



MP for Palmerston North

Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety Deputy Leader of the House

Minister of Immigration

Minister for ACC

25 NOV 2019

MOIA 129

Beth

fyi-request-11386-34611846@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Beth,

Thank you for your email of 5 October 2019 requesting information about potential policy changes with respect to three visa categories under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I have responded to each section of your request in turn.

1. Please provide any reports/briefings/meeting notes that you have received from your ministry in regards to the Exceptional Skills Visa.

The exceptional skills visa was mentioned in early meetings with officials; however, the concept was not developed further in light of other policy priorities. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.

2. Please provide any reports/briefings/meeting notes that you have received from your ministry in regards to the Kiwibuild Visa

I have identified two briefings, titled 'Kiwibuild visa settings' and 'Current immigration settings relating to the construction workforce, and initial advice on the KiwiBuild visa' within the scope of this part your request. Please find these documents enclosed.

3. I note that there was a discussion on this web page in regards to changing Student visas, at this time my understanding is that you have implemented changes regarding Post Study Work Visas and have recently announced specific work visa changes but there does not appear to be any news in regards to Student visa changes. Could you please provide any reports available regarding potential changes to student visas.

I have identified a briefing titled 'Report back on in-study work rights for international students' within the scope of this part of your request. Please find this document enclosed.

You may also be interested in the Cabinet paper titled 'Report back on consultation on proposed changes to immigration settings for international students and recommended final proposals'. This document is publicly available, at: www.mbie.govt.nz/assets/c2a0e57f7e/cabinet-paper-report-back-on-consultation-on-proposed-changes-to-immigration-settings-for-international-students.pdf.

Some information within these documents has been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

9(2)(g)(i) to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

If you are interested in other policy developments in the immigration portfolio, you can view press releases I have made at: www.beehive.govt.nz/portfolio/labour-led-government-2017-2020/immigration. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has also published advice it has provided to me on several areas within the portfolio, which you can access at: www.mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/immigration/release-of-immigration-information/.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review this response to your request. The relevant contact details are as follows:

Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10152, WELLINGTON 6143
Ph 0800 802 602
www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

Yours sincerely



Hon Iain Lees-Galloway
Minister of Immigration