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MEDIA RELEASE

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International Visitors Hit Town in Droves

Tourism organisation Latitude Nelson is encouraging visitors to book in advance, as the industry feels the heat of summer demand.

Large numbers of tourism operators are currently working to capacity and the Nelson i-SITE Visitor Information Centre has been full to bursting this week.

Latitude Nelson CEO Paul Davis said the region's accommodation and activities operators were benefiting from a bumper February.

“Operators here tell us late January was a bit quieter than usual so this will certainly even things out a bit. This is great news for Nelson as restaurants and retail businesses will be seeing the benefits as well.”

Waiting times at the Nelson i-SITE were averaging 14 minutes versus the usual five minutes, he said.

“Late booking patterns are creating last minute pressure to find accommodation as visitors arrive in town at the end of the day. We are encouraging them to plan well ahead and make bookings to avoid queues and disappointment.”

The visitor surge is proving the worth of the new queuing system installed when the centre was rebuilt.

“It means visitors can come in, grab their queue number from the machine, then wander around and look at brochures, maps or online information. They don't have to waste time holding their spot in a line. And if visitors have a choice, the best time to avoid queues at the i-SITE is early morning”

Staff had stayed on board an extra two hours on Sunday evening to meet demand, Mr Davis said.