

Anguilla: Tourism Summary Data March 2003

While the total number of visitors in March was up from the previous month, when compared to March 2002, the total number of visitors declined 19.8%. This decline is partly because Easter occurred in March last year and was in April this year, so the number of visitors in April is likely to show some strengthening. The decline was mainly from weaker excursionist numbers but the number of tourists was also weak. Moonsplash that took place in March this year, failed to attract the numbers that it has done in past years.

The number of visitors in March was 10,808, which was the lowest number for March since 1996. To date 30,165 persons have visited Anguilla, a 9% drop from 2002. The reality of the war with Iraq and the elevated security levels in the U.S and throughout the world are prompting persons to stay closer to home. In addition the slowing of economic activity in the U.S. Anguilla's main source of visitors, is having an impact.

There were 5,878 excursionists who visited Anguilla in March, a 24% decline from March 2002. March 2002 was when the number of excursionists first started to show growth. Both Blowing Point and Sandy Ground received fewer excursionists this march than last but the decline was much more for Sandy Ground, which saw less than half in March 2003 compared to 2002

A number of small cruise vessels have been making one-day calls to the port of Sandy Ground for some time now. Data for this type of visitor have not been recorded previous to 2003. In January 2003, four vessels made calls with a combined total of 453 passengers, while in February 3 vessels made calls with a total of 269 passengers and in March 5 vessels called with a total of 660 passengers.

Tourist arrivals in March declined by 13.5% compared to the previous year. Arrivals totaled 4,930 compared to 5,702 in March of 2002. Just over 40% of the persons visiting stayed for a period of two weeks or more, while a just over a third stayed 4-7 days and 14% stayed for 1-3 days.

Canada and Italy saw the largest increase in arrivals to the island. Visitors from these countries increased by 85.2% and 108% respectively compared to March last year. Canada was the only source country experiencing an increase in 2002 compared to 2001. March 2003 saw a 15.2% decline in arrivals from the island's major source market, which is the United States of America. Arrivals from this market have been slightly on the decline since 2001.

While the United States continued to weaken as a source for visitors, they do represent 71% of all tourists. Germany and Canada increased their market share in March 2003 compared to the previous year.