

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

FEBRUARY 2020

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 for Revenue.

Report No.8: 2019/20

February 2020

Visitor Arrivals

Total Visitor Arrivals fell by 22.0 percent (or 1,991 visitors) to 7,053 visitors over the same month last year and it also recorded a seasonal decline of 32.5 percent (or 3,403 visitors) over the previous month.

As the border of restrictions on travel expanded to cover countries affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the establishment of a mandatory 14-day quarantine for in-coming passengers as part of its containment measures, the number of visitors to Samoa fell significantly.

The major decline in visitor arrivals over February 2019 was due to significant reductions in visitors from Samoa's main source markets:

- New Zealand (down 726 visitors)
- American Samoa (down 554 visitors)
- Others (down 382 visitors)
- Europe (down 151 visitors)
- USA (down 115 visitors)
- Australia (down 63 visitors)

By purpose of visit, substantial reductions were recorded for those who were from:

- Other (down 878 visitors)
- Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) (down 462 visitors)
- Sport (down 230 visitors)
- Business and Conference (down 229 visitors)
- Holiday (down 192 visitors)

As a result, total visitor arrivals in the first eight months of 2019/20 edged down slightly by 2.2 percent (or 2,693 visitors) to 120,538 visitors

compared to the same period last year. Significant decreases were recorded for New Zealand (down 5,496 visitors), American Samoa (down 2,643 visitors), Australia (down 1,346 visitors) and Europe (down 825 visitors). The number of visitors who were 'VFR', 'Holiday' and 'Other' all fell by 6,316 visitors, 1,997 visitors and 954 visitors respectively.

Total Visitor Receipts fell by 11.2 percent (or \$2.7 million) to \$21.3 million despite a slight increase in the average visitor expenditure over the same month in 2019 but was 25.1 percent (or \$7.1 million) less than the previous month.

However, total visitor receipts in the first eight months of 2019/20 increased slightly by 0.8 percent (or \$2.7 million) to \$349.9 million when compared to the same period last year. Underpinning this overall increase was higher earnings from Other Countries (up \$26.1 million) coupled with a \$0.1 million increase in USA, where by purpose, 'Business and Conference' and 'Sport' rose by \$15.6 million and \$6.4 million respectively.

The tourism price index was 3.3 percent higher than in February 2019 due to increases in 'Meals & Drinks', 'Miscellaneous', 'Family Obligations' and 'Other Transportation' sub-indexes.

Private Remittances

Total private remittances recorded a 9.5 percent (or \$3.7 million) increase to \$42.8 million over February

2019 but was 7.9 percent (or \$3.7 million) lower than the previous month.

Primarily contributing to the overall increase over the year was more funds received from Others' (up \$1.4 million) and New Zealand (up \$1.1 million) coupled with \$0.4 million increases each in Australia, USA and American Samoa. By recipient, increases were recorded for 'Family and Households' (up \$2.6 million), 'In-kind' (up \$1.1 million) and 'Others' (up \$0.5 million).

Total inflow of private remittances in the first eight months of 2019/20 increased by 4.4 percent (or \$15.5 million) to \$369.9 million over the same period last year. Largely responsible for the overall increase in the first eight months were gains in transfers from New Zealand (up \$15.1 million), Others' (up \$4.6 million) and American Samoa (up \$2.1 million). Partially contributing to the increase in remittances was a 2.4 percent depreciation of the Samoan Tala against the US dollar. By recipient, total funds for 'Family and Households', Non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH), 'In-Kind'

and 'Others' all increased by \$11.8 million, \$5.9 million, \$1.3 million and \$1.2 million respectively.

The share of remittance inflows over the year through money transfer operators (MTOs) contracted to 77.0 percent from 85.7 percent whilst funds received directly through the commercial banks rebounded to 23.0 percent from 14.3 percent.

The average cost of sending NZD\$200.00 to Samoa narrowed to 8.82 percent from 8.96 percent in February 2019 whereas the average cost of sending AUD\$200.00 to Samoa contracted to 6.73 percent from 8.13 percent in the same month of 2019.

CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA
15th April 2020

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Table 2.

INFLOW OF PRIVATE REMITTANCES

AMOUNTS IN TALA MILLION

Amount in Tala Millions	Feb-18	Feb-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20
By Recipient (Tala Millions)	37.58	39.13	53.45	47.06	38.34	42.24	42.30	57.24	46.49	42.83
Banknotes	4.15	4.62	9.47	4.85	4.40	2.85	2.79	11.03	12.36	4.30
Churches, school, Charities	5.99	5.94	8.78	4.73	2.22	5.03	5.07	5.98	3.13	5.85
Individual/Family/Households	25.25	26.27	33.00	35.66	28.57	32.28	32.50	37.99	28.95	28.86
In Kind	0.50	0.45	0.59	0.68	0.58	0.70	0.74	0.74	0.50	1.50
Others	1.68	1.84	1.60	1.14	2.58	1.37	1.19	1.51	1.55	2.33
By Country (Tala Millions)	37.58	39.13	53.45	47.06	38.34	42.24	42.30	57.24	46.49	42.83
USA	8.56	8.46	11.41	8.03	6.00	8.86	5.66	9.03	6.61	8.83
New Zealand	14.09	15.58	19.96	19.20	16.89	17.11	19.65	25.02	21.12	16.71
Australia	11.82	10.36	16.30	15.52	12.04	13.21	12.62	17.44	13.24	10.76
American Samoa	1.25	1.44	2.00	1.94	1.62	1.86	2.27	2.69	1.54	1.81
Others	1.86	3.29	3.77	2.37	1.78	1.19	2.09	3.06	3.98	4.72
By Channel (%)										
Banks	27.0%	21.6%	21.3%	15.3%	15.1%	17.9%	16.8%	15.5%	14.3%	23.0%
Non Banks (1)	73.0%	78.4%	78.7%	84.7%	84.9%	82.1%	83.2%	84.5%	85.7%	77.0%
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	37.58	39.13	53.45	47.06	38.34	42.24	42.30	57.24	46.49	42.83
First Number of Months up to	8 months	8 months	1st	2 months	3 months	4 months	5 months	6 months	7 months	8 months
	to Feb 18	to Feb 19	month	to Aug 19	to Sep 19	to Oct 19	to Nov 19	to Dec 19	to Dec 20	to Dec 21
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	312.37	354.43	53.45	100.51	138.85	181.09	223.39	280.63	327.11	369.94
Percentage Change (over same period last	15.6%	13.5%	31.8%	13.4%	10.2%	8.5%	7.0%	2.0%	3.7%	4.4%
3 year average (%)	0.0%	3.8%	6.7%	9.9%	8.6%	7.9%	8.7%	10.1%	10.6%	10.5%
5 year average (%)	-1.4%	2.3%	1.0%	3.5%	3.7%	4.0%	4.0%	5.3%	5.4%	5.8%
By Recipient (Tala Millions)										
Banknotes	39.41	56.62	9.47	14.33	18.73	21.58	24.36	35.39	47.75	52.05
Churches, school, Charities	27.32	34.91	8.78	13.52	15.73	20.77	25.84	31.81	34.94	40.79
Individual/Family/Households	228.70	246.07	33.00	68.66	97.22	129.51	162.01	200.00	228.96	257.81
In Kind	4.56	4.78	0.59	1.27	1.85	2.55	3.29	4.03	4.53	6.03
Others	12.38	12.05	1.60	2.74	5.32	6.69	7.88	9.40	10.94	13.27
By Country (Tala Millions)										
USA	56.85	68.49	11.41	19.45	25.45	34.31	39.97	49.00	55.61	64.44
New Zealand	126.49	140.58	19.96	39.16	56.05	73.16	92.82	117.84	138.95	155.66
Australia	103.82	113.35	16.30	31.82	43.86	57.08	69.70	87.14	100.38	111.14
American Samoa	10.55	13.61	2.00	3.95	5.56	7.42	9.69	12.38	13.92	15.74
Others	14.66	18.40	3.77	6.14	7.92	9.11	11.20	14.27	18.25	22.96

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

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