



16 October 2023

Harry

fyi-request-24202-b73c8e54@requests.fyi.org.nz

DOIA 2324-0658

Tēnā koe Harry

Thank you for your email of 21 September 2023 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following:

A. From the data published by INZ, looks like the percentage of applications for which decisions have been made in relation to the number of applications on hand appears to vary significantly based on nationality. Want a confirmation of whether nationality has any influence on the processing of SMC applications.

A1. If nationality does affect the process, I would appreciate an explanation of how and to what extent.

A2. If nationality is not a factor in the SMC processing, please provide clarification on why there appear to be disparities in the processing of SMC applications based on nationality. Specifically, I would like to understand the reasons for variations in the processing times and decision rates among applicants from different countries.

B. Any additional relevant information or insights that can help clarify the processing patterns observed in the SMC applications based on nationality.

Our Response

Immigration instruction A16.1 outlines the order or manner of processing visa applications. Applications of the same group are generally processed in lodgement date order but may be prioritised if they meet certain criteria:

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/opsmanual/#44854.htm>

Whilst applications in each visa category are processed in order of lodgement date, this does not mean that applications will be decided in such order, as processing times will vary depending on individual circumstances. The length of time it can take to process an application depends on a number of factors, including but not exclusive to 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. Health and character assessments may also impact processing times, for instance, if medical referrals are required, or we are waiting for third-party checks, including national security and police checks.

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, please contact inzoias@mbie.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Clifford', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Clifford
Director Visa
Chief Operating Officer Immigration Branch
Immigration New Zealand
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment