

# Christchurch International Airport Australian Roadshow 2022 Report

**Destination Queenstown**

PO Box 353, Queenstown 9348, New Zealand  
+64 3 441 0700

## 1. Overview

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SOUTH, a focused group of the South Island's 15 regional tourism organisations working collaboratively with Christchurch International Airport and other industry partners to grow international tourism to the South Island.

Lead by Christchurch International Airport, Destination Queenstown were invited to participate in three Australian events in Sydney, Melbourne & Brisbane to launch The New Zealand Snow Highway to the travel sellers' market, specifically those engaged in selling Ski destination products.

This SOUTH initiative, the New Zealand Snow Highway\*, was developed by the gateway to the South Island, Christchurch Airport, in partnership with three key regional tourism organisations – Christchurch NZ, Mackenzie Region and Destination Queenstown.

The New Zealand Snow Highway starts in Christchurch, before heading south to New Zealand's favourite ski and snowboard area Mt Hutt, meandering through the McKenzie's ski areas and Mt Cook before ending in Queenstown the South's heart of snow sport with its famous four areas of Coronet Peak, The Remarkables, Cardrona and Treble Cone.

*"We showcased the New Zealand Snow Highway to nearly 200 ski travel specialists across Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. They were excited – saying it's fresh and new and will be popular with Australians wanting to embrace the ski season after two years of closed borders."*

*"A key highlight of the New Zealand Snow Highway is the opportunity to ski the Tasman Glacier on Mount Cook – that really captures imaginations and it's great to be able to shine a light on some of our unique snow experiences," says Scott Callaway.*

## 2. Market background

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Australia is New Zealand's largest international visitor market, previous accounting for over 40% of all international visitors and of those international arrivals to New Zealand that were coming to ski, 71% of those were Australian. Pre-COVID, around 20,000 Australians would cross the Tasman to ski in the South Island.

Australia's close proximity and strong relationship with New Zealand continues to drive consideration and arrivals. Tourism New Zealand's work in Australia aims to jolt consumer apathy to get the Australian market generating volume and value growth.

Prior to Covid- 19:

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- Australian visitors contributed 1.5M (40%) arrivals annually and spent \$2.7b in New Zealand in 2019
- 71% of Australians opted for self-drive holidays in New Zealand
- Visitors from Australia returned to New Zealand 3-4 times in their lifetime providing a big opportunity to increase regional dispersal and 'touring' activity to increase bookings for smaller regions
- Seasonally, Australian holiday arrivals were balanced throughout the year. They made up 27% of holiday arrival – but over winter this jumped to 43%
- Travel agents were the most preferred way to book a holiday in Australia, with 49% of Australians booking their New Zealand holiday via traditional methods

Impacts of Covid-19 on Australians' travel intentions:

- According to Tourism New Zealand's research on the impact of Covid-19 on the intentions to travel, over 77% of Australians who are actively considering travelling to New Zealand will come to holiday, with 28% wanting to visit family and 18% to visit friends
- 60% of Australian active considerers are willing to come to New Zealand within six month of borders re-opening
- Of these, 20% are both willing to come to New Zealand within 6-months and have New Zealand as their first preference
- Based on Tourism New Zealand scenario modelling it could take up until January 2023 for Australia to reach 80% recovery to pre-COVID 19 levels

Additional market insights from TNZ:

- Consumer apathy is a key challenge in the market that is tackled with improved relevancy and brand cut through from Tourism New Zealand
- TNZ key target audiences in Australia are Vibrant Adventurers (younger, adventurous, risk takers) and Experienced Connectors (older, open-minded traditionalists, confident travellers looking for new experiences).
- Summer has the highest peak for Australian holiday visitors, but marketing by Tourism New Zealand and other industry players has helped make New Zealand a popular year-round destination.

All figures above are supplied by Tourism New Zealand. [Click here for more Australian visitor insights.](#)

### 3. Event Overview

Event Objectives:

- To show partnership support for SOUTH collective led by Christchurch International Airport

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- To connect directly with Australian Ski wholesalers and front-line travel sellers that are recognised for selling ski products
- To share the wider “Home of Winter” message to market with key messaging of both on mountain and off mountain experiences in Queenstown

#### Event Structure:

- Sydney – 11 May, Hilton Sydney  
*Presentation and networking event.*
- Melbourne – 17 May, Hotel Chadstone  
*Presentation and networking event.*
- Brisbane, 19 May, Emporium Hotel  
*Networking lunch event.*

To encourage attendance, all three events were hosted by Winter Olympian Nico Porteous and offered opportunities to win prizes supplied by the sponsors/partners.

At both Sydney and Melbourne events, SOUTH partners were invited to present on their offering/region along the Snow Highway. As requested by SOUTH and in complement to over presentations, Destination Queenstown presented on the four accessible mountains (Coronet, Remarkables, Treble Cone & Cardrona) as well as sharing key messaging on off mountain winter activities and experiences in Queenstown.

Unfortunately, due to sickness, Jana Kingston was unable to present at the Melbourne event.

## 4. Attendance

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Christchurch International Airport invited product managers, retail travel agents, wholesale travel agents and online travel agents that are engaged in selling New Zealand winter products. Over the three events, the following companies had representation attend:

#### Sydney Event (47 attendees):

NZ Snow Adventures (OzSnow), Travelplan Ski, Travel Managers, Halo Sport, Host, Trip Advisor, Get Your Guide, Worldstar Travel, AGL Travel, American Express Travel, My Dream Adventures, Helloworld, Travel Partners, Nifty Nev Tours, ANZ Sky Tours, Travel The World, Elsewhere Travel, Savino, The Travel Junction, Personal Travel Manager, Out and About Travel, Travel Managers, ittravel-surry hills, Razortel Pty Ltd and Day Star Travel.

#### Melbourne Event (22 attendees):

Travel Managers, Go West Travel, Travel Manager, Helloworld Mt Waverley, Travel Plan Ski, Grand Pacific Tours, Skimax, Travel Managers, Where2Travel, Flight Centre Chadstone and Acland Travel

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Brisbane Event (21 attendees):

ANZCRO (Ski Express), Sno 'n Ski, Fusion Holidays, Snowscene, Flight Centre, Travel Associates

Lead by Christchurch International Airport, SOUTH partners of The Rees, Helicopter Line, ChristchurchNZ, Mackenzie Country, Mt Hutt & NZSki, Mid Canterbury region, Air New Zealand and Luxury Escapes were present across the three events.

## 5. Summary

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In complement to the re-connection made during the Tourism New Zealand Regional Showcase in Sydney the week prior, supporting this activity in market not only showed a united New Zealand front, but also gave Destination Queenstown the opportunity to connect with a wider footprint of Australian travel sellers, especially those focused on the ski market.

Christchurch International Airport did a wonderful job in pulling together the three events and in supplying the opportunity to get back into market with borders being open and to showcase the South Island, and Destination Queenstown as a key destination for any winter holiday package.

By connecting with frontline agents such as brokers from Travel Managers and Flight Centre, the insight was reinforced that although the borders had only recently opened to New Zealand, such agents were already experiencing time pressures and commented on the heavy workload they are experiencing while they are still only part-time. Although attending event such as this is one of their favourite parts of their role, dedicating their limited time to attended is, and will continue to be, increasingly difficult.

Insight through networking was revealed the reality of how competitive the travel industry will be in recovery. Not only are we already seeing this in the marketing and media space, but one agent from Travel Managers also expressed that while her next trip was meant to be New Zealand, that has now been postponed as Alaskan cruises offered her an all-inclusive 10-day cruise package for two by simply completing a 45-minute webinar training module. Incentives such as this will make attracting the attention of travel sellers increasingly difficult and hard to compete with.

As one of the first “product launch” roadshows from New Zealand into the Australian market since the it was a huge success considering and another great opportunity for Destination Queenstown, in support of the other partners, to get the Home of Winter messaging directly into market at in person events.

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## 6. Related content

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### Media coverage:

<https://www.christchurchairport.co.nz/about-us/who-we-are/media/2022/olympic-gold-medalist-launches-new-zealands-powder-highway-to-aussie-ski-bunnies/>

<https://karryon.com.au/community/drive-ski-and-board-new-zealands-epic-powder-highway-this-winter/>

<https://www.routesonline.com/airports/2385/christchurch-airport/news/298131/olympic-gold-medallist-launches-nzs-powder-highway-to-aussie-ski-bunnies/>

<https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK2205/S00609/olympic-gold-medalist-launches-new-zealands-powder-highway-to-aussie-ski-bunnies.htm>

*\*Originally named New Zealand Powder Highway, this name was changed post events.*

### Event Images:



Snow Highway Sydney launch event – 11 May



Sarah McDonald presenting at Sydney Launch event – 11 May

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Brisbane Event – 19 May



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