

24 August 2022

Via email:

Hon Michael Wood, Minister of Immigration
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Ms Alison McDonald, Deputy Secretary INZ
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Wellington

Tēnā koutou

New Zealand Immigration Policy Consultation

1. We write with reference to the Skilled Migrant Category Resident Visa, the development on New Zealand Immigration Policy more broadly and the level of consultation with The Immigration Reference Group (**IRG**).
2. The IRG has become an important forum for industry representation and for Immigration New Zealand (**INZ**) and the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (**MBIE**) Policy team to provide crucial information, updates and engage on issues of common interest.
3. Terms of Reference were signed on 5 November 2021 by Alison McDonald, Deputy Secretary Immigration, and the IRG in an effort to enable greater strategic engagement between the IRG, INZ and MBIE and includes a commitment to confidentiality.
4. During the IRG Meeting with Minister Faafoi on 15 December 2021 all parties, including the MBIE Policy team acknowledged the importance of industry consultation and the benefit of a stakeholder consultation group such as the IRG. We are hopeful Minister Wood echoes the same commitment.
5. We understand the Minister will make an announcement in relation to the Skilled Migrant Category Resident Visa in the coming months following the completion of policy development, currently underway as a matter of priority.
6. It is our view that the Skilled Migrant Category Resident Visa must resume processing as soon as possible. However, any resumption of processing under updated policy instructions should first be consulted on with industry to ensure the category is effective and desired outcomes are met while ensuring migrant welfare.

7. Our industry would collectively like to have an opportunity to be consulted and provide full feedback, perhaps by virtue of a bespoke industry working group in the same lines of the successful group established for the 2021 Resident Visa Category. This Group is a good example of the public and private sector working well together to make sure a well thought through approach is implemented.
8. To ensure a fully informed decision will be made, we believe is very important that we be provided an opportunity to consult with MBIE in a constructive manner to provide direct feedback to be taken into consideration.
9. Allowing our industry to provide feedback on Skilled Migrant policy development would be highly beneficial to MBIE, as it would allow MBIE to provide recommendations to the Minister that are well informed from our sector and for our sector to understand and provide support for those decisions.
10. We appreciate that time may be of the essence, and it may simply not be possible for a fully informed approach to be completed in such a short period of time. Nevertheless, the IRG are able to be highly nimble and available at short notice when required to provide on-the-ground advice and have demonstrated this in the past.
11. In addition to the Skilled Migrant Category Resident Visa, we understand the Minister, MBIE and INZ's work programme for the remainder of this year and into 2023 includes:
 - (a) A review of the family and partnership visa settings;
 - (b) Reviews of the business visa category (including Entrepreneur Work Visa and Residence Visas); and
 - (c) The Pacific Access Category;
12. We would welcome the opportunity to be involved in policy consultation on the above matters as well and meet with you to discuss our views and to hear from you regarding your planned approach.

Yours faithfully

9(2)(a)



9(2)(a)



(Rotating) Chair