



10 May 2021

Saab

By email: fyi-request-15025-63e76cba@requests.fyi.org.nz

File No: DOIA 2021-1924

Dear Saab

Thank you for your email of 29 March 2021, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

I would like to request a data on a monthly basis the no. of onshore resident visa applications lodged up to 27.11.2019 that are yet to be allocated to case officers.

I also would like to request a data on the no. of applications that were allocated weekly to case officers from 1 March to the date you respond to this request showing the lodgement date of each application, categorised as to priority and non-priority queue.

Thank you for clarifying your request on 10 April 2021 as follows:

1. The number of skilled residence applications (Skilled Migrant Category and Residence from Work) accepted up to and including 27 November 2019, that are currently queued awaiting allocation to an Immigration Officer, with a breakdown of the month the application was accepted by Immigration New Zealand.

2. The number of skilled residence applications allocated to Immigration Officers from 1 March 2021 onwards with a breakdown of their priority status.

Our response

1. The number of skilled residence applications (Skilled Migrant Category and Residence from Work) accepted up to and including 27 November 2019, that are currently queued awaiting allocation to an Immigration Officer, with a breakdown of the month the application was accepted by Immigration New Zealand.

Please refer to Table One attached.

Skilled residence queue data is not static due to the complex nature of visa processing operations. Applications move between queues and this needs to be taken into account when comparing data over time. The data changes over time for reasons such as but not limited to:

- Applicants arriving into New Zealand on critical purpose visas result in their applications moving from the offshore queue to one of the onshore queues;
- A change in an applicant's circumstances resulting in their application meeting the priority criteria and being moved to the priority queue;

- Applications being escalated via the Employment Visa Escalation (EVE) process - <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/newsletters/korero/korero-july-2019/employment-visa-escalations-eve>;
- Applications selected to be used in training new Immigration Officers.

Most data used in OIA responses is pulled directly from the INZ Application Management System (AMS), and reflects the date that the data entry relating to the application was completed in AMS. On occasion an application is received by INZ on one date, but the data entry is not completed until a later date. In the interest of fairness, when allocating applications the Manukau office use the date that all information required for the acceptance of the application was actually received by INZ rather than the date the data entry was completed – which reflects when a client will perceive their application to have been submitted. This means that there may be differences noted in the allocation data, which is sourced directly from the Manukau office, when compared with other statistics about skilled residence, including number and dates of applications in the queues.

2. The number of skilled residence applications allocated to Immigration Officers from 1 March 2021 onwards with a breakdown of their priority status.

Please refer to Table Two attached.

Any updates in regards to the allocation of applications can be found via the following link: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/waiting-for-a-visa/how-long-it-takes-to-process-your-visa-application/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



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

Table One - Skilled residence (Skilled Migrant Category and Residence from Work) applications accepted before and on 27 November 2019 awaiting allocation, as at 20 April 2021.

Accepted Month-Year	Offshore Non Priority applications	Onshore Non Priority applications	Priority applications
Jan-19	28	.	.
Feb-19	112	.	.
Mar-19	62	.	.
Apr-19	68	.	.
May-19	82	.	.
Jun-19	76	.	.
Jul-19	119	1	.
Aug-19	96	268	.
Sep-19	86	579	.
Oct-19	87	628	2
Nov-19	81	654	1

Note that visa processing for overseas applicants is still on hold. This is because INZ is not able to legally grant a visa to people who are unlikely to meet the entry requirements. As such, offshore applications have been separated. Processing of these offshore applications will resume when the border re-opens. There may however be some offshore applicants based in a quarantine-free travel zone who will meet entry requirements. Once their eligibility to travel to New Zealand is confirmed, these applications will also be processed.

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Table Two - Allocation information relating to skilled residence (SMC and RFW) applications

Week commencing	Priority skilled residence applications allocated	Non-priority skilled residence applications allocated	Applications allocated via the employment visa escalation (EVE) process ¹
4 January 2021	47	104	4
11 January 2021	16	97	2
18 January 2021	49	114	0
25 January 2021	58	92	5
1 February 2021	41	129	3
9 February 2021	17	177	0
16 February 2021	60	17	6
22 February 2021	21	49	0
1 March 2021	35	30	1
8 March 2021	52	0	0
15 March 2021	73	49	0
22 March 2021	16	118	0
29 March 2021	26	80	2
5 April 2021	47	20	0
12 April 2021	37	31	1
19 April 2021	79	4	0
26 April 2021	45	39	3
3 May 2021	41	46	0

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¹ Employment Visa Escalation is a process to respond to escalation requests for urgent allocation for employment related visas (and associated family members) for both Temporary Work Visas and Skilled Resident Visas. For more information see the INZ website here: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/newsletters/korero/korero-july-2019/employment-visa-escalations-eve>