

PRESS RELEASE
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Travel industry calls for urgent introduction of Pacific Island travel bubble

Travel agents are urging for the introduction of international travel bubbles as New Zealand continues to wait in limbo for the country's borders to reopen.

A recent survey* conducted by insurance provider, Allianz Partners New Zealand found that 97% of New Zealand travel agents believed a Pacific Island bubble was critical for tourism and for the tourism industry.

Hopes of a Pacific travel bubble were dashed in early August with the resurgence of the virus in New Zealand.

Supporting our Pacific neighbours, who rely heavily on tourism, was cited as the most important aspect for agents for the bubble, who predict an influx of bookings to the Islands once restrictions allow.

Allianz Partners New Zealand Chief Sales Officer, David Wallace, agrees with agents' sentiment saying that now more than ever we need to support the travel industry both here and abroad.

"A travel bubble would be the best thing to happen in the worst situation. It would allow Kiwis an escape from a time that has been difficult as well as supporting the industry. However, we understand that until we have certainty that we have eliminated the virus from New Zealand, we will not see a Pacific bubble as we can't risk it making its way over to our Pacific neighbours."

Travel agents agreed (95%) that the Pacific Islands provided the perfect escape for Kiwis with warm, sunny weather and a relaxing atmosphere and all just a short flight from New Zealand.

Once borders allow, agents cited specific advantages to booking with a travel agent rather than online with 97% suggesting the biggest advantage to booking with a travel agent is having someone to call if something goes wrong.

Janine Mallon from The Travel Brokers Dunedin says, "It's invaluable to have an agent to research the minefield that is international travel right now and to provide clients' support throughout the complex process."

Other agents agreed that they provided value to the consumer in the form of expert advice, strong supplier relationships with international tourism providers, and convenience.

Despite no indication of when New Zealand's borders will re-open and an incredibly challenging seven months, three quarters of agents surveyed remained optimistic about the future.

ENDS

Notes to the Editor

A survey on travel to the Pacific Islands was distributed on 10 August 2020 to travel agents that distribute Allianz Partners New Zealand policies, including but not limited to: First Travel Group and YOU, Helloworld, House of Travel and The Travel Brokers. Results of the survey was based on a sample size of 184 responses.

About Allianz Partners New Zealand

Based in Auckland, we specialise locally in providing and managing assistance services, travel insurance, event insurance, student insurance and pet insurance through our New Zealand and international business partners. Our strength lies in combining the solidarity and trust that comes with being part of an established global organisation with the local expertise of our New Zealand team.

For more local information, please visit: <http://www.allianzpartners.co.nz/>

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