

WTTC urges US to invest more

INVEST heavily in travel and tourism infrastructure or lose out on jobs and economic contribution for the country, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) warns the US. A new WTTC report says the poor quality of the country's ground transport infrastructure could see the country fail to meet its demand growth predictions, lose ground to other advanced economies and miss out on social and economic benefits from travel and tourism.

David Scowsill, WTTC president and CEO, says, "The US does not rank favourably for 'tourism supporting' infrastructure, to transport tourists domestically and internationally. This is compared to other advanced economies within Asia and continental Europe. Roads, especially in the major cities, are heavily congested. Rail networks are slow, compared to their high speed equivalents in other countries. Flight delays and cancellations are common, with inadequate air traffic control infrastructure. No domestic or international tourist wants to spend time in road traffic jams or in lines at airports. Major improvements are needed."

The US is the biggest tourism economy in the world. According to WTTC's 2014 US Economic Impact Report, the total contribution of travel and tourism to gross domestic product was 8.4 per cent (\$1,416 billion) and visitor exports generated 8.4 per cent of total exports (\$190.1 billion) in 2013, (including direct, indirect and induced). ■