



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Andrew Little	Portfolio	Immigration
Title of Cabinet paper	Short Term Support for Migrants on Migrant Exploitation Protection Visas	Date to be published	1 November 2023

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
September 2023	Short Term Support for Migrants on Migrant Exploitation Protection Visas	Office of the Minister of Immigration
18 September 2023	Short Term Support for Migrants on Migrant Exploitation Protection Visas CAB-23-MIN-0443 Minute	Cabinet Office

Information redacted

YES / NO

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.



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Short Term Support for Migrants on Migrant Exploitation Protection Visas

Portfolio **Immigration**

On 18 September 2023, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** that with the implementation of the Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV), it has come to light that some migrants may have been subject to irregular employment practices;
- 2 **noted** that from 7 September 2023, Immigration New Zealand is providing an interim package of support, as agreed to by the group of Ministers with Power to Act during the periods between Cabinet meetings [CAB-23-MIN-0429], prior to a Cabinet decision on a short-term support package;
- 3 **noted** that the above interim package includes the provision of short-term accommodation to the cohort of identified migrants at approximately \$50 per person, per day, organised by Immigration New Zealand, and a stipend of approximately \$220 per person, per week, and was funded at \$200,000 from within the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) existing baseline;
- 4 **noted** that the Minister of Immigration is proposing that MBIE put in place a time-limited support package for Migrant Exploitation Protection Visa (MEPV) holders, from September 2023 to March 2024;
- 5 **agreed** to a support package to provide financial and accommodation support to MEPV holders costing a total of \$7.7 million, for up to 525 eligible persons comprising:
 - 5.1 \$5.5 million for direct financial assistance to MEPV holders:
 - 5.1.1 \$8,105.76 (net) total per person in direct financial support;
 - 5.1.2 \$2,305 (net) total per person in accommodation supplement support;
 - 5.2 \$1 million for potential administration or delivery costs, subject to final design decisions;
 - 5.3 \$1 million transferred to Integrity and Security of the Immigration System to be ring fenced to reimburse the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) on behalf of providers providing Community support services to MEPV holders if this funding is required;

5.4 \$200,000 to support the interim package provided to the cohort of identified migrants;

6 **approved** the following fiscally neutral adjustment to provide for the policy initiative in paragraph 5 above, with no impact on the operating balance and/or net debt:

Vote Labour Market Minister of Immigration	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Immigration Services MCA					
Departmental Output Expense: Assessment and processing services (funded by revenue Crown)	(7.700)	-	-	-	-
Departmental Output Expense: Integrity and Security of the New Zealand Immigration System (funded by revenue Crown)	7.700	-	-	-	-

7 **agreed** that the changes to appropriations for 2023/24 above be included in the 2023/24 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply;

8 **noted** that in Budget 2023, MBIE received cost pressure funding of \$8.055 million (revenue Crown) for visa assessment and processing services, but due to higher-than-expected visa applications and third-party revenue, a portion of this funding can be re-purposed;

9 **noted** that there are further cost pressures facing Immigration New Zealand, including processing asylum seekers within required timeframes, which will also require a decision on Budget 2023 cost pressure funding;

10 **noted** that the support package for MEPV holders will be considered in MBIE’s evaluation of the suite of legislative, policy, and operational measures introduced in 2021 to address temporary migration exploitation;

11 **noted** that MEPV holders will also have access to the following MSD services over the six-month period (or until March 2024):

11.1 community based support including through the Community Connectors and E Tū Whānau providers;

11.2 assistance with finding employment, utilising the existing service provided by MSD;

12 **noted** that Community Connectors are an existing workforce employed by non-government organisations to walk alongside individuals, families and whānau, providing advice and support, and advocating for them until they are connected with relevant supports;

13 **noted** that Community Connectors have a discretionary fund of \$300 per household, however, some providers’ funding may already be exhausted, and additional funding may be required to allow support for migrants that have been granted a MEPV;

Bringing forward the change in scope of Community Connectors

- 14 **noted** that, in June 2023, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee agreed that the scope for Community Connectors from 1 October 2023 will be to provide short-term support to individuals, families and whānau, to prevent and minimise the impacts of hardship [SWC-23-MIN-0060];
- 15 **agreed** that the above planned scope take immediate effect, so that Community Connectors are able to support a wide range of people, including those on the MEPV;
- 16 **authorised** the Minister of Immigration to make any adjustments within the agreed funding amount of \$7.5 million that are necessary to meet the intent of the policy to put in place a short-term package of support for MEPV holders;
- 17 **directed** MBIE to report back to Cabinet by 1 December 2023 on the longer-term model of support for MEPV;

Providing for a further 6-month MEPV

- 18 **noted** that on 4 September 2023, the Minister of Immigration advised Cabinet of his intention to undertake further work to extend the duration of the Migrant Exploitation Protection Visa, which currently allows for the grant of an open work visa of up to 6 months for migrants where MBIE has assessed their report of exploitation as credible;
- 19 **noted** that the Minister of Immigration is progressing work to provide a further 6 month Migrant Exploitation Protection Visa, where a migrant has not found suitable employment during their initial MEPV;

Managing the risks posed by triangular employers

- 20 **noted** that triangular employment arrangements have been identified as having a higher risk of migrant exploitation in some sectors, due to the reduced control the employer has over the employee's day to day working conditions;
- 21 **noted** that the Minister of Immigration has asked for further advice about increasing the level of New Zealand workforce required for triangular employers from the current level of 15 per cent;
- 22 **authorised** the Minister of Immigration to take decisions on changes to the requirements for New Zealand workforce levels for triangular employers;
- 23 **invited** the Minister of Immigration to report back to Cabinet on the decisions in paragraph 22.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet