	175.4
USA	20.2	26.3	27.8	30.7	35.6	5.3	7.7	11.1	13.4	15.7	19.9	22.0	24.1	27.9
Other Countries	30.5	34.7	38.9	44.0	50.2	4.9	9.1	13.3	17.5	21.7	26.9	30.8	35.2	39.5
Cruise ships	2.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Earnings, by purpose (tala million)														
Holiday	111.8	146.5	158.0	165.7	177.7	14.3	36.9	58.2	74.3	84.8	111.3	124.8	131.1	142.6
VFR	112.6	128.4	140.6	171.9	199.3	25.8	43.6	59.1	75.8	96.6	132.8	149.2	158.2	172.8
Business & Conference	26.9	27.2	29.2	31.1	33.0	3.7	6.4	8.7	10.9	14.2	16.3	19.1	21.8	24.6
Sport	2.4	3.2	3.3	3.6	3.8	0.7	1.0	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.4	2.5	3.2	3.4
Other	31.2	30.0	34.9	38.1	40.3	3.7	6.7	9.7	17.3	19.1	24.8	27.8	32.9	36.8
Cruise ships	2.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

March 2019

Table 2.

INFLOW OF PRIVATE REMITTANCES

AMOUNTS IN TALA MILLION

Amount in Tala Millions	Mar-17	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19
		(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	(rev)	
By Recipient (Tala Millions)	32.30	44.49	41.88	49.34	40.18	40.55	48.12	37.30	40.85	40.02	65.61	39.67	40.12	55.63
Banknotes	3.16	5.62	6.28	8.16	7.04	7.63	7.46	7.88	6.70	5.70	12.44	4.19	4.62	5.66
Churches, school, Charities	0.30	6.15	7.06	6.44	5.65	1.82	6.40	1.85	2.86	3.22	5.52	6.40	5.94	11.44
Individual/Family/Households	27.97	31.70	27.29	33.57	26.27	28.97	31.37	25.88	29.80	29.96	45.47	28.28	26.27	31.92
In Kind	0.57	0.40	0.62	0.58	0.47	0.59	0.68	0.57	0.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.45	1.67
Others	0.30	0.62	0.63	0.59	0.75	1.54	2.20	1.13	0.75	1.14	2.18	0.81	1.84	4.94
By Country (Tala Millions)	32.30	44.49	41.88	49.34	40.18	40.55	48.12	37.30	40.85	40.02	65.61	39.67	40.12	55.63
USA	5.74	3.38	9.35	9.72	8.96	6.81	9.25	4.93	7.01	8.29	13.39	9.97	8.67	15.59
New Zealand	14.14	20.26	16.27	20.90	15.98	17.00	16.59	15.48	16.37	16.82	26.73	15.33	15.98	19.20
Australia	9.59	14.20	13.86	14.08	11.81	14.00	16.46	13.77	13.39	12.24	20.61	11.99	10.62	16.14
American Samoa	1.74	1.55	1.56	2.24	1.69	1.65	1.73	1.49	1.62	1.61	2.72	1.28	1.47	1.96
Others	1.09	5.11	0.84	2.39	1.74	1.09	4.08	1.64	2.46	1.06	2.16	1.10	3.38	2.75
By Channel (%)														
Banks	9.4%	19.8%	22.5%	17.3%	19.7%	14.0%	20.9%	11.5%	13.2%	14.0%	15.1%	20.7%	21.0%	32.5%
Non Banks (1)	90.6%	80.2%	77.5%	82.7%	80.3%	86.0%	79.1%	88.5%	86.8%	86.0%	84.9%	79.3%	79.0%	67.5%
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	32.30	44.49	41.88	49.34	40.18	40.55	48.12	37.30	40.85	40.02	65.61	39.67	40.12	55.63
First Number of Months up to	9	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months	months
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	302.58	356.86	398.74	448.08	488.26	40.55	88.67	125.97	166.82	206.84	272.45	312.12	352.24	407.87
Percentage Change (over same period last 3 year average (%))	3.2%	17.9%	20.0%	22.2%	21.0%	19.8%	25.8%	20.7%	16.6%	13.3%	15.9%	13.6%	12.8%	14.3%
5 year average (%)	-2.2%	0.8%	0.6%	0.7%	1.1%	2.2%	1.1%	2.0%	2.7%	3.5%	2.8%	3.6%	3.8%	4.9%
	1.5%	-1.1%	-0.9%	-1.0%	-0.8%	-1.0%	0.2%	1.0%	2.2%	2.0%	2.2%	2.2%	2.3%	2.9%
By Recipient (Tala Millions)														
Banknotes	37.50	45.02	51.30	59.47	66.50	7.63	15.09	22.97	29.68	35.38	47.82	52.00	56.62	62.28
Churches, school, Charities	8.70	33.47	40.53	46.97	52.62	1.82	8.22	10.07	12.93	16.15	21.67	28.07	34.01	45.45
Individual/Family/Households	241.77	260.41	287.69	321.27	347.53	28.97	60.34	86.22	116.02	145.98	191.45	219.73	246.00	277.93
In Kind	4.73	4.96	5.58	6.16	6.63	0.59	1.27	1.84	2.58	2.58	2.58	2.58	4.02	5.69
Others	9.88	13.00	13.63	14.21	14.97	1.54	3.74	4.88	5.62	6.76	8.94	9.75	11.59	16.53
By Country (Tala Millions)														
USA	47.13	60.23	69.58	79.30	88.26	6.81	16.06	20.99	28.00	36.29	49.68	59.65	68.32	83.91
New Zealand	126.35	146.75	163.02	183.92	199.90	17.00	33.59	49.06	65.43	82.25	108.97	124.30	140.28	159.48
Australia	101.82	118.02	131.88	145.96	157.77	14.00	30.46	44.22	57.62	69.86	90.47	102.46	113.08	129.22
American Samoa	13.32	12.10	13.66	15.90	17.59	1.65	3.39	4.87	6.50	8.11	10.83	12.11	13.58	15.55
Others	13.96	19.77	20.60	23.00	24.73	1.09	5.18	6.82	9.28	10.34	12.50	13.60	16.98	19.72

(1) Includes Money Transfer Operators (MTOs) and Foreign Exchange Dealers (FEDs)

(rev) - Remittances data starting from May 2017 up to December 2018 have been revised to reflect updates and amendments to the international transactions reported by commercial banks and money transfer operators.