

Submitter information

Please provide your name and phone number, and preferred email address for contact if it is different from the one used to send this form:

s 9(2)(g)(i)

s 9(2)(a)

In what capacity are you providing feedback?

e.g. on behalf of: your company, the company you work for, an industry organisation, a union, a licensed immigration adviser etc.

As dairy farmers employing 4 FTE

If you are representing a company or group, what is the name of that group?

Excel farming Ltd

What industry or industries does that group work in?

Dairy Farming

In your company or industry, what are the most common occupations for migrant workers?

Dairy Farm staff

What visa categories are commonly used by those workers?

i.e. resident visa, Essential Skills work visa, Work-to-Residence work visa (under the Talent or Long Term Skill Shortage List categories), Post-Study work visa (open or employer assisted), open work visa.

Essential Skills Work Visa

Only answer the following questions if you directly employ migrant workers:

How many migrant workers do you currently employ? (Refer to the visa categories in the question above)

2

Have you supported an Essential Skills visa application for any of these workers?

Yes

Using wage or salary information to help determine skill level and access to Essential Skills migrants

Proposal 1: Introduction of remuneration thresholds to determine skill levels and associated visa conditions for Essential Skills visas

Consider the proposal of aligning the remuneration thresholds for the Essential Skills visa with the remuneration thresholds for the Skilled Migrant Category.

What impacts or implications do you foresee from defining lower-, mid- and higher-skilled Essential Skills migrants in this way?

Give details of the occupations or sectors and wage or salary levels you are thinking of.

Our concerns here is that Dairy farm assistant herd managers and herd managers have valuable skills and experience that are not being recognised by the proposal – they are deemed ANZSCO levels 4 and 5 and therefore will remain as Lower- skilled and unable to move in to the mid-skilled category.

Assistant Herd Managers and Herd Managers have usually had over 2 years experience and have gained competency in many skills on our dairy farm ensuring we have capable safe independent staff who are able to supervise junior staff/farm assistants and run the farm for short periods while owners/managers have time off.

Without this level of staff or continually needing to replace them every 3 years we will not be able to take on junior staff to train in the dairy industry and risk burn out and accidents from our managers and owners as we do not have capable staff to allow us to have time off.

Our concern is not in relation to the salary levels but the way ANZSCO has classified our staff.

Reinforcing the temporary nature of the Essential Skills visa and managing the settlement expectations of temporary migrants

Proposal 2a: Introduction of a maximum duration for lower-skilled Essential Skills migrants

Consider the option of a three years for a maximum duration for lower-skilled Essential Skills visas.

What impacts or implications do you foresee from the proposed maximum duration for lower-skilled Essential Skills visa holders?

Give details of the occupations and industries you are thinking of.

On our dairy farm one of the biggest concerns is that we invest in staff, train them and get them upskilled to a herd manager position where we are confident that they are safe, capable and independent and then they have to leave –and our history over the last five years has

shown no suitable NZ applicants and therefore we need to then recruit another immigrant fresh to NZ and our farm – this will be a costly process both in terms of recruiting them as well as the cost to our business of having less skilled staff again and cost to us personally as owners with less time off and risk of accidents increase and our family misses out.

I think the fact that these immigrants are not able to apply for their families to apply for NZ visas shows that these are temporary visas.

I would like to see recognition of the level of experience our Assistant herd managers and herd managers have and if after 3 yrs of essential skills visas staff have progressed to this level and have the corresponding salary of \$23.49-\$35.34 that they will be recognised as mid-skilled and eligible to apply for a 3 yr visa.

Proposal 2b: Introduction of stand down period for lower-skilled Essential Skills migrants

Consider the option for a year-long stand down period following the maximum duration for lower-skilled Essential Skills visas.

What impacts or implications do you foresee from these proposed changes?

Give details of the occupations and industries you are thinking of.

As above – I think this is excessive and will negatively impact on recruitment and also on how employers treat staff and train them as if they are aware that after 3 years they will be leaving why would they invest heavily in upskilling them just to start again?

Proposal 3: Require the partners of lower-skilled Essential Skills visa holders to meet the requirements for a visa in their own right

Consider the proposal to require the partners of lower-skilled Essential Skills visa holders to meet the requirements for a visa in their own right.

What impacts or implications do you foresee from these proposed changes?

Give details of the occupations and industries you are thinking of.

I have concerns that this will limit who want to move to NZ to work as farm staff with families are likely to look to move to other countries where their families are welcome.

All of our previous staff have had families and have wanted to bring them to NZ once settled, they are happy to be in NZ for a short time without family but not long term.

The families contribute to our communities in many ways including attending local schools, using local facilities which in turn has a positive impact on our rural communities and services through more locals being employed eg employing more teachers at school, more staff at the local garage and supermarket.

We also foresee that this will lead to immigrants not choosing NZ and therefore NZ dairy farmers will have a major labour shortage, with a resulting bidding war to attract good staff and potentially causing dairy farm business to cease farming. This will also impact our larger communities as if we are not farming we are not employing 4 FTES and they are not using local facilities or have families attending local schools – the larger communities will also end up putting off staff and therefore we have more NZs on the dole looking for work. Dairy farming in our area has increased our school numbers to have a 3rd teacher, the local garage and engineers have significantly increased staff in recent years since dairying has come to our area as have other businesses.

Proposal 4: Require the children of lower-skilled Essential Skills visa holders to meet the requirements for a visa in their own right

Consider the proposal to require the children of lower-skilled Essential Skills visa holders to meet the requirements for a visa in their own right.

What impacts or implications do you foresee from these proposed changes?

Give details of the occupations and industries you are thinking of.

AS above

Reinforce that Essential Skills visas should only be granted for the period for which the employment is offered

Proposal 5: Make it explicit how the 'period of employment' condition applies to seasonal work

Consider the option to reinforce that Essential Skills visas for seasonal work are only for the length of the season and that the offer of employment must match the length of the season.

What impacts or implications do you foresee from these options?

Give details of the occupations or sectors you think are likely to be affected.

Seasons impact on what jobs we do on dairy farms but not on what staff required – we require our 4 FTE for the full 12 months of the year.

While in winter we are not milking cows we are still feeding them daily which is intensive and we still require all our staff at work but the days will reduce to 7.5 hr working days.

Consider the list of seasonal occupations being considered.

Are there any seasonal occupations that should be added or removed from this list? Why?

Dairying as above

Consider the list of seasonal occupations being considered.

If you employ seasonal staff, or represent a sector with seasonal staff:

- **What are the occupations of the seasonal staff within the sector that you are commenting on?**
- **For each of the occupations that you have identified, what is the typical period that you require seasonal staff to cover (e.g the peak of the season)?**

Dairy farm staff are permanent all year.