

Tonga loses out on NZ tourism aid in plane row

Author : Ashlee Betteridge

Date : July 11, 2013

The New Zealand government is reportedly suspending millions of dollars in tourism aid to Tonga after [concerns](#) about the safety of planes gifted to the country by China.

The safety record of the Xian MA60 has recently been in the spotlight after a number of [incidents](#) in Indonesia and Myanmar.

"Until all of the safety certification has been undertaken to a high standard we've got things on hold, it's as simple as that," New Zealand Foreign Minister Murray McCully [told](#) Islands Business.

Meanwhile, Tonga's opposition leader has said this week that the kingdom is [too reliant](#) on aid and remittances, thereby sapping the country's sense of initiative. He called for more democratic reform to promote accountability. (Tonga's Legislative Assembly is composed of a mix of representatives of the people, and of Nobles.)