



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

PERRY JOHN P. TENORIO
MVA MANAGING DIRECTOR

For Immediate Release-April 5, 2013

For further information, contact:
Perry John P. Tenorio, Managing Director
Marianas Visitors Authority
Telephone: (670) 664-3200/3201 Facsimile: (670) 664-3237
mva@mymarianas.com
www.mymarianas.com

NMI February 2013 Visitor Arrivals Up 6%

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – February 2013 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) were up 6 percent compared to February 2012. According to the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA), arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 38,350 visitors in February compared to 36,332 in February 2012.

Arrivals from Japan in February dipped slightly to 14,883 visitors, 3 percent lower than last year, partly because of the leap year in 2012 which meant February last year had an extra day. Also, the 8 percent depreciation in value of the Japanese yen so far this year makes the NMI a more expensive destination for Japanese travelers as compared with last year.

Arrivals from Korea fell 19 percent in February to 10,098 visitors. Key Korean travel agents indicate that the key reason for the year-on-year decline in Korean arrivals was primarily due to the high occupancy of NMI hotels during the Lunar New Year and peak winter charter flights to Cebu, Cambodia, Phuket and others short-flight time destinations. Asiana Airlines continues to operate charter flights from Korea twice weekly using an Airbus 330 with 290 seats for the winter season from Jan. 10 to Mar, 29.

Meanwhile, arrivals from China rose 74 percent in February to 10,776 visitors due to the fact that the Lunar New Year this year fell in February while in 2012 it fell in January. This is the first time in history that Chinese arrivals to the NMI have exceeded 10,000 Chinese visitors

in a given month. In conjunction with Century Tours, DFS Saipan, and other key China travel agents, the MVA China office launched a large-scale billboard, subway advertising, PR and travel trade campaign in February in support of the Beijing flights and also targeting the post-Lunar New Year low season.

Arrivals from Russia more than doubled in February, registering a 114 percent increase in arrivals to 786. With the launch of bi-weekly direct charter flights from Vladivostok to Saipan in late October, arrivals from Russia are up 59 percent this fiscal year and are anticipated to continue rapid growth with the March launch of weekly charter flights from Khabarovsk, Russia.

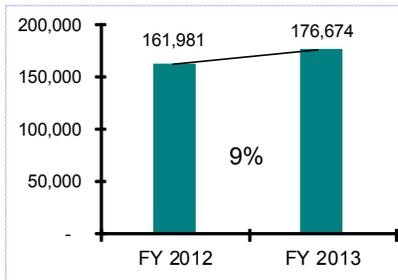
Japan, Korea and China Economic Highlights

The Japanese Cabinet Office's monthly economic report maintained the same overall assessment in February that it had in January: the economy is bottoming out. The value of the yen dropped for most of February as investors watched the Japanese government and Bank of Japan come together to battle deflation. According to Japan Tourism Marketing Company, if the yen weakens to 100 to the US dollar, it could have some psychological effect, but the current rate is not yet a major travel deterrent.

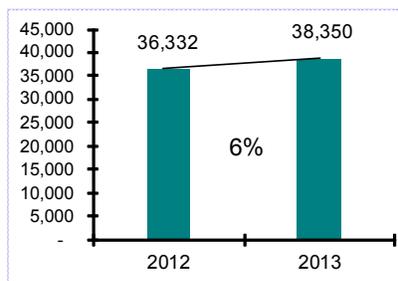
The Korean economy showed sluggishness in domestic demand, mainly due to weaker investment, while Korea saw continuing improvement in production and exports. Amid overall stability of the domestic financial market, the won depreciated slightly. In January, the won depreciated 1.1% against the dollar, despite the depreciated value of the yen.

The United States has launched a new application policy for non-immigrant visa applicants from China, promising better customer service and lower costs. The new policy, which was scheduled go into effect on March 16, offers greater convenience for applicants scheduling visa interviews, completing visa processing procedures and checking their visa status. Visa applicants will only have to pay a standard processing fee of about \$160 for most non-immigrant visa categories. China's Foreign Exchange Trading System reported the renminbi, or yuan, weakened 23 basis points to 6.2816 against the U.S. dollar on February 18. A combined study by China Outbound Tourism Research Institute and Rossetto Solutions estimates China will become the No. 1 global outbound tourism source market in 2013 with 90 million border-crossings.

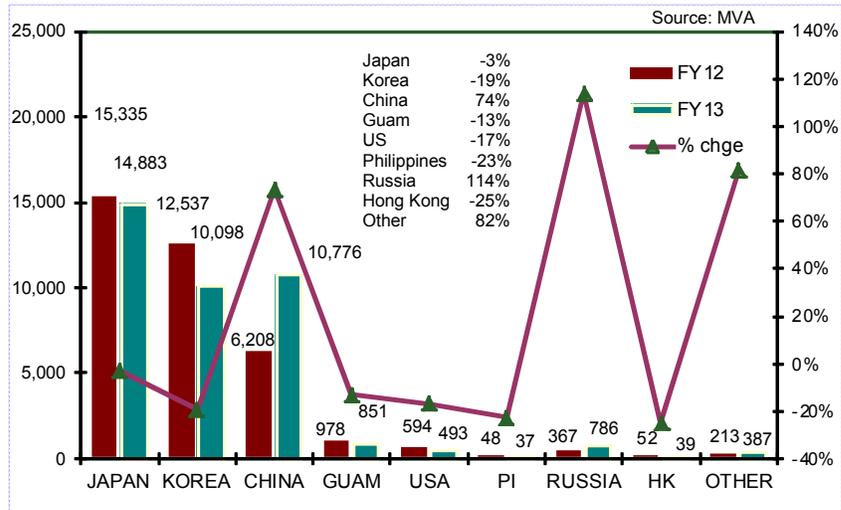
**Visitor Arrivals Year to Date
FY 2012 vs. FY 2013**



**Visitor Arrivals
Feb. 2012 vs. Feb. 2013**



**CNMI Source Market Arrivals
February 2012 vs. February 2013**



*Note: Effective July 2011, Taiwan section has been replaced with Hong Kong.

The Northern Mariana Islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are a chain of idyllic islands in the West Pacific, offering a friendly, fun and exciting vacation in paradise. They are an excellent destination for families, adventure and sports-minded travelers, as well as business people looking for a tropical haven. Adventurous travelers from Asia, Australia, Europe and elsewhere looking for new travel discoveries will find them in the Mariana Islands, just three hours travel from most cities in Japan, and four from Asia and Australia. The Northern Marianas are served from Tokyo and Osaka in Japan by Delta and Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana provides direct flights from Seoul and Busan. United Airlines has daily flight connections from nine cities in Japan to Saipan via Guam. United States mainland connections can be made by United Airlines to Saipan via Guam, and Delta Airlines from the west coast to Saipan via Narita. For more information visit www.mymarianas.com.

###