



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Andrew Little	Portfolio	Immigration
Title of Cabinet paper	Cyclone Response: Immigration options	Date to be published	10 November 2023

List of documents that have been proactively released		
Date	Title	Author
August 2023	Cyclone Response: Immigration options	Office of the Minister of Immigration
16 August 2023	Cyclone Response: Immigration options DEV-23-MIN-0171 Minute	Cabinet Office
17 February 2023	Cyclone Response Workforce Demands and Potential Immigration Responses	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
17 February 2023	Immigration response to Cyclone Gabrielle – supporting A3	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
21 February 2023	Immigration options to support the response to the early 2023 extreme weather events	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
24 March 2023	Aide Memoire - Recovery Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
20 April 2023	Next steps for the Recovery Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
5 May 2023	Update on Cyclone Response Immigration Options	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
31 May 2023	Draft Cabinet paper: Cyclone Response – Immigration options	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
9 August 2023	Material to support your item at Economic Development Committee on 16 August: Cyclone response – Immigration options	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment

Information redacted

YES / NO (please select)

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 maintain the privacy of natural persons and to protect the free and frank expression of opinions.



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.

Cyclone Response: Immigration Options

Portfolio **Immigration**

On 16 August 2023, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee (DEV):

Recovery Visa

- 1 **noted** that on 22 February 2023, in response to the North Island weather events, DEV noted that the Minister of Immigration expected to establish an extreme weather event recovery visa (the Recovery Visa), which would be valid for six months [DEV-23-MIN-0014];
- 2 **noted** that a clear picture of rebuild projects and their associated workforce needs is still emerging, making longer-term decisions about workforce needs and the government levers to support them difficult at this time;
- 3 **noted** that since the Recovery Visa was implemented, uptake for the Visa has exceeded expectations, and that the Visa has enabled employers to meet urgent and evolving labour needs in response to the extreme weather events;
- 4 **agreed** to close the Recovery Visa to new applicants immediately after Cabinet's decisions relating to the paper under DEV-23-SUB-0171 are announced (or at a date set by the Minister of Immigration);
- 5 **agreed** that a visa extension of three months for those currently holding a Recovery Visa will be implemented, to streamline the transition to longer-term work visas;
- 6 **agreed** that eligibility for a visa extension would apply to current Recovery Visa holders, who:
 - 6.1 are already in New Zealand at the date of announcement; and
 - 6.2 hold a current job or genuine job offer in a cyclone recovery related role;
- 7 **agreed** that visa extensions will be processed at no cost to successful applicants, which will require a manual refund issuing process;
- 8 **noted** that while this visa extension risks allowing people with undisclosed health or character issues to remain in New Zealand for longer, these will be checked at the Accredited Employer Work Visa application point, should an individual choose to stay and continue working in New Zealand beyond the visa extension;

- 9 **agreed** that the standard Tuberculosis screening will not apply, and that a workaround will be implemented whereby applicants can upload a letter confirming they are applying for an extension of their Recovery Visa and therefore the Tuberculosis requirement does not apply;

Adding roles to the Construction and Infrastructure Sector Agreement

- 10 **noted** that as part of the Immigration Rebalance, the Construction and Infrastructure sector was selected for an immigration Sector Agreement, already providing an exemption to the median wage for 23 key roles;
- 11 **noted** that Civil Contractors New Zealand provided two lists of suggested occupations to be added to the Sector Agreement, but that feedback received both by unions and agencies consulted opposed the addition of any roles to the Sector Agreement;
- 12 **agreed** that the following occupations be added to the Sector Agreement:
- 12.1 Driller's Assistant (821912);
 - 12.2 Earthmoving Labourer (821113);
 - 12.3 Earthmoving Plant Operator (General) (721211);
 - 12.4 Linemarker (721912);
 - 12.5 Machine Operators n.e.c (711999);
 - 12.6 Mechanic's Assistant (899916);
 - 12.7 Road Traffic Controller (899923);
- 13 **noted** that the Minister of Immigration will certify new Immigration Instructions under section 22 of the Immigration Act 2009 to give effect to above decision;

Financial implications

- 14 **noted** that officials estimate that implementation costs associated with the above paragraphs are \$680,610;
- 15 **noted** that the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has identified departmental output expense Crown Revenue underspends in 2022/23, that could be used to meet these implementation costs in 2023/24;
- 16 **agreed** to an in-principle expense transfer in the Assessment and Processing category of the Immigration Services MCA in Vote Labour Market of up to \$1.000 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 financial year, to meet the implementation costs of the Recovery Visa extensions outlined above;

- 17 **authorised** the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Immigration jointly to increase the Assessment and Processing category (departmental output expense) within the Immigration Services MCA in Vote Labour Market for 2023/24 by up to \$1.000 million, following completion of the 2022/23 audited financial statements, with no impact on the operating balance and net debt across the forecast period.

Janine Harvey
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Hon Damien O'Connor
Hon Andrew Little
Hon David Parker (Chair)
Hon Peeni Henare
Hon Kieran McAnulty
Hon Ginny Andersen
Hon Dr Deborah Russell
Hon Rachel Brooking
Hon Jo Luxton

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for DEV