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## NZX / MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT



### TOURISM HOLDINGS CALLS FOR COMPULSORY EMISSIONS TESTING OF ALL RENTAL AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT VEHICLES

The steps by the Government to reduce air pollution by prohibiting the import of old and inefficient petrol and diesel engines is being welcomed by the leading tourism industry operator, Tourism Holdings Limited.

From early January some imported used vehicles will have to meet the new standards before being permitted on New Zealand public roads.

Tourism Holdings' Chief Executive Trevor Hall says the steps announced by the Government are positive but there needs to be much more stringent action to protect New Zealand's biggest foreign exchange earner.

"Our reputation as a tourist destination is based on the great outdoors – great experiences, great scenery and clean air. But there are operators who are spoiling that advantage, and price gouging by using old vehicles that frankly should not have been permitted to enter the country."

"These operators either do not recognise the harm they are causing or do not care. The sub-standard product they are providing reflects poorly on New Zealand's image."

Mr Hall says the Government needs to go further and hasten the introduction of compulsory emissions testing for all commercial and rental vehicles used in the tourism industry.

"The existing visual standards clearly lack sufficient rigour. Ultimately it is the jobs and incomes of New Zealanders which are at stake as well as our health. European tourists in particular are seeking holidays that can deliver great experiences with a low environmental impact."

THL has already gone much further than the new Government standards required by developing a voluntary annual emissions standards regime with Vehicle Testing New Zealand for all motorhome rentals in its fleet.

"THL can proudly say that most of its vehicles will be amongst the lowest emitting in the world. We urge the Government to urgently regulate to bring all existing vehicles used by the tourism industry to the same standard."

"Further, by focusing on the elimination of high greenhouse-gas polluting vehicles from the national commercial fleet will have a positive impact on air quality and also halt the transition of these vehicles to private use."

Creating a sustainable business that respects the environmental expectations of customers has been a key focus for THL for the last 12 months.

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In addition to working with VTNZ on emissions standards for its fleet the group has spent \$50 million on new Mercedes Benz vehicles for its Maui motorhome fleet. The diesel powered cab and chassis units comply with tough Euro 4 emission standards and are 95 per cent recyclable.

The company has also moved its Caravan and Motorhome manufacturing facility to new premises in Hamilton to embrace sustainable manufacturing.

Further, the creation of a joint venture with InterCity Group to own and operate THL's coaching operation Great Sights and the maritime activities of Fullers Bay of Islands will result in annual savings of tens of thousands of litres of diesel and consequent emissions.

"These are significant steps to reduce the group's carbon footprint and create sustainable businesses. The protection and enhancement of New Zealand's reputation as a premier tourist destination need the active engagement of all operators. They also need the firm hand of Government to bring into line those whose selfish neglect can damage the interests of us all."

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Editor's note:

Tourism Holdings Limited is New Zealand's premier tourism company with extensive operations in Australia and Fiji. Operations include car and motorhome rentals in Australia and New Zealand, a specialist caravan and motorhome manufacturing company in Hamilton and transport and tourism activities in the Bay of Islands, Auckland, Waitomo and Milford Sound. Tourism Holdings is listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange under the ticker code THL.

Further details on [www.thlonline.com](http://www.thlonline.com)