



COVERSHEET

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| Minister | Hon Kris Faafoi | Portfolio | Immigration |
| Title of Cabinet paper | Extending the Re-Entry Border Exception for Nationally Significant Travel | Date to be published | 25 January |

List of documents that have been proactively released

| Date | Title | Author |
|-------------------|--|--|
| September 2021 | <i>Extending the Re-Entry Border Exception for Nationally Significant Travel</i> | <i>Office of the Minister of Immigration</i> |
| 29 September 2021 | <i>Cabinet Economic Development Committee Minute of Decision [DEV-21-MIN-0195]</i> | <i>Cabinet Office</i> |

Information redacted

YES

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld to protect the privacy of natural persons.



Cabinet Economic Development Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Extending the Re-entry Border Exception for Nationally Significant Travel

Portfolio **Immigration**

On 29 September 2021, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee:

1 **noted** that on 12 April 2021, Cabinet:

1.1 agreed to a border exception that allows temporary visa holders to vary the conditions of their visa to exit and re-enter New Zealand if travelling overseas for reasons of national significance before 31 August 2021;

1.2 noted that the Minister of Immigration will report back with further advice should it be appropriate to continue a re-entry exception beyond that time;

[CAB-21-MIN-0105]

2 **noted** that eligibility is determined by meeting the Ministry of Health's 'travelling for reasons of national significance' categories for early access to the COVID-19 vaccine;

3 **noted** that Vaccine Ministers have recently decided to expand the circumstances under which a person travelling overseas can receive early vaccine access;

4 **noted** that the expansion of early vaccine access has implications for the re-entry border exception, as people applying for early vaccine access will no longer be required to show proof that their reason for travelling is nationally significant;

5 **noted** that there is still likely to be a need for temporary visa holders to travel overseas for reasons of national significance;

6 **agreed** to extend the ability for temporary visa holders to re-enter New Zealand if travelling for reasons of national significance beyond 31 August 2021;

7 **agreed** that for travel after 31 August 2021, Immigration New Zealand will assess whether a person meets the national significance criteria by requiring a sponsoring agency to request re-entry permission;

- 8 **agreed** that the replacement criteria would enable a variation of conditions to be granted where:
- 8.1 the person holds a valid temporary visa; and
 - 8.2 the person is nominated for the border exception by a sponsoring government agency under one of the following categories:
 - 8.2.1 to protect the safety and security of New Zealand's right to govern itself;
 - 8.2.2 for government-approved humanitarian efforts as part of New Zealand's commitments to foreign aid, international disaster responses, or supporting Pacific and Realm countries' recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - 8.2.3 to participate in major international events where travel is necessary to represent New Zealand; or
 - 8.2.4 for nationally significant trade negotiations; and
 - 8.3 the person is assessed by Immigration New Zealand as being someone who meets one of the above categories; and
 - 8.4 the person requires a variation of conditions in order to return to New Zealand after nationally significant travel is undertaken; and
 - 8.5 the person continues to meet all other conditions of their visa;
- 9 **noted** that the current settings require an applicant to hold a temporary visa, but that many applicants are expected to be Australians, who are generally granted residence visas on arrival in New Zealand (which then expire on departure);
- 10 **agreed** to clarify that Australians not ordinarily resident in New Zealand are eligible to re-enter New Zealand under the re-entry border exception.

Janine Harvey
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)
Hon Dr Megan Woods (Deputy Chair)
Hon David Parker
Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Hon Stuart Nash
Hon Kris Faafoi
Hon Willie Jackson
Hon Michael Wood
Hon Dr David Clark
Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Hon Meka Whaitiri
Hon Phil Twyford
Rino Tirikatene, MP
Deborah Russell, MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for DEV