



04 SEP 2020

Sumit Rawtani

By email: fyi-request-13561-73dda919@requests.fyi.org.nz

File No: DOIA 2021-0407

Dear Sumit Rawtani

Thank you for your email of 13 August 2020, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

I would like to know the update on the allocation of non-priority queue of SMC Residence Visa please.

Thank you for clarifying your request on 27 August 2020 as the following:

I would like to know the date of the oldest application in the non-priority skilled residence queue.

Our response

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) does not have a specific Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) queue but one for skilled residence applications. These applications are SMC and Resident from Work (RFW) and are all processed in the Manukau office. The applications are not split into two separate queues based on the application category.

As at 25 August 2020, there were 14,573 applications in the non-priority skilled residence queue. Of the 14,573 applications in the non-priority queue, 1,539 applications have applicants located offshore. The oldest application in the queue off-shore is dated 14 December 2018. INZ cannot decide applications whose applicants are offshore due to border restrictions; therefore, these applications will not be allocated for assessment.

As at 25 August 2020, the date of the oldest onshore application in the non-priority skilled residence queue was 18 January 2019. 13,034 applications remain in the onshore non-priority queue waiting allocation.

Allocations of applications to immigration officers occur weekly and the number of applications that are allocated is dependent upon processing capacity. The New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP) Planning Range sets the upper and lower number for residence visa approvals. The previous Planning Range was 50,000 to 60,000 residence approvals from 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2019. 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. In the meantime, INZ will continue to process applications at same volume and with the

same level of resourcing as the previous NZRP allowed for, this does have an impact on the number of applications that can be allocated and the timeliness of application processing.

Any updates in regards to the allocation of applications can be found at the following link: www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/how-we-prioritise-resident-visa-applications/smc-and-rfw-timeframe-information.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact Anna McLachlan, Business Advisor, Operations Support, Immigration New Zealand at Anna.McLachlan@mbie.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Steve McGill
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