



13 November 2020

Nair

fyi-request-13936-f6b49193@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: DOIA 1920-0766

Dear Nair

I refer to your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) received on 8 October 2020 requesting the following:

- 1. Why are certain applications being put for SAT assessment?*
- 2. Do they have a timeframe in which applications are being processed?*
- 3. Are applicants picked randomly or based on the directive from Immigration officer.*

Our response

Questions One and Three

Applications are referred to the Specialist Assessment Team based on the application meeting certain criteria but I am not able to elaborate on that criteria. Therefore the information you have requested is withheld under sections 6(a) and 6(c) of the Act in that the making available of that information would be likely to prejudice the security and defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand, and prejudice the maintenance of the law, including prevention, investigation, and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial.

I am able to confirm that applications are not allocated to the SAT on a random basis and this includes the individual preferences of an immigration officer.

Question two

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) considers every application on a case-by-case basis to ensure it aligns with New Zealand's immigration policy and regulations. The length of time it can take to process an application depends on a number of factors including the complexity of the application, whether it is received with all the information needed to make a decision, and the number of other visa applications being processed at the same time.

Applications that are referred to the SAT require further verification which is often performed by a third party and INZ is not able to give a timeframe as to when this verification will be completed. To be fair to all applicants applications are allocated based on date order according to the date they were received. Generally, the oldest applications are allocated first unless there is a specific or urgent requirement for an application to be allocated ahead of an older application.

I trust you find the information helpful.



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, or if you require any further assistance, please contact Matt Burden, Senior Business Advisor, Operations Support at Matt.Burden@mbie.govt.nz

Yours sincerely



Nicola Hogg
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Immigration New Zealand
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment