



13 February 2020

Deen Joseph

fyi-request-11984 a4b1a888@requests.fyi.org.nz

File No: DOIA 1920-1040

Dear Deen Joseph,

Thank you for your email of 06 January 2019, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

"The total number of Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) residence applicants who currently in queue waiting for a case officer."

Our response

Residence applications naturally take longer to process as there is more at stake and there is greater scrutiny of each application, which means there is a flow-on effect and the allocation of new applications to and immigration officer can take longer.

The last New Zealand Residence Programme ran from 1 July 2018 until 31 December 2019 and included a planning range of 50,000 to 60,000 residence approvals. The Government is currently reviewing its approach to the NZRP, and is considering replacing the planning range with a more targeted approach that focuses on management of specific residence visa types.

As at 23 January 2020 there were a total of 11,525 applications on hand under the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC). To provide you an accurate number of SMC applications that are currently in a queue waiting to be allocated to a case officer would require a manual check on each individual application.

We are therefore refusing your request under section 18(f) of the OIA, because the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. Providing this information would remove Ministry staff from their core duties and therefore the greater public interest in the effective and efficient administration of the public service would not be served. I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in both cases, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact Lautalie Leausa Vaa, Operations Support, Immigration New Zealand at Lautalie.Leausavaa@mbie.govt.nz.

Yours Sincerely,

Nicola Hogg
General Manager – Border and Visa Operation
Immigration New Zealand
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment