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International Border Crossings: Total border crossings remain down in first half of 2004; but overseas market returns

- Total border crossings into Ontario decreased by 0.6% over the first half of 2003 and by 18.4% over the first half of 2002. Total overnight crossings increased by 15.8% over the first half of 2003, but decreased by 7.7% over the first half of 2002.
- Border crossings from the U.S. dropped by 2.0% over the first half of 2003 and by 19.6% over the first half of 2002. U.S. overnight crossings increased by 13.8% over the first half of 2003, but decreased by 9.6% over the same period of 2002.
- Border crossings from overseas countries increased by 27.5% over the first half of 2003 and by 4.2% over the first half of 2002. Overnight border crossings by residents of overseas countries increased by 26.9% over the first half of 2003 and by 3.3% over the first half of 2002.
- Travel by Ontario residents to the U.S. and overseas countries increased by 4.1% in the first half of 2004 over the same period of 2003 and by 4.6% over the same period of 2002.

Special Topic: Tourism in the Ottawa Region

This article is the third in a series that will highlight a tourism region in Ontario. The following provides a profile of visitors to Ottawa Region, which includes Ottawa-Carleton Regional Municipality (Census Division 6).

In 2002 (the latest statistics available from Statistics Canada) Ottawa Region received 7.3 million person visits, which represents a 3% decrease over 2001. Ontario as a whole received 129.9 million person visits in 2002, a 3% growth over 2001. Ottawa Region received 6% of total person visits in 2002.

Of the 7.3 million visitors to Ottawa Region, 87% were Canadians (of which 62% were Ontario residents travelling to or within the region), 7% were Americans and 6% were from overseas countries. These visitors spent \$1.3 billion in the region in 2002 or an average of \$177 per person visit. Residents of Ottawa Region spent an additional \$589 million on Canadian carrier fares to travel outside of the region.

Over one-third (35%) of visitors primarily travelled to Ottawa Region for a pleasure trip compared to 42% of the total visitors to Ontario. Visiting friends and/or relatives was the primary reason for travelling to Ottawa Region for 35% of visitors in 2002 compared to 34% for Ontario as a whole. Business was the primary reason for visiting Ottawa Region for 15% of total visitors to the area.

Visitors to Ottawa Region were very active participating in an average of 2.7 activities per person trip to the region. The top activities in 2002 were visiting friends and/or relatives (57%), shopping (48%), sightseeing (28%), participating in sports or outdoor activities (19%) and visiting museums and art galleries (17%).

Visitors from overseas countries stayed in the region for an average of 5.2 nights, while Americans stayed for an average of 1.9 nights and domestic visitors for an average of 1.3 nights. Americans and Canadians tended to stay in Ottawa Region longer than they did in the province as a whole with average stays of 1.0 and 1.1 nights, respectively.

Americans visited Ottawa Region, on average, in groups of two (1.8 persons), as did Americans that travelled to Ontario as a whole (2.1 persons). Meanwhile, domestic visitors to Ottawa Region travelled, on average, in smaller groups (1.5) and to Ontario as a whole travelled, on average, in groups of 1.7 persons.

International Border Crossings into Ontario APRIL TO JUNE AND JANUARY TO JUNE 2004 PERCENT CHANGE OVER SAME PERIODS OF 2003

	April 2004	May 2004	June 2004	Jan-June 2004
Total U.S.	5.8%	4.0%	3.7%	-2.0%
Overnight U.S.	39.4%	27.2%	15.3%	13.8%
Total Overseas	25.2%	79.3%	45.3%	27.5%
Overnight Overseas	23.1%	81.8%	45.6%	26.9%
Total International	6.9%	7.5%	6.2%	-0.6%
Overnight International	36.4%	34.6%	19.6%	15.8%

Source: Statistics Canada

Accommodations: Hotel occupancy rates increase by 5 percentage points in first six months of 2004

Occupancy and Average Daily Rates—January to June 2004

Market	Occupancy Rate		Average Daily Rate	
	Q1&2 2004	% point ch*	Q1&2 2004	% ch**
Greater Toronto Area	62.1%	9.5	\$123.14	3.7%
Downtown Toronto	65.7%	13.1	\$146.52	3.5%
Toronto Airport	70.5%	11.9	\$111.45	1.2%
GTA West	58.8%	5.4	\$101.94	2.1%
GTA East/North	53.4%	5.7	\$104.96	2.6%
Eastern Ontario	52.5%	1.4	\$92.77	3.9%
Kingston	56.0%	0.2	\$103.95	5.3%
Other Eastern Ontario	50.6%	1.9	\$86.19	2.8%
Ottawa	62.0%	-1.3	\$122.34	-1.9%
Downtown Ottawa	65.0%	0.0	\$129.71	-2.1%
Ottawa West	51.9%	-3.7	\$107.90	2.0%
Ottawa East	58.4%	-3.1	\$90.45	0.6%
Southern Ontario	51.9%	2.1	\$102.36	6.1%
London	63.1%	7.9	\$96.59	4.8%
Windsor	55.6%	-4.1	\$102.18	-2.4%
KW/Cambridge/Guelph	58.2%	-0.8	\$93.50	2.3%
Hamilton/Brantford	56.9%	1.3	\$93.59	2.6%
Niagara Falls	46.9%	5.7	\$117.92	9.8%
Other Niagara Region	40.7%	-4.9	\$84.67	4.4%
Other Southern Ontario	46.5%	1.5	\$87.80	-2.2%
Central Ontario	45.7%	-2.8	\$118.13	1.4%
North Eastern Ontario	60.9%	1.8	\$79.88	-0.2%
North Bay	55.9%	-0.2	\$83.00	-1.6%
Sudbury	59.3%	-4.1	\$84.80	1.4%
North Central Ontario				
Sault Ste Marie	49.2%	-5.1	\$83.40	1.9%
North Western Ontario	62.7%	-1.9	\$87.05	1.8%
TOTAL ONTARIO	58.1%	4.7	\$114.17	3.5%

- Hotel occupancy rates in Ontario reached 58.1% in the first six months of 2004 (January to June), an increase of 4.7 percentage points over the same period of 2003, but a 1.4 percentage point decrease over the same period of 2002.
- The overall average daily rate increased by 3.5 percentage points in the province to \$114.17 over the first six months of 2003, but decreased by 1.0 percentage points over the same period of 2002.
- Downtown Toronto's hotel sector experienced the largest increase in occupancy rate (13.1 percentage points), while 'Other Niagara Region' (does not include Niagara Falls) experienced the largest drop in occupancy (-4.9 percentage points).
- Toronto Airport hotels experienced the highest occupancy rate (70.5%) in the first six months of 2004, an increase of 11.9 percentage points over the same period of 2003. Downtown Toronto hotels experienced the highest average daily rate (\$146.52) in the first six months of 2004, an increase of 3.5 percentage points over the same period of 2003.
- Revenue per available room (RevPar) reached \$66.29 in the province during the first six months of 2004, a 12.7 percentage point increase over the same period of 2003. The highest RevPar was achieved in the Downtown Toronto area (\$96.19) and the lowest in Other Niagara Region (\$34.42).

The table at left outlines actual occupancy and average daily rates for several different markets across the province for the first six months of 2004.

* percentage point change

** percent change over same period of 2003

Data based on PKF's unweighted sample, which tends to be branded properties of 30 rooms or more. Source: PKF Consulting Inc.

Ontario Travel Information Centres (TICs) Visitation down in January to July period of 2004

- Visitation to Ontario Travel Information Centres (TICs) increased by 1.8% in July 2004 over July 2003. April 2004 and July 2004 are the first months in which TICs experienced an increase in visitation since August 2001.
- However, visitation remained down in the first seven months of 2004 (-0.3%) over the same period of 2003.
- Of the 18 TICs across Ontario, only 7 experienced increases in visitation during the January to July period of 2004.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation

State of the Domestic Tourism Industry

While Ontario's tourism industry relies on various markets from around the world, the domestic market makes up the vast majority of visitation to and within the province. For example, of Ontario's 130 million person visits in 2002, 78% of these visits were made by Canadian residents. Ontario residents as a source market for tourism becomes even more important when we consider that 94% of the total domestic person visits in Ontario were made by our own residents in 2002 and in 2003.

Look back over the last four years...

In 2003, there were 91.3 million domestic person visits to/within Ontario, a decrease of 10% over 2002 and 4% over 2000. Ontario residents travelling within the

province decreased, as did visitors from other provinces.

During the first quarter of 2004 total domestic travel to/within Ontario increased by 9% over the same period of 2003. Compared to the first quarter of 2002, domestic travel to/within Ontario decreased by 6%.

What does the future hold?

The Ministry's tourism forecasting model (last output was in December 2003) indicated that domestic tourism in the first quarter of 2004 should increase by 12% over the same period of 2003, but decrease by 3% over the same period of 2002.

It is important to note that changes in attitudes toward travel since 9/11 have been documented in the MTR Travel

Intentions surveys, but are not fully incorporated into the forecasting model. The survey indicates that approximately 20% of Canadians surveyed no longer take overnight trips to any destination and approximately 30% now take fewer overnight trips. Similarly, planning cycles for travel have changed. When Canadians were asked if they make their travel plans closer to the departure date, nearly 50% indicated yes. For short trips (1 to 3 nights), 59% of Canadians indicated that they book 1 to 2 weeks prior. For longer trips (4+ nights), 56% indicated that they book about 1 month prior to the trip. The changes in attitude toward travel and trip planning cycles will continue to have an impact on travel to and within Ontario in the years to come.

Visitor Inquiries

Web site user sessions up, toll-free number inquires down

- In July 2004 there were nearly 260,000 user sessions on www.ontariotravel.net, an increase of 61.0% over July 2003.
- In the first seven months of 2004, user sessions reached over 1.3 million, an increase of 53.6% over the same period of 2003.
- There were over 55,000 inquiries to 1-800-ONTARIO in July 2004, a decrease of 9.8% over July 2003.
- Total inquiries to 1-800-ONTARIO decreased by 5.2% in the first seven months of 2004 over the same period of 2003.

Source: Electronic Data Solutions

What's New

New Research and Publications

The fourth wave of the Travel Intentions Study in Canada and the U.S. will be available on our web site at www.tourism.gov.on.ca in mid-September 2004. This study tracks where and when travel has been planned and if respondents do not plan to travel, the reasons for not travelling are tracked. The study also looks into how Ontario is perceived as a destination to Americans and Canadians.

The launch of the new Regional Tourism Profiles web-based tool developed by the Tourism Research and Industry Competitiveness Unit was delayed and MTR apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused. The launch is scheduled for late September 2004 on www.tourism.gov.on.ca. The Regional Tourism Profiles tool provides detailed tourism statistics, including economic impact data, on a census division level, travel region level and for the province as a whole.

At the request of the Tourism Federation of Ontario, the Tourism Research and Competitiveness Unit is conducting a

study into the impact of rising costs on the accommodation industry's bottom line. This report will be completed in the Fall of 2004 and will be available through the MTR web site.

The next version of the Travel Activities and Motivations Study (TAMS) will soon be underway! Organizations from across Canada have partnered once again to conduct this very valuable study of the Canadian and American market. The study will be completed in 2006. Current TAMS reports can be found at <http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/tourdiv/research/reports.htm#TravelActivities> and include in-depth market reports on the live theatre market, golfers, and the touring market to name a few.

Upcoming Conferences

Canada's Restaurant and Foodservices Association will hold its annual 'HostEx' conference and trade show on October 17-19, 2004 at the Toronto International Centre. A meeting for members will be held on October 18. Please visit www.crfa.ca for more information.

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Canada's National Parks and Recreation Association's annual conference will be held October 20-23, 2004 in Halifax. Please visit www.cpra.ca for more information.

Canada's Tourism Leadership Summit (formerly called the National Conference on Tourism), organized each fall by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, is an important opportunity for tourism industry leaders and stakeholders from across Canada to plan for success—by obtaining current information, networking, exploring new opportunities, and discussing ways to meet current and emerging challenges in key areas. This year's event will be held in Whitehorse, Yukon, from October 24-26, 2004. Please go to www.tiac-aitc.ca for more information.

FOBBA, the Federation of Ontario Bed and Breakfast Accommodation, will hold their Annual General Meeting on November 1 and 2 in Haliburton. For more information, please visit the website, www.fobba.com or contact Pam Smith at info@meadowwoodbb.com.

The **Ontario Motorcoach Association** will hold their Annual Conference, Marketplace and Silent Auction on November 7, 2004 at the Sheraton Downtown Toronto. Please visit www.omca.com for more information.

Ontario Private Campground Association will hold its 36th Annual Conference on November 21-24, 2004 at the Waterloo Inn & Conference Centre. Please visit www.campingontario.ca for more information.

Eco-North 2004 Éco-Nord, a tourism conference and trade show to foster sustainable nature-based, heritage and cultural tourism activities in Northern Ontario, will be held on November 24 to 27, 2004 in Thunder Bay. In addition, the following organizations will be holding their general meetings at the conference, the Northern Ontario Native Tourism Association, Northern Ontario Travel Associations Programs, Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters Association, operating as Nature and Outdoor Tourism Ontario, North of Superior Travel Association and

Destination Nord. Please visit www.eco-north.ca for more information.

The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council will be holding their 4th Annual Tourism HR Forum on November 26 to 27, 2004 in Ottawa. Please visit www.cthrc.ca for more information.

Useful Web Sites

MTR Tourism Monitoring web page:
www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/tourdiv/research/monitor.htm

Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership:
www.tourismpartners.com

Canadian Tourism Commission:
www.canadatourism.com

Statistics Canada: www.statcan.ca

TTRA Canada: www.ttracanada.ca

TTRA International: www.ttra.com

Tourism Investment in Ontario:
www.2ontario.com/tourism

World Tourism Organization—
www.world-tourism.org

US Department of Commerce, Tourism Industries: <http://tinet.ita.doc.gov>

Visit our website, www.tourism.gov.on.ca, for information on the industry's current performance, as well as historical trends and statistics.



Questions? Suggestions

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