



File No. DOIA 2223-0429

14 September 2022

Privacy of Natural Persons

Dear

Privacy of Natural
Persons

Thank you for your email of 30 August 2022 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information relating to call wait times in the Immigration Contact Centre (ICC) and visitor visa processing times.

For clarity, I have addressed each part of your request as follows.

What is the wait time for connecting with the New Zealand Immigration services office via phone?

The speed of answer has been on the increase since January of this year. Our average speed of answer for ICC calls in August 2022 has been 1:01:47 (hour:minute:second).

How many call centre operators are manning the phone call services for NZIS?

We currently have just over 155 trained full-time employees assigned to answer ICC calls and this number is expected to grow.

ICC had begun the process of planning and recruiting for the expected workload following the opening of the 2021 Residence Visa, as well as Reconnecting of New Zealand, in September 2021. We have been in a continuous recruitment drive since January 2022, and have recruited 61 permanent, full-time Client Services Advisors (CSAs) to date. We have another 11 CSAs in the process of being onboarded at the time of writing, and our recruitment will continue for the foreseeable future.

We are hoping to reach the resourcing levels of the pre-Covid period, however the current employment market is proving challenging for most industries to find suitable candidates, so it has been a slower process than usual. The strength of the current employment market has also opened up numerous opportunities for career growth and promotions, which has had an impact on our resources as well – many of our experienced people have moved on to other roles within and outside of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment in the last two years, so while we have recruited 60+ people, we also continue to see our people move on to other roles.

Our recruitment advisors have opened up all available recruitment pipelines to achieve our goals, so besides permanent recruitment, we are also offering temporary contracts and part-time hours, to corner as much of the market as possible.

What is the wait time for processing visitor visa applications as of date - How many applications have been received and processed as of date?

From the 1 August 2022 to 10 September 2022, the median average time for processing visitor visas that were submitted and decided during that time, was 14 weekdays. 95% of visitor visa applications that were submitted and decided were done so in 27 weekdays.

From 1 August 2022 to 10 September 2022, Immigration New Zealand (INZ) received 47,802 visitor visa applications. Between 1 August 2022 to 10 September 2022, INZ has decided 12,756 of these visa applications.

I trust this has answered your request in full.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. The relevant details can be found at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nelowfar Ghumkhor', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nelowfar Ghumkhor
National Manager, Immigration Contact Centre
Engagement and Experience