

MEDIA RELEASE

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Renewed efforts to manage vehicle camping

Renewed efforts are being made to improve vehicle-based camping as we head into the peak travel season, with a refreshed educational campaign being launched this week.

Campers are being urged to stay in holiday parks, Department of Conservation (DOC) camping grounds or other designated areas this summer. Posters and vehicle stickers highlighting this message have been sent to 300 holiday parks, 32 campervan operators, 27 DOC visitor centres, 89 i-SITE visitor centres, 54 youth hostels, 78 councils and seven international airports.

Cook Strait ferry operators Interislander and Bluebridge are also getting in on the act, and will be distributing 15,000 leaflets with camping information to passengers driving campervans and similar vehicles.

Interislander Sales & Marketing Manager Gavin Rutherford says the company is right behind the freedom camping campaign. "The trip across Cook Strait is an ideal opportunity to reach out to travellers and direct them towards camp grounds in the Wellington and Marlborough regions. We want to help all visitors enjoy their time in New Zealand."

Bluebridge General Manager Peter Ellison says: "We recognise this is a New Zealand-wide issue and we wanted to help make a difference."

Forum Chairman and Tourism Industry Association (TIA) Advocacy Manager Geoff Ensor says the New Zealand Freedom Camping Forum has been working hard to achieve the best possible management of camping around the country.

"We are delighted at the support we are receiving for this campaign, from the government, councils, communities, rental vehicle operators and other interested parties."

The renewed campaign has been developed with funding from the Ministry of Economic Development's Tourism Strategy Group, and the following private sector partners:

- Holiday Accommodation Parks Association of NZ

- *thl*
- KEA Campers
- Spaceships
- United Campervans
- Escape Rentals
- Jucy Rentals
- Pacific Horizon Campervans

Local Government New Zealand is also making progress with the development of legislation establishing a national instant fine system that councils will be able to use to better enforce freedom camping rules in their areas. More than 20 councils have indicated they will support the legislation, Mr Ensor says.

In addition, as a result of a request by the Freedom Camping Forum, Police are translating the 'Keeping Safe as a Visitor in New Zealand' brochure www.police.govt.nz/safety/visitors.html into four languages (Spanish, French, Dutch and German).

The brochure and other relevant camping information is available at www.camping.org.nz

"The Forum is keen that campers continue to be welcomed and enjoy good experiences in our regions," Mr Ensor says.

- The New Zealand Freedom Camping Forum was convened by TIA in December 2007 in response to concerns about the impacts of freedom camping in some regions. Membership includes representatives from rental vehicle operators, local government, tourism organisations and central government. For more information, visit www.camping.org.nz

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