

# Hon Kris Faafoi

Minister of Justice  
Minister for Broadcasting and Media  
Minister of Immigration



15 FEB 2021

Dear Grant Johnson,

Thank you for your request on 7 January under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for the following information:

*“As you know, the most recent New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP) expired at the end of 2019, more than a year ago. The lack of an NZRP - besides leaving Immigration New Zealand (INZ) without a guiding document with which to govern their residency approvals - has caused uncertainty for those interested in applying for New Zealand Residency.*

*Your office has made statements to the effect that a new NZRP is being prepared, which is encouraging, but nothing definitive has been forthcoming to date.*

*Therefore, I would like to make the following requests:*

- 1. What is the status of the new NZRP that is under development?*
- 2. When do you expect that the new NZRP will be released?*
- 3. Please send any internal documents, presentations, or communications relating to the new NZRP that are disclosable under the OIA.”*

In December 2018, Cabinet agreed to updated objectives for the New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP) and to a changed approach for managing residence numbers (Cabinet Paper *New Zealand Residence Programme: New objectives and approach to managing residence numbers* refers). The updated objectives are:

- To maximise the contribution of the NZRP to the economic and social wellbeing of New Zealand and New Zealanders by:
  - attracting skilled workers and business migrants;
  - reunifying the families of New Zealand residents and citizens; and
  - meeting international and humanitarian commitments;
- To manage overall residence numbers through controlling each of the individual components of the programme

Cabinet agreed to shift from a single planning range that covers the whole NZRP to an approach where residence numbers and priorities are managed directly through the individual resident visa categories. Disruptions have meant the new approach could not be implemented before the previous planning range expired. Immigration New Zealand continues to process applications at same volume and with the same level of resourcing as the previous planning range allowed for.

Details of the new NZRP, including the planning range, are being considered for this term's work programme; however decisions are still being taken and timing cannot be confirmed at this time.

The Cabinet paper, *New Zealand Residence Programme: New objectives and approach to managing residence numbers*, referred to above, has been refused under s18(d) of the Act as the information is already publicly available at:

<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/4577-cabinet-paper-new-zealand-residence-programme-pdf>.

I am withholding all other documents relating to the new NZRP in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) - to maintain constitutional conventions which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by officials.

I do not consider that there are public interest grounds that outweigh the redactions made under the Act.

I trust you will find the information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of my response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Hon Kris Faafoi  
**Minister of Immigration**