

# PANAMA TOURISM OFFICE REPORTS 3.6% DECLINE IN STAFF



Panama tourism industry employs fewer people. The decrease of 3.6% was revealed in a recent report by the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic.

Some 1,116 fewer jobs were recorded from January to December 2015 when they totaled 29,998, compared with 2014 when they amounted to 31,044, representing a reduction of 3.6%.

**According to the report, Panama tourism staff received 0.9% smaller salaries in 2015.** In 2014 the wages for tourism personnel amounted to \$312.4 million while last year it was only \$309.5 million.

The president of the country's Chamber of Tourism, Antonio Alfaro said that hotel jobs have been lost due to the lack of promotion of the country brand, so they are working very closely with the Panama Tourism Authority, but marketing takes time.

'We must promote green Panama, where we have a lot to offer and it is one of the products most sought after by tourists,' stated the president of the Chamber of Tourism.

Meanwhile, the president of the Panama Tourism Commission of the Association of Business Executives, Alfredo Motta, said the government should also consider building an amphitheater to attract more concerts to the country.

According to figures from the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic, **the hotel occupancy fell 13% over the last four years in the Panamanian capital.** In 2011, the hotel occupancy was 65%, 59% in 2012, 57% in 2013, 56% in 2014, ending at 52% in 2015.

There has been an increase in the number of hotel rooms due to increased investment in new hotels however. In 2015 five hotels of prominent international chains were opened, providing some 821 new rooms.

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