



11 May 2021

Harsha Nalla

fyi-request-15195-68135534@requests.fyi.org.nz

DOIA 2021-2078

Dear Harsha Nalla,

Thank you for your email of 16 April 2021 requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA), the following information:

"I am Harsha. Can you please provide information regarding SMC Non Priority Queue status as on April 16 2021. Can you please provide information regarding how many applications from August 2019 to September 6 2019 are pending to get Case Officer Allocation.

Also could you please provide me a reason even after getting back to Level 2 from 7th March, then Level 1 on very next week.. why INZ has slowed down in processing applications and allocating Case officers."

Our Response:

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) has one queue for skilled residence applications. The applications in this queue include Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) and Resident from Work (RFW), and are not split into two separate queues based on the application category.

Please see table below which provides the number of unallocated SMC applications in the offshore and onshore non priority queues as at 16 April 2021, broken down by month the application was accepted for processing by INZ.

Month Accepted	Offshore Non priority queue	Onshore Non priority queue
Jan-19	28	0
Feb-19	112	0
Mar-19	62	0
Apr-19	68	0
May-19	82	0
Jun-19	76	0
Jul-19	118	1
Aug-19	94	262
Sep-19	86	578
Oct-19	86	621
Nov-19	88	667
Dec-19	86	678



Jan-20	91	534
Feb-20	110	863
Mar-20	64	748
May-20	16	71
Jun-20	128	1,218
Jul-20	59	481
Aug-20	16	75
Sep-20	36	188
Oct-20	14	59
Nov-20	29	65
Dec-20	15	40
Jan-21	14	34
Feb-21	0	1

Allocations of applications to immigration officers occur weekly and the number of applications that are allocated is dependent upon processing capacity. The Government is currently reviewing its approach to the New Zealand Residence Programme (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 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.

Please also note that in February 2021, the Auckland region moved into Alert Level 3 twice which had an impact on the processing of skilled residence applications, and the capacity for immigration officers to be allocated new applications. With reduced processing capacity and reduced ability for some staff to access INZ offices during the COVID-19 response, for several weeks the INZ Manukau office had limited numbers of staff processing skilled residence applications from the office and reduced productivity for those working from home.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact Faanimo Tagaloa, Business Advisor, Business Management, Immigration New Zealand at Faanimo.Tagaloa2@mbie.govt.nz

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Hogg
General Manager – Border and Visa Operations
Immigration New Zealand