



Ritz89

By email: fyi-request-13856-eed578f8@requests.fyi.org.nz

File No: DOIA 2021-0674

Dear Ritz89

Thank you for your email of 23 September 2020, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

I am writing to request the number of applications that are currently held in the non-priority queue under the SMC, with the lodgement dates from 04/03/2019-05/07/2019 Onshore only.

Could also give me the breakup of non-priority SMC lodgement month wise from March 2019 to December 2019.

Also, whats is the number of applications that INZ is allocating each month (August, September, October) to a CASE OFFICER for the onshore non-priority applicant only.

Thank you for clarifying your request on 28 September 2020 as the following:

- The number of onshore applications that are currently held in the non-priority skilled residence queue, that were accepted between 04/03/2019 and 05/07/2019 (inclusive of those dates).*
- The number of non-priority skilled residence applications accepted by INZ in March 2019 - December 2019, broken down by calendar month. E.g. the number accepted in March 2019, the number accepted in April 2019 and so on.*
- The number of onshore non-priority skilled residence applications that INZ allocated in August 2020 and; the number of onshore non-priority skilled residence applications that INZ allocated in September 2020.*

Our response

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) does not have a specific Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) queue but one for skilled residence applications. These applications are SMC and Resident from Work (RFW) and are all processed in the Manukau office. The applications are not split into two separate queues based on the application category.

The number of onshore applications that are currently held in the non-priority skilled residence queue, that were accepted between 04/03/2019 and 05/07/2019 (inclusive of those dates):

As at 7 October 2020 there were 1,484 onshore applications held in the non-priority skilled residence queue that were accepted between 4 March 2019 and 5 July 2019 (inclusive of those dates).

The number of non-priority skilled residence applications accepted by INZ in March 2019 - December 2019, broken down by calendar month. E.g. the number accepted in March 2019, the number accepted in April 2019 and so on:

Volume of SMC and RFW visas in non-priority queue, accepted 1 March 2019 to 31 December 2019, as at October 7 2020.	
Month application accepted	Non-priority applications
Mar-19	72
Apr-19	435
May-19	574
Jun-19	570
Jul-19	968
Aug-19	849
Sep-19	762
Oct-19	882
Nov-19	928
Dec-19	920
Total (ALL)	6960

The number of onshore non-priority skilled residence applications that INZ allocated in August and; the number of onshore non-priority skilled residence applications that INZ allocated in September:

Allocations of applications to immigration officers occur weekly and the number of applications that are allocated is dependent upon processing capacity.

INZ allocated 353 onshore non-priority skilled residence applications in August 2020, and 507 onshore non-priority skilled residence applications in September 2020.

Visa processing for overseas applicants is still on hold. This is because people who are not New Zealand citizens or residents are unlikely to meet the current entry requirements. 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 and are not being processed. Processing for offshore applications will resume when the border re-opens.

The New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP) Planning Range sets the upper and lower number for residence visa approvals. The previous Planning Range was 50,000 to 60,000 residence approvals from 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2019. The Government is currently reviewing its approach to the NZRP and is considering replacing the planning range with a more targeted approach that focuses on management of specific residence visa types. In the meantime, INZ will continue to process applications at same volume and with the same level of resourcing as the previous NZRP allowed for,

this does have 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 at the following link: www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/how-we-prioritise-resident-visa-applications/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