

Title	Update
<p data-bbox="204 250 454 318">Citizenship by Grant Backlog</p> <p data-bbox="204 376 418 448">Responsible DCE: Maria Robertson</p> <p data-bbox="204 506 379 613">Contact: Julia Wootton 9(2)(a)</p>	<p data-bbox="566 250 766 280"><i>Recent activities</i></p> <p data-bbox="566 300 1401 452">The processing timeframes for receiving citizenship have grown. The current backlog is at 23,334. We are processing applications from late August 2020. There remains provision to process applications under urgent circumstances.</p> <p data-bbox="566 472 1401 624">An increase in processing timeframes was expected while we transition from the paper-based applications, supported by ageing technology, to a case management system (the system) supporting a fully online application process.</p> <p data-bbox="566 645 1050 674">Further reasons for the increase include:</p> <ul data-bbox="614 694 1412 958" style="list-style-type: none"> • staff needed to be released from processing applications to test and learn the new system; • decisions were made not to replace citizenship staff, pending the introduction of the system, to avoid redundancies and to re-deploy available passports staff; and • COVID-19 prevented staff from working on key systems during the lockdown. <p data-bbox="566 978 694 1008"><i>Next steps</i></p> <p data-bbox="566 1028 1385 1135">Reducing the backlog is a high priority. We expect a combination of measures to achieve a reduction in the processing timeframes in the coming months.</p> <p data-bbox="566 1155 737 1184">These include:</p> <ul data-bbox="614 1205 1359 1482" style="list-style-type: none"> • further improvements to the system; • cross-training additional passports staff; • prioritisation of work on system features that speed up processing; and • extend the use of the API with Immigration New Zealand's travel records. In future the API will be used to automate applicant status and presence checks. <p data-bbox="566 1503 1369 1570">We will continue to provide regular updates on this work, and brief you where required.</p>