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PLEASE ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE
TO THE GOVERNOR

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

MAY 2023

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 Customs and Revenue.

Report No.11: 2022/23

May 2023

Visitor Arrivals¹

Total number of **visitor arrivals** grew for the third month in a row, rising by 14.6 percent (or 1,999 visitors) to a total of **15,719 visitors** when compared to the previous month.

The boost in visitor arrivals reflected usual events during the month of May such as the Mother's Day celebration and the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS) annual conference as well as one-off events such as the Catholic World Apostolic Congress On Mercy (WACOM) conference and the Samoa International Game Fishing (SIGFA) tournament. Also, contributing to this increase was the preparation of Motherland Concert and the closing and final activities of the year-long 60th Independence Celebrations.

By country, the hike in the number of visitor arrivals over April 2023 was due to increases in visitor arrivals from 'Other countries' (32.4 percent), USA (by 28.6 percent), Australia (by 15.9 percent) and New Zealand (by 13.9 percent). For arrivals by purpose of visit, improvements were recorded for those who were here for 'Business and conference' (up by more than twofold), 'Sports' (up by 50.2 percent), 'Other' (by 19.6 percent), 'Holiday' (by 8.3 percent) and 'VFR' (by 8.3 percent).

As a result, total international visitor receipts expanded by 25.6 percent (or \$12.5 million) to \$61.2 million over April 2023. This growth was mainly due to gains in the number of visitor earnings from New Zealand (up \$7.2 million), 'Other

Countries' (up \$2.9 million), USA (up \$1.8 million) and Australia (up \$0.8 million). Increases were also recorded for those who were here for Business and VFR, Holiday, Business & Conference and Sport, and all went up by \$7.2 million, \$4.5 million, \$2.2 million and \$0.7 million in that order.

Furthermore, total tourism earnings in the **first eleven months of FY2022/23²** amounted to **\$363.3 million**. Underpinning this increase were higher earning shares from New Zealand (at 45.5 percent), Australia (at 29.3 percent), 'Other countries' (at 11.3 percent), USA (at 7.4 percent), American Samoa (at 5.9 percent) and Europe (at 0.7 percent). By purpose of visit, 'VFR' was the main purpose of visit with 49.2 percent followed by 'Holiday' visitors at 30.0 percent while those who were here for 'Other' purposes, 'Business and Conference' and 'Sport' accounted for 13.5 percent, 6.5 percent and 0.9 percent in that order.

Remittances

Total inflow of private remittances rebounded by 51.4 percent (or \$25.7 million) over April 2023 and was 12.0 percent (or \$8.1 million) higher when compared to the same month of the previous year.

This improvement over the previous month was accounted for by increases in funds received from New Zealand (up \$9.5 million), Australia (up \$7.3 million), 'Others' (up \$6.7 million), USA (up \$1.2 million) and American Samoa (up \$1.1 million). In terms of recipients, hikes were recorded for 'Family and households' (up by \$11.9 million), 'Hand-carried cash' (up by \$8.1 million), 'Non-profit

¹ Samoa re-opened its border to international travelers on 1st August 2022. Cruise ship tourists are not counted as tourist as they are only in Samoa for a day but their spending is included as part of tourist earnings.

² Including July 2022 when Samoa was still in lockdown.

institution serving households' (NPISH)³ (up by \$6.0 million), and 'In Kind' (up by \$0.04 million).

In the **first eleven months of the FY2022/23** total inflow of remittances jumped by **14.9 percent (or \$98.2 million)** to \$758.4 million over the same period of FY2021/22. This overall increase highlighted expansions in remittance transfers from Samoa's main source markets such as New Zealand, Australia, USA, American Samoa and 'Others' and by \$38.3 million, \$37.9 million, \$16.3 million, \$2.9 million and \$2.7 million respectively. Partially contributing to this expansion was a depreciation of the Samoan Tala against the US dollar by 4.8 percent. By recipients, gains were noted for 'Hand carried cash' (by \$53.9 million), Individuals, Family & Households (by \$44.2 million) and 'NPISH' (by \$2.9 million).

The monthly share of total remittances received through Money Transfer Operators (MTOs) shrank to 78.3 percent from 83.6 percent when compared to May 2022 while funds received through commercial banks edged up to 21.7 percent from 16.4 percent.

The average monthly cost of sending NZD\$200.00 to Samoa shrank to 7.24 percent of total funds from 9.74 percent in May 2022 while the average cost of sending AUD\$200.00 to Samoa also fell to 6.27 percent from 6.89 percent when compared to the same month of the previous year.

CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA
10th July 2023

³ Includes funds for churches, non-profit organizations and charities

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

May 2023

Table 2. INFLOW OF PRIVATE REMITTANCES
AMOUNTS IN TALA MILLION

Amount in Tala Millions	May-21	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
By Recipient (Tala Millions)	53.34	67.63	72.20	83.06	72.26	69.24	62.59	74.58	94.51	55.08	56.55	64.72	50.03	75.74
Banknotes	0.29	2.24	3.54	3.26	3.86	4.80	5.13	6.99	6.29	4.15	5.64	3.90	4.01	12.15
Churches, school, Charities	6.31	3.83	5.61	1.85	2.82	0.28	1.27	5.72	4.35	0.56	2.12	2.67	0.85	6.82
Individual/Family/Households	45.43	60.16	61.38	76.50	62.94	61.99	54.66	60.40	82.09	48.88	47.56	56.81	43.30	55.17
In Kind	0.64	0.70	0.62	0.68	0.94	0.86	0.89	0.86	0.93	0.82	0.55	0.78	0.75	0.79
Others	0.67	0.69	1.05	0.76	1.70	1.31	0.64	0.62	0.84	0.68	0.68	0.57	1.11	0.81
By Country (Tala Millions)	53.34	67.63	72.20	83.06	72.26	69.24	62.59	74.58	94.51	55.08	56.55	64.72	50.03	75.74
USA	9.23	7.89	8.79	10.79	8.18	9.92	10.77	10.62	12.35	7.87	10.44	8.83	8.32	9.53
New Zealand	24.23	29.19	32.40	33.03	28.17	28.88	24.15	29.69	38.01	22.90	21.53	27.77	22.40	31.85
Australia	11.08	22.02	23.14	30.19	28.88	25.36	22.69	26.33	36.45	20.65	20.81	22.95	16.01	23.28
American Samoa	8.19	4.40	3.81	6.67	4.23	4.09	4.32	3.77	5.06	3.12	3.26	4.05	2.90	4.00
Others	0.61	4.13	4.06	2.38	2.81	0.99	0.65	4.18	2.65	0.54	0.51	1.12	0.40	7.09
By Channel (%)														
Banks	13.6%	16.4%	20.7%	12.6%	20.1%	17.6%	16.0%	20.7%	17.5%	8.7%	13.5%	14.0%	19.6%	21.7%
Non Banks (1)	86.4%	83.6%	79.3%	87.4%	79.9%	82.4%	84.0%	79.3%	82.5%	91.3%	86.5%	86.0%	80.4%	78.3%
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	53.34	67.63	72.20	83.06	72.26	69.24	62.59	74.58	94.51	55.08	56.55	64.72	50.03	75.74
First Number of Months up to	11 months to May 21	11 months to May 22	12 months to June 22	1st month	2 months to Aug 22	3 months to Sep 22	4 months to Oct 22	5 months to Nov 22	6 months to Dec 22	7 months to Jan 23	8 months to Feb 23	9 months to Mar 23	10 months to Apr 23	11 months to May 23
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	555.13	660.23	732.43	83.06	155.32	224.56	287.15	361.73	456.25	511.33	567.88	632.60	682.63	758.37
Percentage Change (over same period last year)	7.7%	18.9%	20.7%	55.5%	40.0%	36.6%	23.1%	20.1%	20.0%	20.5%	18.5%	18.4%	15.2%	14.9%
3 year average (%)	12.3%	7.4%	7.5%	10.7%	7.9%	9.4%	12.0%	13.0%	11.6%	10.5%	10.7%	9.5%	9.9%	10.1%
5 year average (%)	6.4%	9.3%	9.3%	10.4%	10.0%	10.0%	11.7%	12.3%	12.4%	11.8%	12.2%	12.2%	12.4%	12.7%
By Recipient (Tala Millions)														
Banknotes	5.49	6.21	9.75	3.26	7.13	11.92	17.06	24.05	30.34	34.49	40.13	44.02	48.04	60.19
Churches, school, Charities	38.49	26.46	32.06	1.85	4.67	4.96	6.23	11.95	16.30	16.86	18.98	21.65	22.51	29.32
Individual/Family/Households	488.47	606.08	667.46	76.50	139.44	201.43	256.09	316.49	398.59	447.46	495.02	551.83	595.13	650.30
In Kind	6.09	8.96	9.58	0.68	1.62	2.47	3.36	4.22	5.15	5.97	6.51	7.29	8.04	8.83
Others	16.59	12.51	13.57	0.76	2.47	3.78	4.42	5.03	5.88	6.56	7.24	7.81	8.92	9.73
By Country (Tala Millions)														
USA	79.81	91.31	100.10	10.79	18.97	28.89	39.66	50.27	62.62	70.50	80.94	89.77	98.09	107.61
New Zealand	235.88	270.08	302.48	33.03	61.20	90.07	114.23	143.92	181.93	204.83	226.36	254.13	276.53	308.38
Australia	172.08	235.66	258.79	30.19	59.07	84.43	107.12	133.45	169.90	190.55	211.37	234.32	250.33	273.61
American Samoa	44.22	42.58	46.38	6.67	10.91	15.00	19.32	23.09	28.14	31.26	34.52	38.57	41.47	45.48
Others	23.14	20.60	24.66	2.38	5.18	6.18	6.83	11.01	13.65	14.20	14.70	15.82	16.22	23.30

(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.