



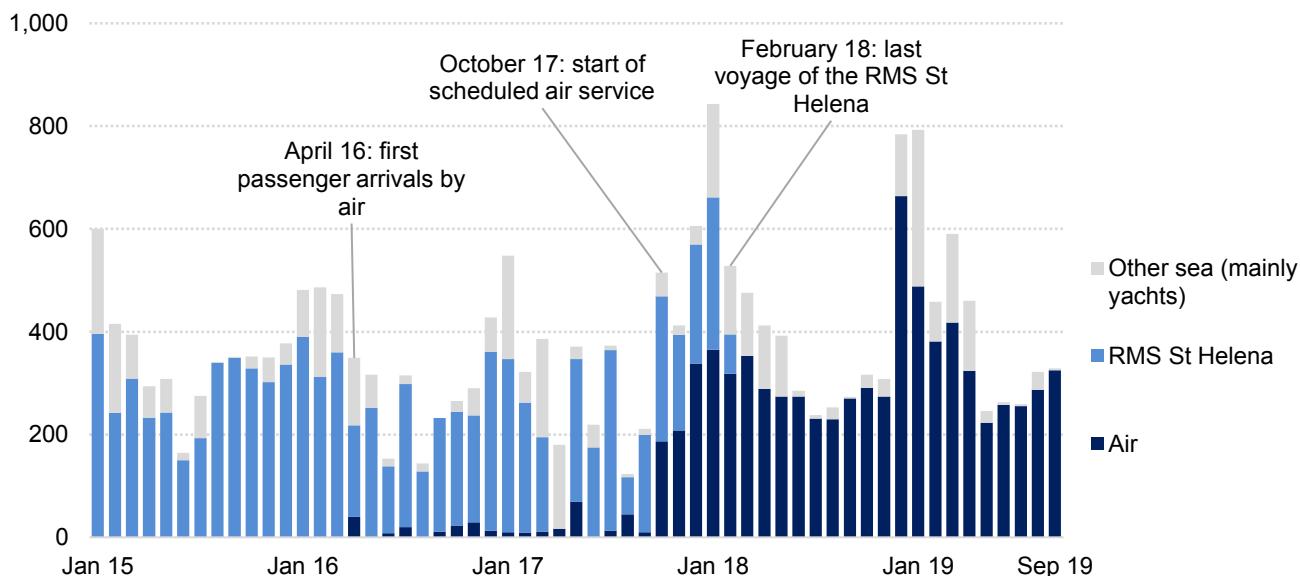
In this Bulletin: passenger arrivals and departures

This bulletin provides a brief commentary on the trends in passenger arrivals and departures to and from St Helena, with a focus on air transport since the start of St Helena’s first scheduled air service in October 2017. It uses the statistics on passenger arrivals and departures that are compiled and released by St Helena’s Statistics Office on a monthly basis, in the file ‘Population.xls’ on the St Helena Statistics website at: www.sainthelena.gov.sh/statistics-data.

Arrivals to St Helena

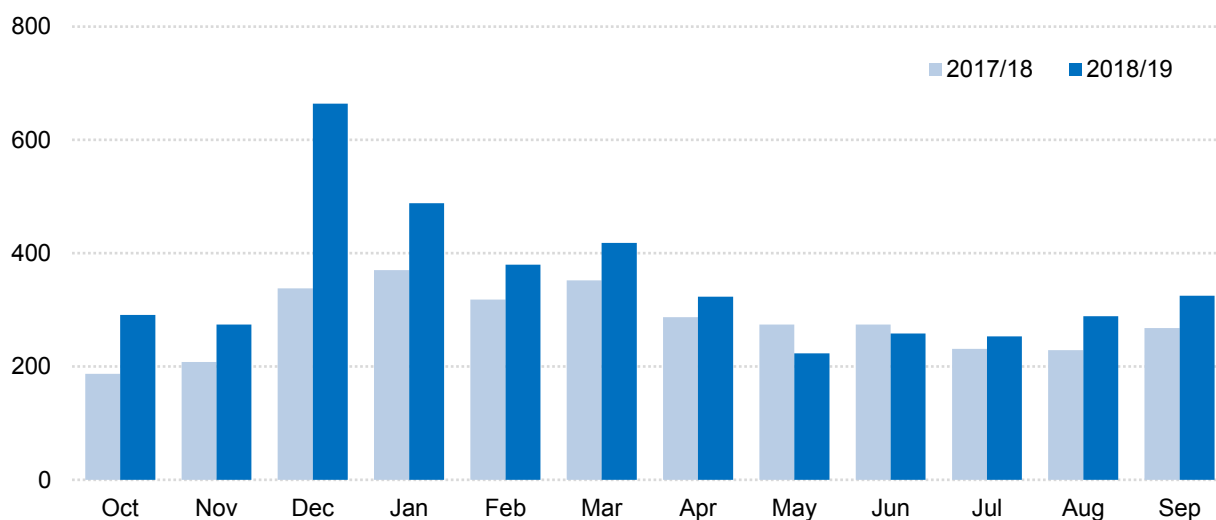
Chart 1 illustrates the trend in passenger arrivals as St Helena’s new air service replaced the RMS St Helena shipping service. Between January 2010 and March 2016, just before the first 40 people arrived by air in April 2016, the average number of arrivals per month by sea (excluding day visitors arriving on cruise ships) was 307, with an average of 245 arriving on the Royal Mail Ship (RMS) St Helena. Between October 2017, when the first scheduled air service began, and September 2019, an average of 432 passengers arrived per month, with 314 of those passengers arriving by air. Chart 1 also shows the seasonal nature of arrivals to St Helena, with the peak corresponding to the warmest months of December to April each year.

Chart 1. Passenger arrivals to St Helena, January 2015 to September 2019 (excluding day visitors on cruise ships)



Since October 2017, a total of 7,525 people have arrived by air: 3,337 in the first 12-month period and 4,188 in the second. The increase in the second year follows the introduction of a mid-week flight during the peak period of December 2018 to April 2019 (Chart 2). Arrivals by air were higher in the second year in every month apart from May and June.

Chart 2. Passenger arrivals to St Helena by air, October 2017 to September 2019



More than half of these arrivals (4,007) came for a leisure purpose, with 2,135 tourists and 1,872 St Helenians visiting family and friends (Chart 3). 1,706 people arrived for business or employment, and 1,644 were residents returning to the Island after a short period away. A further 165 arrivals were in transit, usually either to join or leave sea transport – note that passengers transiting to Ascension Island on the regular monthly flight are not included in the count of transit arrivals, since they do not complete immigration processes and enter St Helena (note that there were three arrivals where the purpose of visit is not specified).

Chart 3. Purpose of arrivals to St Helena by air, October 2017 to September 2019

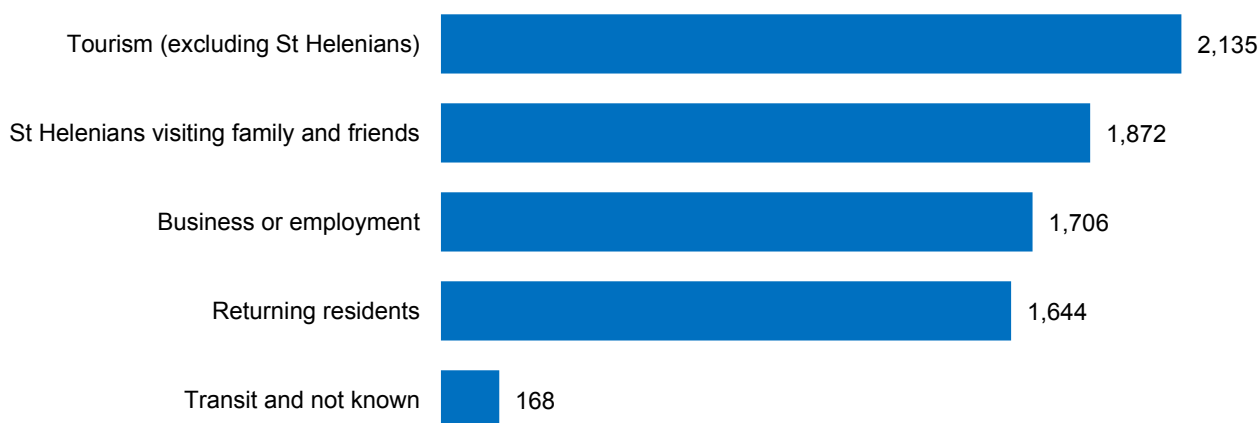
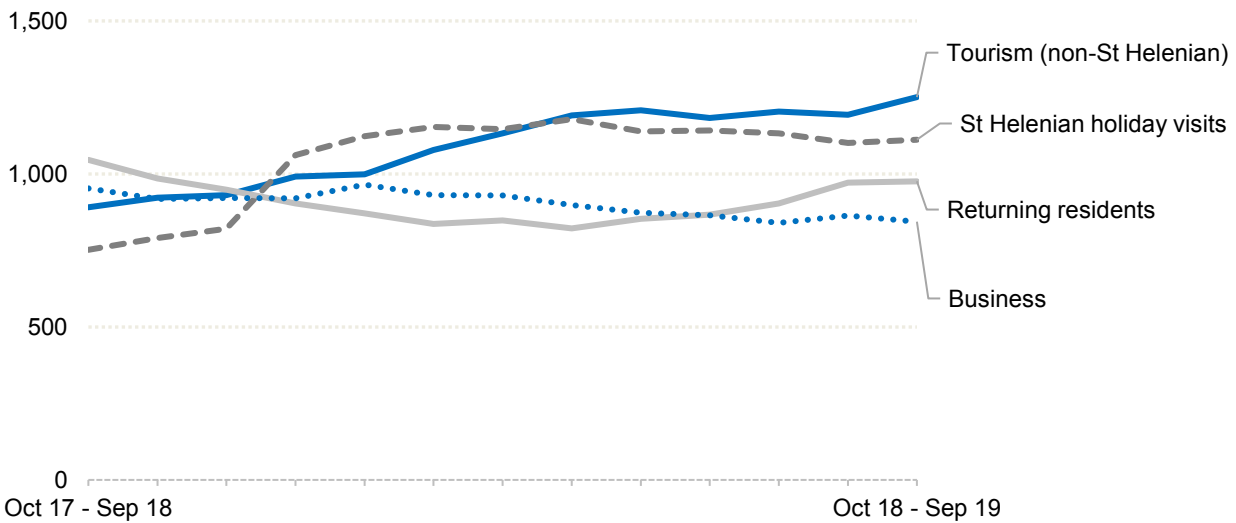


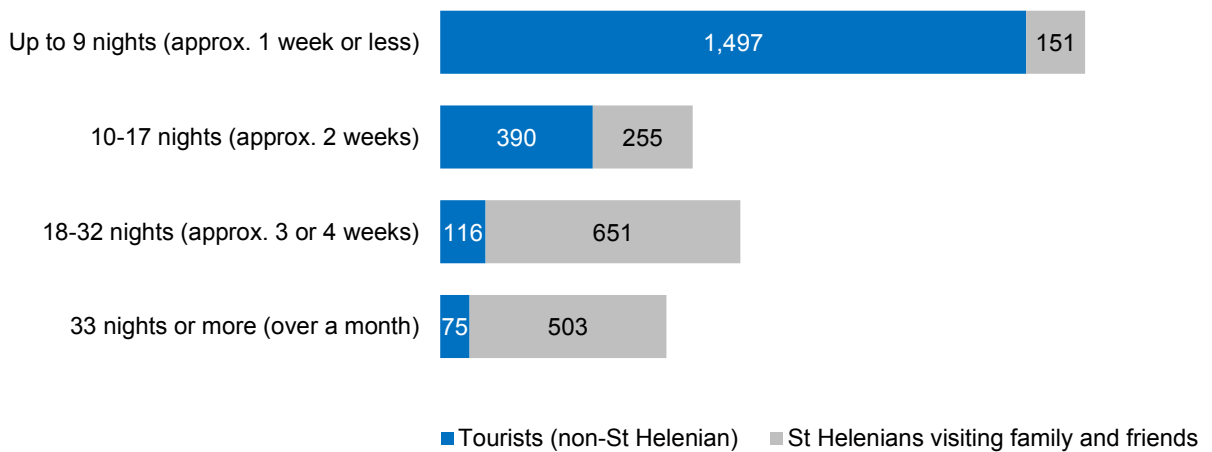
Chart 4 shows the trends in the purpose of arrival of air passengers, using a ‘rolling’ 12-month total to remove the seasonal pattern. During the first year of scheduled services, returning residents and arrivals for business and employment were the most common categories, but during the second year, the most common categories of arrivals were for leisure, both tourists and St Helenians visiting family and friends.

Chart 4. Trends in 12-month totals of arrivals by air by purpose of visit



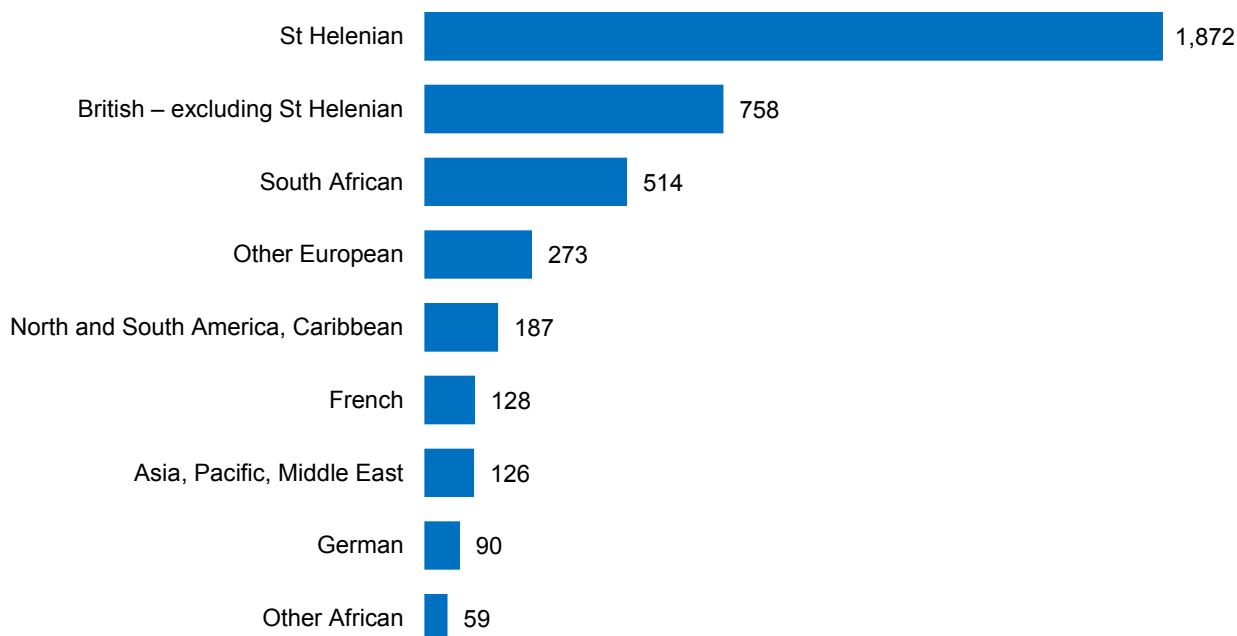
Leisure visitors who arrived by air and who left the Island between October 2017 and September 2019 spent a total of 71,051 nights on St Helena altogether, with St Helenians visiting family and friends spending twice as many nights as tourists (47,639 nights compared to 23,412). This is because St Helenians visiting family and friends tend to stay longer on St Helena, typically around a month, compared to non-St Helenian tourists, who typically stay around a week or two (Chart 5).

Chart 5. Length of stay of those leaving St Helena between October 2017 and September 2019 who arrived by air



Of all passengers arriving by air for a leisure purpose, the largest group by nationality was St Helenian. British and South African are next, comprising the majority of non-St Helenian tourists visiting by air. Non-St Helenian tourism arrivals by air are generally dominated by Europeans and South Africans; only 372 tourists, over the two year period, had a different nationality (Chart 6).

Chart 6. Nationality of leisure visitors arriving by air between October 2017 and September 2019



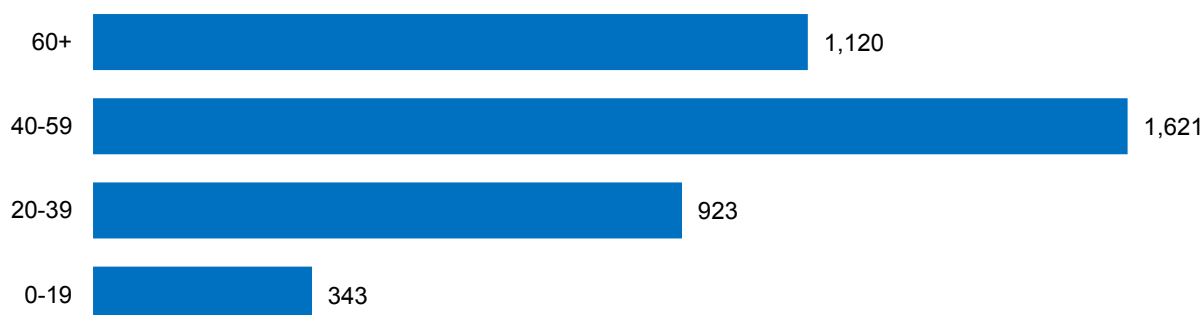
Since October 2017, around 22% more males than females visited for a leisure purpose. Put another way, out of every 20 leisure visitors arriving by air roughly 11 were men and nine were women (Chart 7). Leisure visitors also tended to be older; out of every 20 arriving by air since October 2017, about 14 (or around 70%) were 40 or older (Chart 8).

Chart 7. Gender of leisure visitors arriving by air between October 2017 and September 2019



Note: the gender of one leisure arrival was not specified.

Chart 8. Age of leisure visitors arriving between October 2017 and September 2019 by air

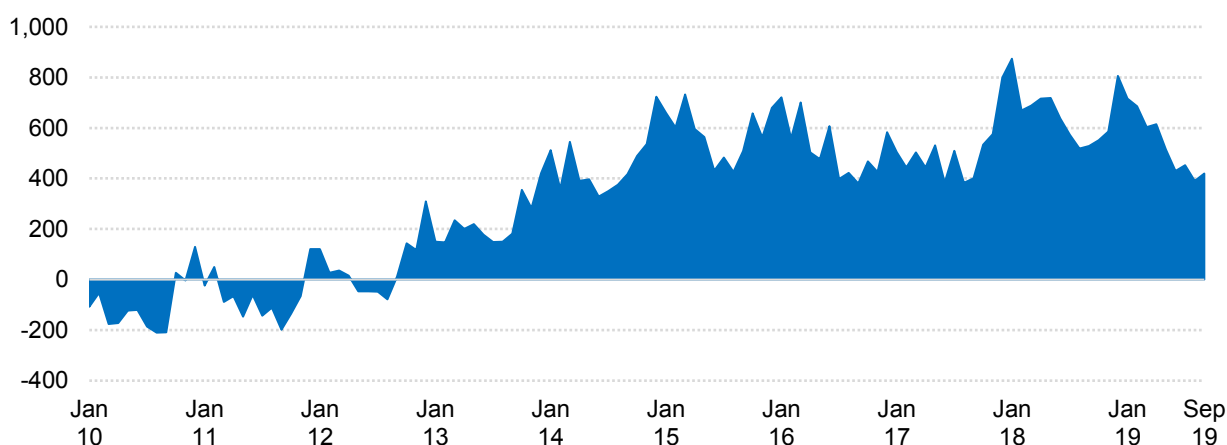


Departures from St Helena

Between January 2010 and March 2016, just before the first passengers arrived by air in April, passenger arrivals exceeded departures by 701, largely due to the arrival of workers involved in construction of the new airport. Between April 2016 and September 2017 this trend was reversed, as some workers left St Helena following completion of the major construction works; during this period, departures exceeded arrivals by 301. Between October 2017 and September 2019, when the scheduled air service has been operating, there have been 20 more passenger arrivals than departures. Note that this does not translate directly into the total number of people living on St Helena, because only some arrivals or departures are of residents.

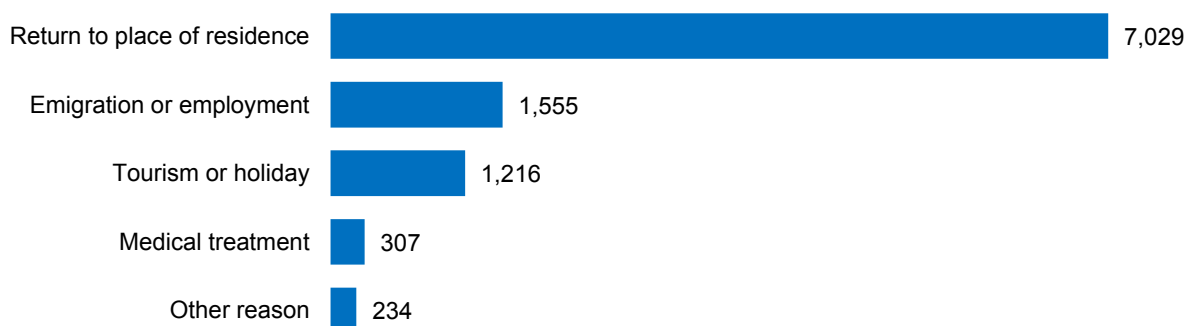
Chart 9 shows the cumulative number of net arrivals since January 2010, illustrating the increase in net arrivals between 2012 and 2015, the repatriation of workers to their home countries between 2016 and 2017, and the impact of the start of the regular scheduled air service in 2017.

Chart 9. Cumulative net passenger arrivals (arrivals less departures), January 2010 to September 2019



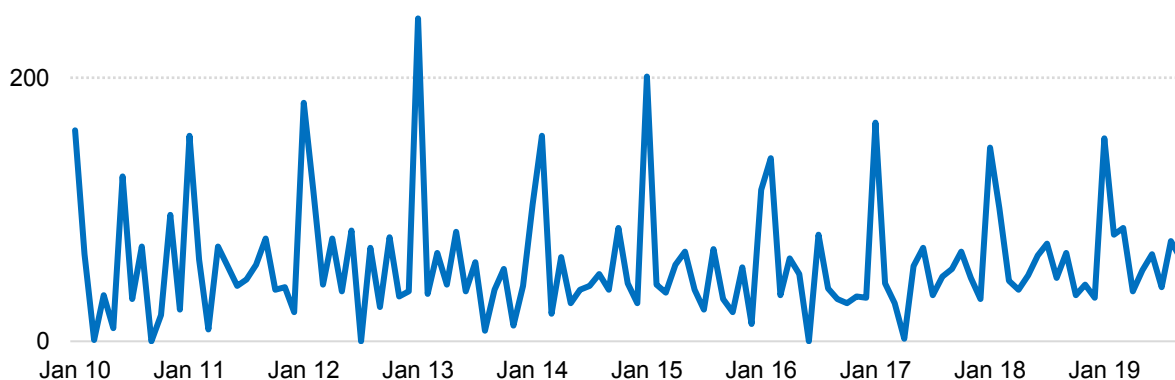
The reason for leaving St Helena is categorised into tourism or holiday, medical treatment overseas (typically South Africa, including persons accompanying patients), emigration or employment of St Helenians and their families (for instance, in the UK or on Ascension Island or the Falkland Islands), to return to a place of residence, or for other reasons (such as business, training, or transit). Between October 2017 and September 2019 the most common reason for leaving was to return to a place of residence – these are departures of people who arrived for a temporary stay (Chart 10). Among residents, the most common reason for departure was emigration or employment overseas, followed by a holiday abroad.

Chart 10. Reason for leaving St Helena, October 2017 to September 2019



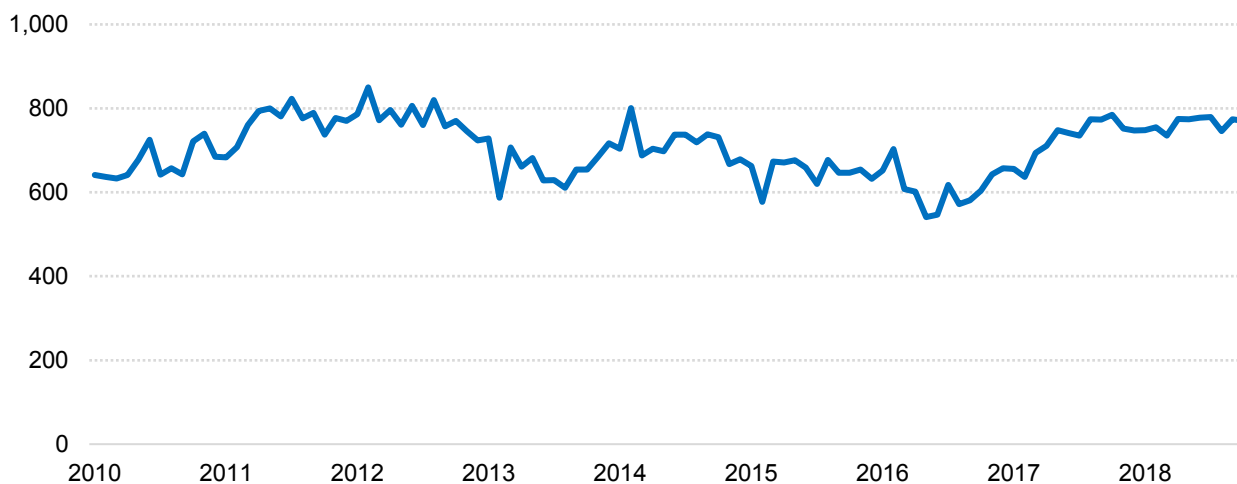
Departures for overseas employment are most common in the period just after Christmas when workers return to Ascension Island or the Falklands following the holiday season (Chart 11).

Chart 11. Number leaving St Helena for emigration of overseas employment per month, January 2010 to September 2019



The number of people leaving for overseas employment or to emigrate has fluctuated between around 600 and 800 per year in the last few years (Chart 12). Since scheduled air services began, the number has tended towards the top end of that range, compared to during the airport construction period, when it tended more towards the bottom of the range.

Chart 12. Number leaving St Helena for emigration of overseas employment per 12-month period, January 2010 to September 2019



Methodology

The classification of arrivals and departures into purpose of visit or departure is based on the records created by Immigration Officers. For arrivals, tourism/holiday includes short-term visitors or departures (i.e. less than six months) for tourism or holiday purposes, and it includes St Helenians making short-term visits to St Helena to see family and friends, both those that live permanently abroad and those who are away for a period of overseas employment. Day visitors arriving on cruise ships are not included in either arrivals or departures. Business and employment includes short-term and long-term arrivals who arrive for work purposes, including those employed by the St Helena Government on contract (and their families). Returning residents are people who are returning to their normal place of residence (for arrivals, this excludes those returning for the purpose of business or employment, who are classed as business). It also includes people returning permanently from periods of overseas employment. Transit includes those for whom St Helena is not their final destination; it includes most arrivals by yacht and any people transiting to or from a ship via air.

The primary data source is the arrival and departure records maintained by the Immigration Office of the Police Directorate, supplemented by reports from the Air Access Office. Estimates are provisional, and may be revised in subsequent months.

Have questions or comments?

Please get in touch: we are Neil Fantom, Statistical Commissioner, Justine Joshua, Senior Statistical Assistant, and Bertina Benjamin, Statistical Assistant. You can find us in person at the Statistics Office on the **first floor of the Castle**, Jamestown, at the back of the main courtyard. You can also contact us by telephone: our direct line is **22138** or via the Castle switchboard on 22470. If calling from overseas, the international dialling code for St Helena is +290. Our general office e-mail address is statistics@sainthelena.gov.sh, or you can email team members directly (the format is `firstname.lastname@sainthelena.gov.sh`).