



8 February 2024

Paul Zhao
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File No: DOIA 2324-1444

Dear Paul,

I refer to your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) received on 20 December 2023 requesting the following information from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (Ministry):

Dear Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, If a former New Zealand permanent resident becomes a New Zealand citizen, and he does not want to apply for a citizenship endorsement on his foreign (Chinese) biometric passport, and he does not want to travel with his New Zealand passport, and there is no visa sticker on his foreign (Chinese) biometric passport, and he relied on his Permanent Residency eVisa attached to his foreign (Chinese) biometric passport travelling to New Zealand in the past when he was not a New Zealand citizen,

(2) Will the NZ 'Visa Verification Service' still respond to verification requests from a foreign airport that the foreign (Chinese) biometric passport holder is allowed to enter New Zealand?

(3) Last but not least, how much information will the NZ 'Visa Verification Service' disclose to verification requests from a foreign airport?

(4) Will the NZ 'Visa Verification Service' disclose what category of visa (i.e. Permanent Residency, Visitor, etc.) the foreign (Chinese) biometric passport holder has?

(5) Will the NZ 'Visa Verification Service' disclose whether the foreign (Chinese) biometric passport holder has New Zealand citizenship or a New Zealand passport?

Our Response

When an individual becomes a New Zealand citizen any visa they hold is deemed cancelled under the Immigration Act 2009 as a New Zealand citizen cannot also hold a visa for New Zealand. This is outlined in S13 of the Immigration Act 2009. S64(1)(g) of the Immigration Act 2009 also outlines that any visa will be cancelled on the grant of New Zealand citizenship to the holder.

A New Zealand citizenship endorsement is not a visa, it allows the individual to travel on a foreign passport as a New Zealand citizen. Endorsements do not have to be a label in the foreign passport but can be electronic so there is no physical record of this.

If the individual elects not to obtain an endorsement they will not be able to travel on their Permanent Resident Visa as this has been cancelled under the Immigration Act 2009.

During check-in at the airport, if the individual holds an endorsement in their foreign passport, the check-in system will give the airline an 'OK to Board' response and they would be able to issue a boarding pass. The airline cannot see any visa type or endorsement via the check-in system.



If the individual does not hold an endorsement and is not travelling on their New Zealand passport the airline will get a 'deny board' response at check-in and this will result in the airline having to make a call to Immigration New Zealand's Immigration Border Operations (IBO) team. IBO would speak with the individual about getting an endorsement and there may be situations where IBO may have to mention to the airline that the individual is a New Zealand Citizen. However, this would be assessed on a case by case basis. IBO is able to give the airline an override which would allow the individual to board the flight.

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

Richard Owen
General Manager – Immigration Risk and Border
Immigration New Zealand
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

