



2 July 2021

Christopher McPhee

By email: fyi-request-15672-3ec9fd5a@requests.fyi.org.nz

File No: DOIA 2021-2473

Dear Christopher McPhee

Thank you for your email of 4 June 2021, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

- 1. A breakdown of how many on-shore skilled residence applications are waiting for allocation up-to 19th December 2019.*
- 2. A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled residence applications allocated to Immigration Officers for assessment in 2021 to date.*
- 3. A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled residence applications completed in 2021 to date.*
- 4. As per your targeted time how much time it will take to allocate all applications of skilled residence files to reach 19th December 2019.*

**Our response**

- 1. A breakdown of how many on-shore skilled residence applications are waiting for allocation up-to 19th December 2019.*

Please see attached Table 1 detailing the number of unallocated onshore skilled residence applications that were accepted by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) on or before 19 December 2019, broken down by accepted date and queue, as at 22 June 2021. We have withheld application counts of five or fewer under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA in order to protect the privacy of natural persons.

- 2. A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled residence applications allocated to Immigration Officers for assessment in 2021 to date.*

Please see attached Table 2 detailing the number of skilled residence applications allocated for assessment from 4 January 2021 to present, broken down by week and queue.

It is important to note that 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 which results 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>;
- The lodgment of an application may take several days or weeks, depending on the completeness of the application. Applications are back-dated once lodgment requirements are completed which can cause fluctuations in the number of applications accepted in a particular month.

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.

*3. A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled residence applications completed in 2021 to date.*

Please see attached Table 3, detailing the number of skilled residence applications completed from 1 January 2021 to 22 June 2021 (inclusive), broken down by week completed.

*4. As per your targeted time how much time it will take to allocate all applications of skilled residence files to reach 19th December 2019.*

This is not a request for Official Information, however we can advise that allocations of skilled residence applications to immigration officers occur weekly and the number of applications that are allocated is dependent upon processing capacity.

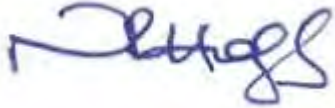
INZ's role as a regulator is to process and approve applications in line with immigration instructions and the New Zealand Residency Programme (NZRP) planning range set by the Government of the day. The Government is currently reviewing its approach to the NZRP. In the meantime, INZ will continue to process applications at the same volume and with the same level of resourcing as the previous NZRP allowed for. This has an impact on the number of applications that can be allocated and the timeliness of application processing.

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>

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact Anna McLachlan, Senior Business Advisor, Operations Support at [Anna.McLachlan@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Anna.McLachlan@mbie.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N Hogg', is centered on the page.

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

**Table 1: The number of unallocated onshore skilled residence (Skilled Migrant Category and Residence from Work) applications that were accepted by INZ on or before 19 December 2019, broken down by accepted date and queue, as at 22 June 2021.**

Month	Priority skilled residence applications	Onshore general (non-priority) skilled residence applications
Oct-19	0	141
Nov-19	0	718
Dec-19	<=5	636

**Table 2: Number of skilled residence (Skilled Migrant Category and Residence from Work) applications allocated by week, broken down by queue.**

Week beginning	Count of onshore priority skilled residence applications allocated (including approved requests under EVE <sup>1</sup> )	Count of onshore general (non-priority) skilled residence applications allocated
4 January 2021	51	104
11 January 2021	18	97
18 January 2021	49	114
25 January 2021	63	92
1 February 2021	44	129
8 February 2021	17	177
15 February 2021	66	17
22 February 2021	21	49
1 March 2021	36	30
8 March 2021	52	0
15 March 2021	73	49
22 March 2021	16	118
29 March 2021	28	80
5 April 2021	47	20
12 April 2021	38	31
19 April 2021	79	4
26 April 2021	48	39
3 May 2021	41	46
10 May 2021	69	83
17 May 2021	68	101
24 May 2021	57	197
31 May 2021	43	150
7 June 2021	76	170
14 June 2021	55	150
21 June 2021	64	271

<sup>1</sup> 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>

**Table 3: The number of skilled residence (Skilled Migrant Category and Residence from Work) applications completed from 1 January 2021 to 22 June 2021 (inclusive), broken down by week completed.**

Week beginning	Skilled residence applications completed
4 January 2021	140
11 January 2021	325
18 January 2021	224
25 January 2021	190
1 February 2021	142
8 February 2021	153
15 February 2021	209
22 February 2021	286
1 March 2021	98
8 March 2021	166
15 March 2021	265
22 March 2021	262
29 March 2021	181
5 April 2021	143
12 April 2021	207
19 April 2021	191
26 April 2021	204
3 May 2021	299
10 May 2021	243
17 May 2021	283
24 May 2021	238
31 May 2021	280
7 June 2021	203
14 June 2021	288
21 June 2021 (partial week, to 22 June 2021)	60
Total	5,280

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