



STATISTICS OFFICE

Ministry of Finance, P O Box G6, Honiara, Solomon Islands

Telephone: [677] 27835, 23951; Fax: [677] 23775

Emails: stats_mof@mof.gov.sb; dkimie@mof.gov.sb

Please address all correspondence to the GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN

Press Release

Monday 27th May 2024

Visitor Arrivals in 2023 showed first annual surge since COVID-19

There was a total of 25,996 Visitor Arrivals to the Solomon Islands in 2023, showing the first annual surge in visitor arrival numbers since the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

Deputy Government Statistician Samson Kanamoli released the report over the weekend saying the bulletin further showed an increasing trend in visitor arrivals since 2021, rebounding from the contraction in 2020.

“An increase of visitors from 737 in 2021 to 7,323 in 2022 was a clear recovery of the number of visitors into the country since the travel restrictions were imposed by the government at the beginning of July 2022.

“An increase of 255.0 % was recorded in 2023 from 7,323 visitors in 2022.”

Mr Kanamoli said visitor arrivals account for more than half (54.1%) of the total arrivals in 2023. This was followed by Returning Residents with 45.3% and Intending Residents with less than 1% of the arrivals.

Arrivals by category showed that Returning Residents and Visitors made up the largest proportion of all arrivals since 2015.

During the COVID era in 2021, both categories showed a vast decline but recovered significantly after 2021 and increased to more than 99.4% in 2023. Intending Residents have declined from 1.6% of all arrivals in 2021 to 0.6% in 2023.

An increase in visitor arrivals was evident for all countries by residence in 2023 compared to 2022 arrivals.

Australians remain the largest group of visitors to the Solomon Islands (33.4%) with a figure of 8,688 in 2023. This number more than doubled

with an increase of 175.5% in the number of Australian visitors compared to 2022 with a figure of 3,154.

Residents from other Pacific Countries recorded the next largest group of visitors with 11.9%, followed by Papua New Guinea (9.1%), Fiji (8.8%), New Zealand (6.9%) and United State of America (6.8%).

The most common purpose for visiting Solomon Islands in 2023 was visiting for Other Reasons. This accounted for 40.8% of all visitors by common purpose or 10,612 arrivals. This was followed by Holiday and Vacation 24.2% or 6,297 visitors, Business and Conference 20.8% or 5,397 visitors, Visiting Friends and Relatives 11.0% or 2,863, and Transit and Stopover 3.2% or 827.

A total of 7,124 tourists travelled to Solomon Islands in 2023 and spent an average of 14 days by frequency of visit in the country.

Top 10 Country of Residence for tourists visiting Solomon Islands in 2023 were from Australia who recorded the highest proportion (2,976 or 41.8%) of tourist. This was followed by United State (973 or 13.7%), Papua New Guinea (535 or 7.5%), Other European Countries (427 or 6.0%), Other Asian Countries (419 or 5.9%), Fiji (309 or 4.3%), New Zealand (291 or 4.1%), China (288 or 4.0%), Vanuatu (190 or 2.7%) and United Kingdom (150 or 2.1%).

Visitor arrivals by broad age group showed that the majority of visitors were in the age range 25 to 44 years in 2023. This accounted for 38.6% of arrivals or 10,026 visitors. This was followed by the age group 45-64 years with 8,935 (34.4%) visitors.

The youngest age group (less than 25 years) made up 17.5% or 4,547 of visitors, while the elderly age group 65 years and over recorded 2,330 visitors, representing 9.0% of visitor arrivals.

Distribution of visitors by gender showed more male visitors visiting Solomon Islands than female visitors. Male visitors recorded 17,245 which showed more than half of total visitor arrivals (66.3%) compared to females with 8,751 visitors that represented 33.7% of total visitor arrivals.

Visitors who were engaged in Professional and Technical showed the highest percentage of occupation (48.5%) in 2023.

This was followed by visitors who worked as Administration and Managerial (14.0%), No Work (12.2%), Service Worker (6.2%), Other Occupation (4.9%), Production and Related Work (4.7%), Student (3.4%), Clerical & Related Work and Sales Worker (2.4%), Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (1.1%) and not stated (0.2%).

Ends with two tables and 1 chart.///

Table 1: Arrivals by Category: 2015 to 2023

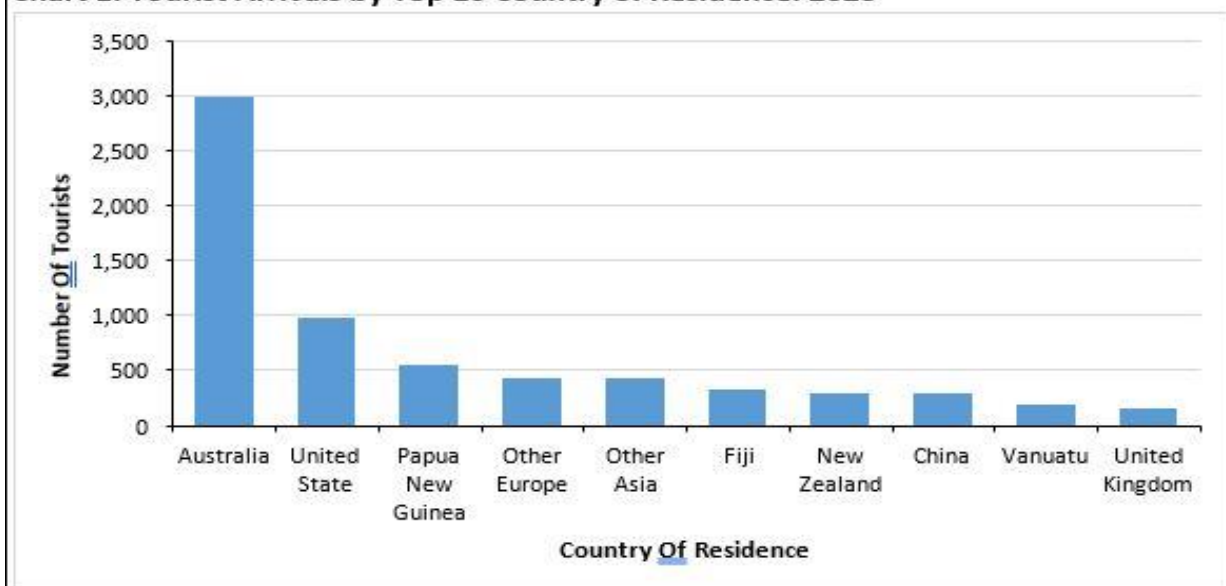
Year	Returning Resident	Intending Resident	Visitors	Total
2015	19,244	2,953	21,623	43,820
2016	22,298	1,256	23,194	46,748
2017	26,408	706	25,709	52,823
2018	28,227	345	27,866	56,438
2019	26,774	360	28,930	56,064
2020	6,202	93	4,440	10,734
2021	2,030	44	737	2,811
2022	10,460	164	7,323	17,947
2023	21,790	287	25,996	48,073
Percentage Change (%)				
2015-2016	15.9	-57.5	7.3	6.7
2016-2017	18.4	-43.8	10.8	13.0
2017-2018	6.9	-51.1	8.4	6.8
2018-2019	-5.1	4.3	3.8	-0.7
2019-2020	-76.8	-74.3	-84.7	-80.9
2020-2021	-67.3	-52.4	-83.4	-73.8
2021-2022	415.3	272.7	893.6	538.5
2022-2023	108.3	75.0	255.0	167.9

Table 2: Visitor Arrivals by Country of Residence: 2021 to 2023

Country of Usual Residence	2021		2022		2023	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGES (%)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGES (%)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGES (%)
Australia	337	45.7	3,154	43.1	8,688	33.4
PNG	46	6.2	451	6.2	2,356	9.1
US	7	0.9	667	9.1	1,777	6.8
NZ	126	17.1	437	6.0	1,795	6.9
UK	1	0.1	98	1.3	323	1.2
Japan	21	2.8	168	2.3	391	1.5
Germany	0	0.0	25	0.3	109	0.4
Canada	0	0.0	62	0.8	181	0.7
Oth. Pacific	2	0.3	203	2.8	3,105	11.9
Vanuatu	2	0.3	167	2.3	837	3.2
Hong Kong	0	0.0	6	0.1	27	0.1
Fiji	53	7.2	606	8.3	2,295	8.8
Other Asia	50	6.8	692	9.4	1,714	6.6
Netherlands	0	0.0	16	0.2	31	0.1
Oth. Europe	1	0.1	163	2.2	737	2.8
France	1	0.1	90	1.2	24	0.1
Italy	0	0.0	29	0.4	21	0.1
China	83	11.3	205	2.8	1,265	4.9
Oth. Country	7	0.9	84	1.1	320	1.2
Not Stated	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	737	100.0	7,323	100.0	25,996	100.0

Source: Solomon Islands' National Statistics Office

Chart 1: Tourist Arrivals by Top 10 Country of Residence: 2023



Source: Solomon Islands National Statistics Office, Annual Visitor Arrivals 2023

- **SINSO Media**

-