

Coversheet: Government formation information

Request received from: New Zealand National Party

Included in the following pack is all requests received from the New Zealand National Party, responses provided by Departments and all associated correspondence.

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National Party Information Request – 16 October 2017			
Agency	MBIE	Priority	High

The National Party has requested information from the Public Service to support government formation discussions and negotiations.

2017/018

The Leader of the National party is in discussions with NZ First on immigration matters, and in particular the interface between overall residents number and the skilled migrant category.

We want to ensure that we fully understand the numbers and the consequences of any change in them prior to going back to NZ First later today. Given this tight timeframe we request an urgent meeting with the relevant immigration officials.

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Toni Vincent [SSC]

From: 9(2)(a) privacy
Sent: Tuesday, 17 October 2017 3:04 p.m.
To: Debbie Power [SSC]
Subject: Request for Information

Hi Debbie,

As discussed, the Leader of the National party is in discussions with NZ First on immigration matters, and in particular the interface between overall residents number and the skilled migrant category.

We want to ensure that we fully understand the numbers and the consequences of any change in them prior to going back to NZ First later today. Given this tight timeframe we request an urgent meeting with the relevant immigration officials.

Thanks for your consideration of this matter.

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File Note: Meeting to Respond to Information Request

File Note: Meeting to Provide Information Response – Tuesday 17 October 2017

Summary of Discussion

An information request was made for information to be provided to the National Party related to some immigration data. It was requested that the information be provided by way of a meeting with the requestors because of the short timeframe within which to respond. The State Services Commissioner approved the meeting request.

Three senior officials from the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment attended the meeting, following consideration by the Chief Executive and their attendance was supported by Debbie Power (Deputy State Services Commissioner) and Geoff Short (Assistant Commissioner) from the State Services Commission.

The requestors had data on residencies approved by Immigration New Zealand broken down by category for the 2016/17 financial year. This information is publicly available on the Ministry's website. The requestors sought information regarding a number of technical definitions associated with the data and the categories by which it is presented.

Officials were asked to confirm the numbers relating to approved residencies by each category for the past year. They informed the requestors there had been around 48,000 approved residencies in total, with around 15,000 of these approved in the family and partnerships category, around 4,000 approved in the humanitarian category, and around 29,000 approved in the skilled and migrant category.

Officials informed the requestors that the responses they were providing were subject to the normal technical caveats associated with the data and were based on the information that they had readily accessible in the short-timeframe available to respond to the request and needed to be treated with that context in mind.

In response to questions, officials confirmed that the Family and Partnerships category included around 11,000 approvals for partners and around 1,900 approvals for dependent children. Partnership category approvals were for partners of New Zealand citizens and residents. The relationships of partners were subject to testing and had to prove a relationship that was genuine and stable for a period of 12 months or more. A dependent child was eligible for an approved residency up to 24 years of age.

In response to questions, officials confirmed that the associated personage categories and the parents and siblings categories were now closed to new applications as a result of policy changes.

In response to questions, the officials confirmed the Skilled Migrants Category included both approvals for permanent residencies. The number of approvals was around 29,000 for the last year. Approvals for temporary migrant residencies for work under the essential skills category, had to meet occupational requirements as part of a work test. Information on the occupational requirements was available on the Immigration New Zealand website.

In response to questions, officials provided an estimate of the year end number of total residencies for the current financial year. The estimate was for around 38,000 people to be approved for residencies overall. When asked to compare the estimated number for the current year with the previous year, officials informed it was estimated there would be around 18% fewer approved residencies this current year, following the recent policy changes to the Skilled Migrant

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Category and the current threshold of 160 points. Officials estimated there would be 10,000 fewer residencies approved under the Skilled Migrant Category by the end of this financial year.

The meeting closed.

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Sign-off of requests for information by Standing Committee

Date Received	17/10/17	Request no.	2017/018
Which Party?	National Party	Party contact	
Standing Committee members	Debbie Power - Chair Michael Webster Anneliese Parkin Struan Little	Agency/ies	MBIE

The assessment of the Standing Committee is that the response from the agency appropriately provides the information and analysis requested by the political party. The Committee is not attesting to the detail of the information and analysis.

The Standing Committee recommends their response is provided to the political party by the agency with a copy simultaneously being sent to the State Services Commissioner.



Debbie Power
Chair, Standing Committee

Date: 17 Oct 2017

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