Response to further data requests about AEWV and related trends

Contents

This document includes data requested by the external AEWV review team. Where relevant, additional comparisons and context is provided.

AEWV

Volumes: There have been 94,667 AEWVs approved between the category opening on 4 July 2022 and 11 November 2023.

Compared to previous equivalent visas (based on previously compiled data between July 2022 and 30 September 2023), there were over 89,000 AEWV approvals, compared to 71,100 people approved on Essential Skill and Work to Residence between July 2018 and September 2019.

Apart from higher volumes (that is likely to be somewhat associated with recent labour market conditions and a post border closure 'catch-up' period) most high-level trends in country of origin of applicant and occupations appear similar to previous known risk areas. INZ continue to monitor risk and outcomes, responding to more nuanced trends and insights as they become clear.

The system is 'circular' by design, and as INZ gathers further information about employers over time, malafide actors will be better detected and deterred by a suite of controls, including assessment practices, revocation, suspension and infringements which in turn will influence the applicant trends at the work visa gateway.

Occupation & Sector: The top 20 occupations approved on temporary work visas pre and post COVID-19 are similar. There are some changes, for example a larger number of builder's labourers and fewer waiters approved on AEWV. Construction, hospitality, primary industry, and health remain the top five sectors, with transport and logistics just edging out retail under AEWV (there were a higher number of bus drivers linked to the Green List announcement). There is a 10 per cent relative increase of visas for migrants in construction sector compared to pre COVID-19 (up from 25 per cent to 35 per cent of visas issued).

Top 20 Occupations

Pre-Covid: July 2018 – September 2019　　　　　　**Post-Covid: July 2022 – September 2023**

Pre-Covid Essential Skill & Work to Residence	No of Applications	Post-Covid AEWV	No of Applications
Dairy Cattle Farm Worker	4,302	Builder's Labourer	9,554
Chef	3,089	Carpenter	3,887
Carpenter	3,011	Cook	3,171
Retail Supervisor	3,002	Truck Driver (General)	2,932
Cook	1,314	Personal Care Assistant	2,234
Cafe or Restaurant Manager	1,287	Chef	2,059
Aged or Disabled Carer	1,232	Dairy Cattle Farm Worker	1,882
Retail Manager (General)	1,232	Retail Supervisor	1,847
Truck Driver (General)	1148	Fast Food Cook	1,636
Scaffolder	967	Meat Process Worker	1,457
Registered Nurse (Aged Care)	924	Painting Trades Worker	1,297
Metal Fabricator	967	Kitchenhand	1,280
Dairy Cattle Farmer	816	Aged or Disabled Carer	1,249
Personal Care Assistant	781	Registered Nurse (Medical)	1,111
Commercial Housekeeper	691	Beauty Therapist	1,060
Sales Assistant (General)	682	Commercial Cleaner	1,034
Builder's Labourer	659	Metal Fabricator	1,028
Waiter	600	Scaffolder	998
Telecommunications Technician	573	Bus Driver	907
Steel Fixer	524	Commercial Housekeeper	865

Skill Level: post COVID-19, 46 percent of AEWV holders are working in high to mid-skilled roles (ANZSCO skill level 1 – 3), compared to 62 percent of Essential Skill and Work to Residence visa holders pre COVID-19.
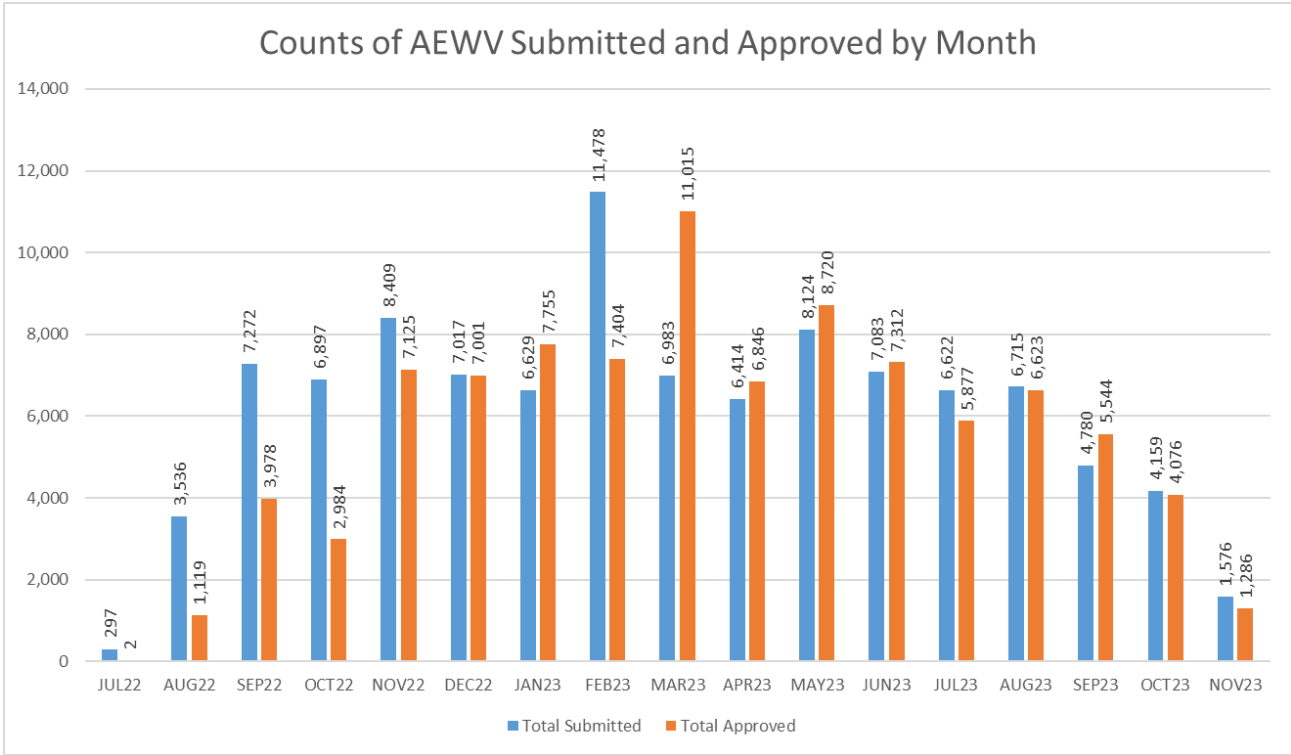
Wage: Despite sector agreement exceptions allowing lower rates, most AEWV holders are paid at or above median wage (over 80 per cent).

Nationality: Similar to the pre COVID-19 trend of temporary work visa holders, the top 3 nationalities of AEWV holders are India, Philippines and China.
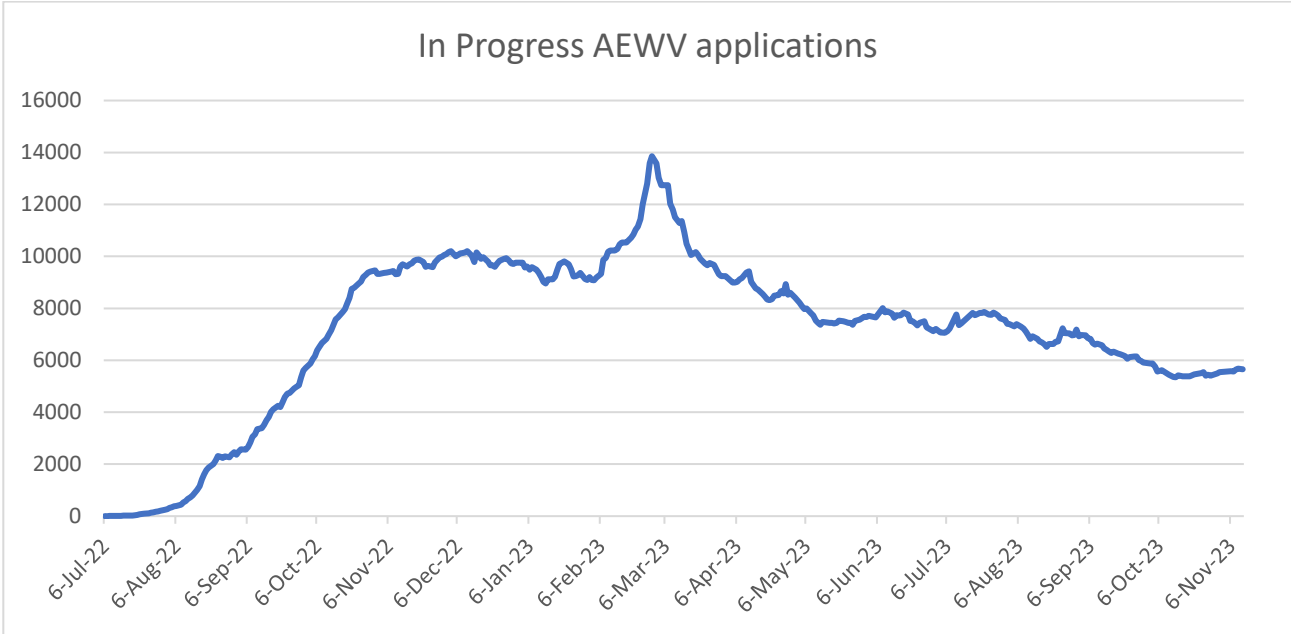
As at 11 November 2023: AEWV submitted, approved, withdrawn and declined, broken down by month

Month	Total Submitted	Total Approved	Total Withdrawn	Total Declined
July 2022	297	2	0	0
August 2022	3,536	1,119	19	7
September 2022	7,272	3,978	43	8
October 2022	6,897	2,984	58	13
November 2022	8,409	7,125	73	15
December 2022	7,017	7,001	105	26
January 2023	6,629	7,755	99	35
February 2023	11,478	7,404	121	41
March 2023	6,983	11,015	200	104
April 2023	6,414	6,846	148	135
May 2023	8,124	8,720	208	134
June 2023	7,083	7,312	166	118
July 2023	6,622	5,877	175	152
August 2023	6,715	6,623	205	239
September 2023	4,780	5,544	241	220
October 2023	4,159	4,076	198	240
November 2023	1,576	1,286	47	71
Total	**103,991**	**94,667**	**2,106**	**1,558**

As at 11 November 2023: AEWV submitted and approved broken down by month

Counts of AEWV Submitted and Approved by Month

	Total Submitted	Total Approved
JUL22	297	2
AUG22	3,536	1,119
SEP22	7,272	3,978
OCT22	6,897	2,984
NOV22	8,409	7,125
DEC22	7,017	7,001
JAN23	6,629	7,755
FEB23	11,478	7,404
MAR23	6,983	11,015
APR23	6,414	6,846
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AUG23	6,715	6,623
SEP23	4,780	5,544
OCT23	4,159	4,076
NOV23	1,576	1,286

AEWV applications in progress trend

In Progress AEWV applications

AEWV Partnership

As at 6 November 2023: Partnership/dependent visas issued, supported by AEWV holders

Month	Approved

July 2022	11
August 2022	264
September 2022	1,503
October 2022	1,342
November 2022	2,233
December 2022	2,731
January 2023	3,242
February 2023	3,211
March 2023	3,964
April 2023	3,601
May 2023	5,199
June 2023	5,521
July 2023	5,858
August 2023	5,992
September 2023	4,308
October 2023	3,605
November 2023	530
Total	**53,115**

Accredited Employers

The majority (75 per cent) of employers have been approved on the Standard Accreditation. Monthly breakdowns are attached.

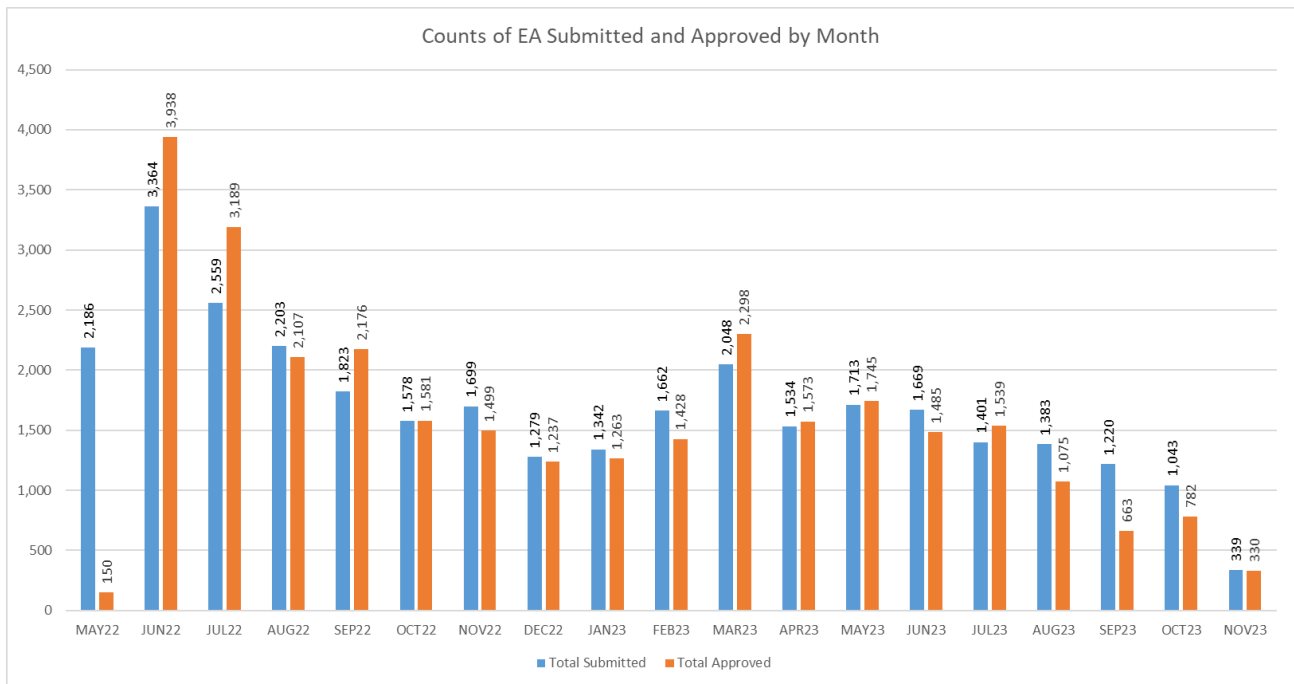**As at 16 October 2023: Employer accreditation applications approved broken down by accreditation type**

Accreditation Type	Approved	Proportion
Standard	22,130	75 per cent
High Volume	5,904	20 per cent
Franchisee	1,149	4 per cent
Triangular	198	1 per cent
Total	**29,381**	**100 per cent**

As at 11 November 2023, employer accreditation applications submitted, approved, withdrawn and declined, broken down by month
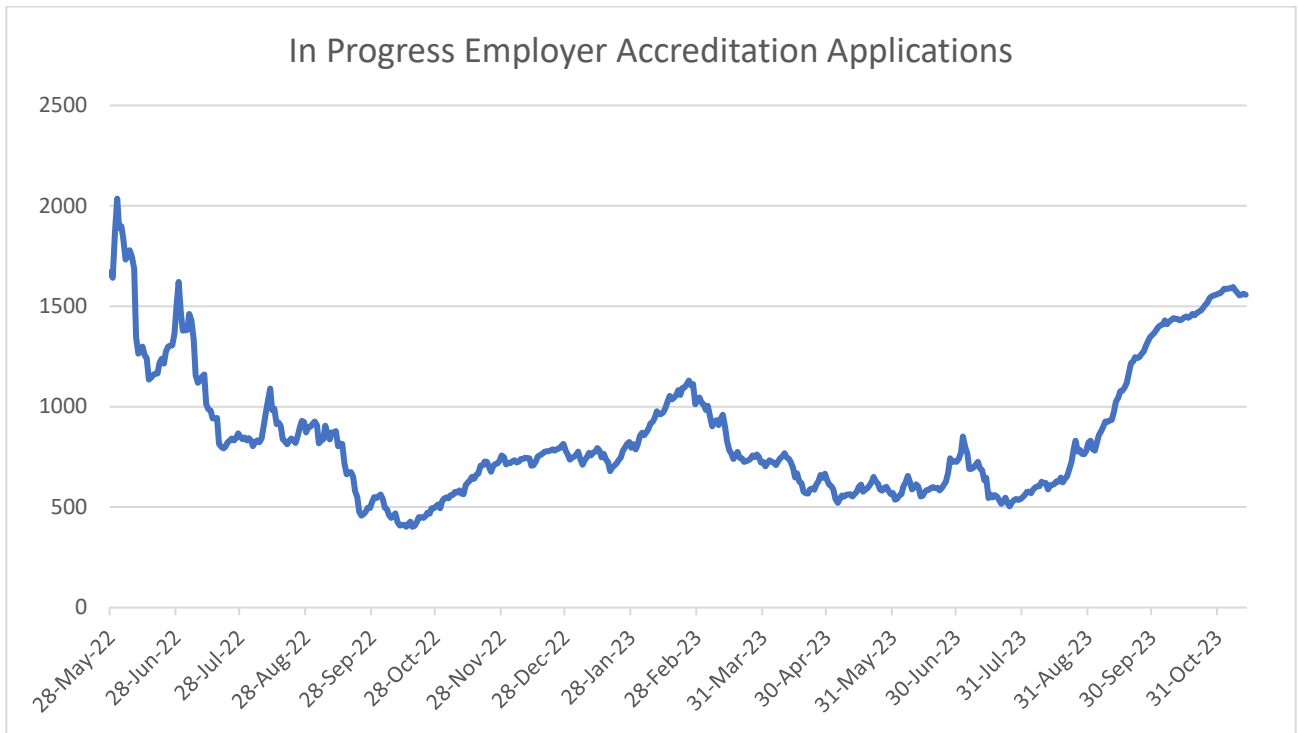
Month	Total Submitted	Total Approved	Total Withdrawn	Total Declined
May 2022	2,186	150	0	0
June 2022	3,364	3,938	0	0
July 2022	2,559	3,189	0	0

August 2022	2,203	2,107	15	1
September 2022	1,823	2,176	15	0
October 2022	1,578	1,581	12	1
November 2022	1,699	1,499	16	1
December 2022	1,279	1,237	7	1
January 2023	1,342	1,263	12	2
February 2023	1,662	1,428	7	5
March 2023	2,048	2,298	50	8
April 2023	1,534	1,573	30	19
May 2023	1,713	1,745	20	14
June 2023	1,669	1,485	27	3
July 2023	1,401	1,539	32	6
August 2023	1,383	1,075	29	7
September 2023	1,220	663	15	7
October 2023	1,043	782	41	13
November 2023	339	330	9	6
Total	**32,045**	**30,058**	**337**	**94**

As at 11 November 2023 employer accreditation applications submitted and approved broken down by month

Counts of EA Submitted and Approved by Month

Employer accreditations in progress trend

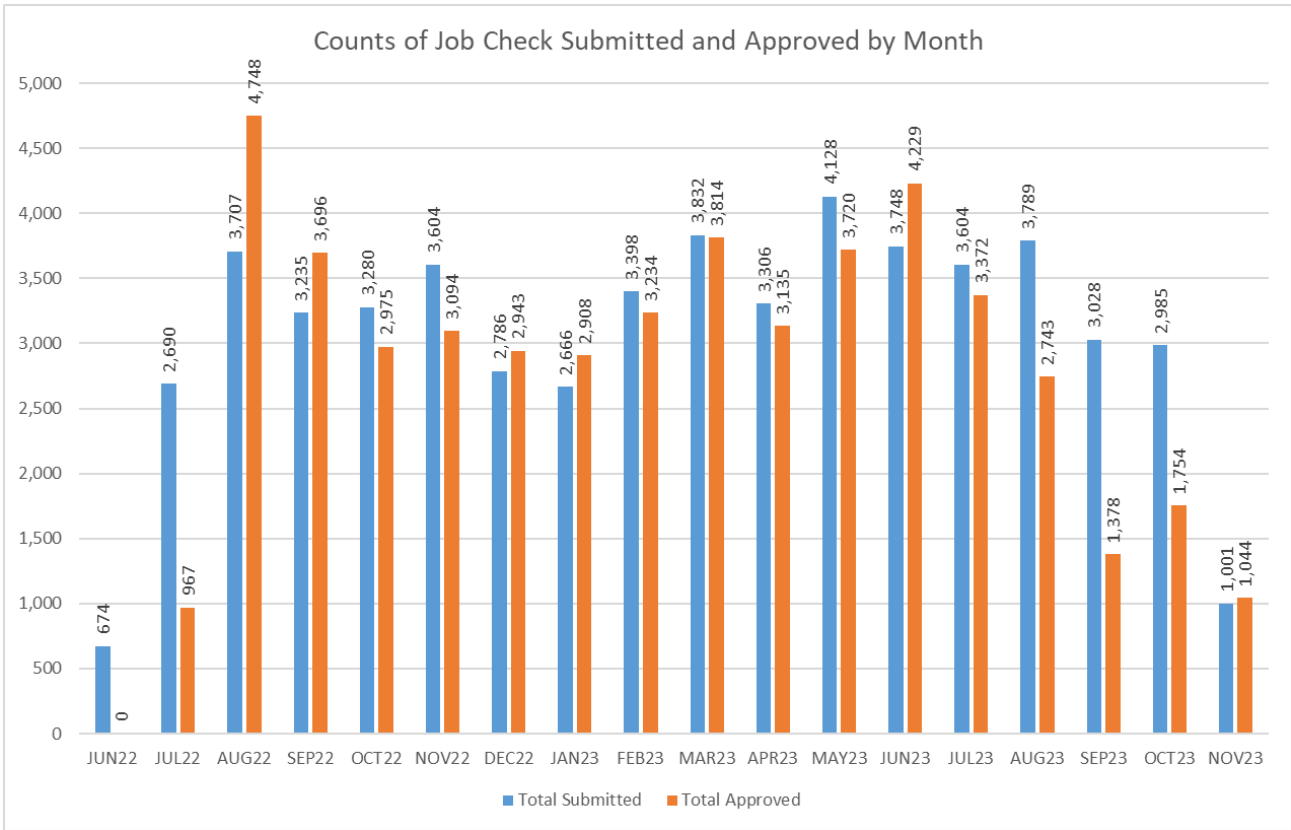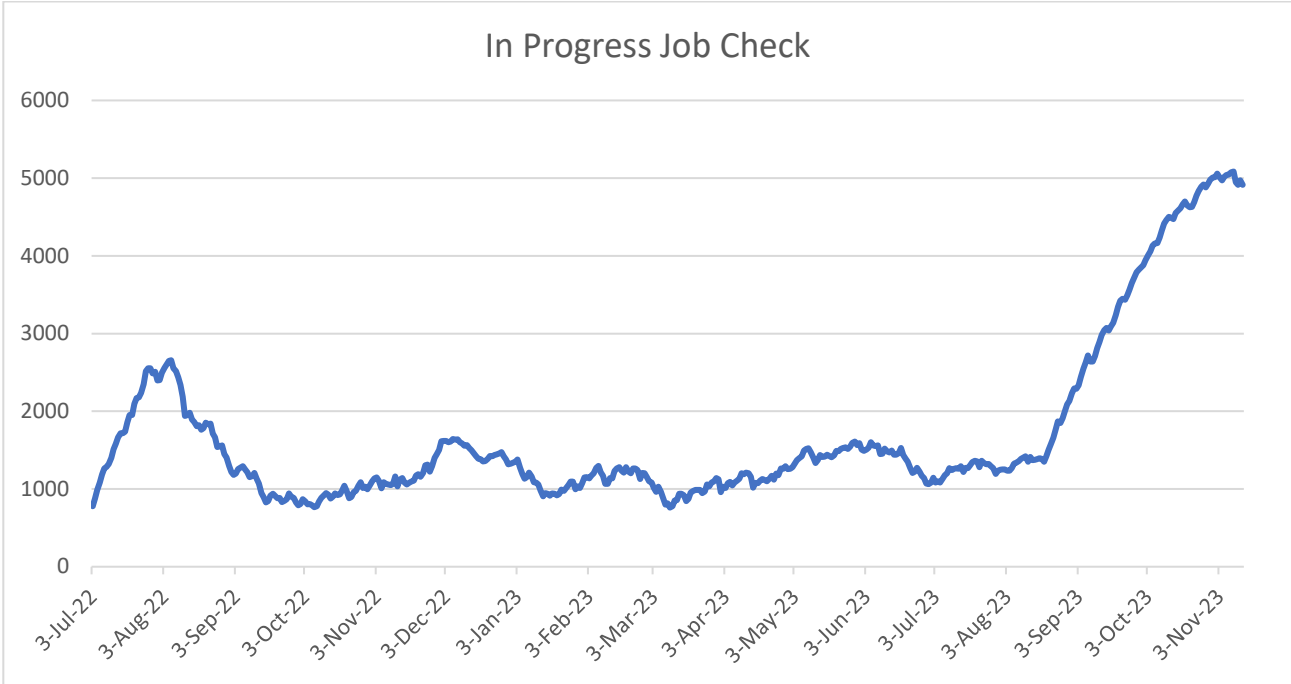In Progress Employer Accreditation Applications

Job check

As at 11 November 2023, job checks, submitted, approved, withdrawn and declined, broken down by month.

Month	Total Submitted	Total Approved	Total Withdrawn	Total Declined
June 2022	674	0	0	0
July 2022	2,690	967	1	0
August 2022	3,707	4,748	1	55
September 2022	3,235	3,696	4	44
October 2022	3,280	2,975	3	41
November 2022	3,604	3,094	2	56
December 2022	2,786	2,943	2	19
January 2023	2,666	2,908	1	8
February 2023	3,398	3,234	3	82
March 2023	3,832	3,814	8	38
April 2023	3,306	3,135	7	34
May 2023	4,128	3,720	11	61
June 2023	3,748	4,229	2	44
July 2023	3,604	3,372	15	35
August 2023	3,789	2,743	7	52
September 2023	3,028	1,378	6	25
October 2023	2,985	1,754	16	54
November 2023	1,001	1,044	1	29
Total	**55,461**	**49,754**	**90**	**677**

As at 11 November 2023, job checks submitted and approved broken down by month

Counts of Job Check Submitted and Approved by Month

Legend: Total Submitted, Total Approved

Data labels by month (Total Submitted / Total Approved):
- JUN22: 674 / 0
- JUL22: 2,690 / 967
- AUG22: 3,707 / 4,748
- SEP22: 3,235 / 3,696
- OCT22: 3,280 / 2,975
- NOV22: 3,604 / 3,094
- DEC22: 2,786 / 2,943
- JAN23: 2,666 / 2,908
- FEB23: 3,398 / 3,234
- MAR23: 3,832 / 3,814
- APR23: 3,306 / 3,135
- MAY23: 4,128 / 3,720
- JUN23: 3,748 / 4,229
- JUL23: 3,604 / 3,372
- AUG23: 3,789 / 2,743
- SEP23: 3,028 / 1,378
- OCT23: 2,985 / 1,754
- NOV23: 1,001 / 1,044

Job checks in progress trend

In Progress Job Check

Job tokens

As of 11 November 2023, 49,754 job checks were approved for 236,378 roles.

There was a higher tolerance for accepting numbers of job vacancies prior to changes to the general instruction in August 2023. The general instruction changes included greater scrutiny on the numbers of job tokens, which appears to be having an impact on reducing the number of approved job tokens. Over time, we expect to see better information which reflects genuine vacancy trends. For now, roles approved through AEWV applications provide a more reliable indicator for understanding the actual demand from employers.

As at 11 November 2023, job tokens requested, approved, withdrawn and declined, broken down by month.

Month	Total Requested	Total Approved	Total Withdrawn	Total Declined
June 2022	4,267	0	0	0
July 2022	17,698	6,914	0	10
August 2022	25,772	31,427	481	2
September 2022	16,588	19,727	207	19
October 2022	15,607	14,356	479	9
November 2022	18,755	15,850	487	7
December 2022	13,280	14,775	50	3
January 2023	14,368	14,481	16	5
February 2023	19,121	17,448	1,182	16
March 2023	16,510	16,904	109	513
April 2023	13,779	11,892	170	25
May 2023	16,393	15,522	516	55
June 2023	15,689	16,867	447	2
July 2023	14,831	14,525	154	105
August 2023	14,413	11,045	405	17
September 2023	5,518	4,759	87	19
October 2023	2,772	6,265	288	94
November 2023	237	3,621	174	6
Total	**245,598**	**236,378**	**5,252**	**907**

As at 11 November 2023, job tokens requested and approved broken down by month
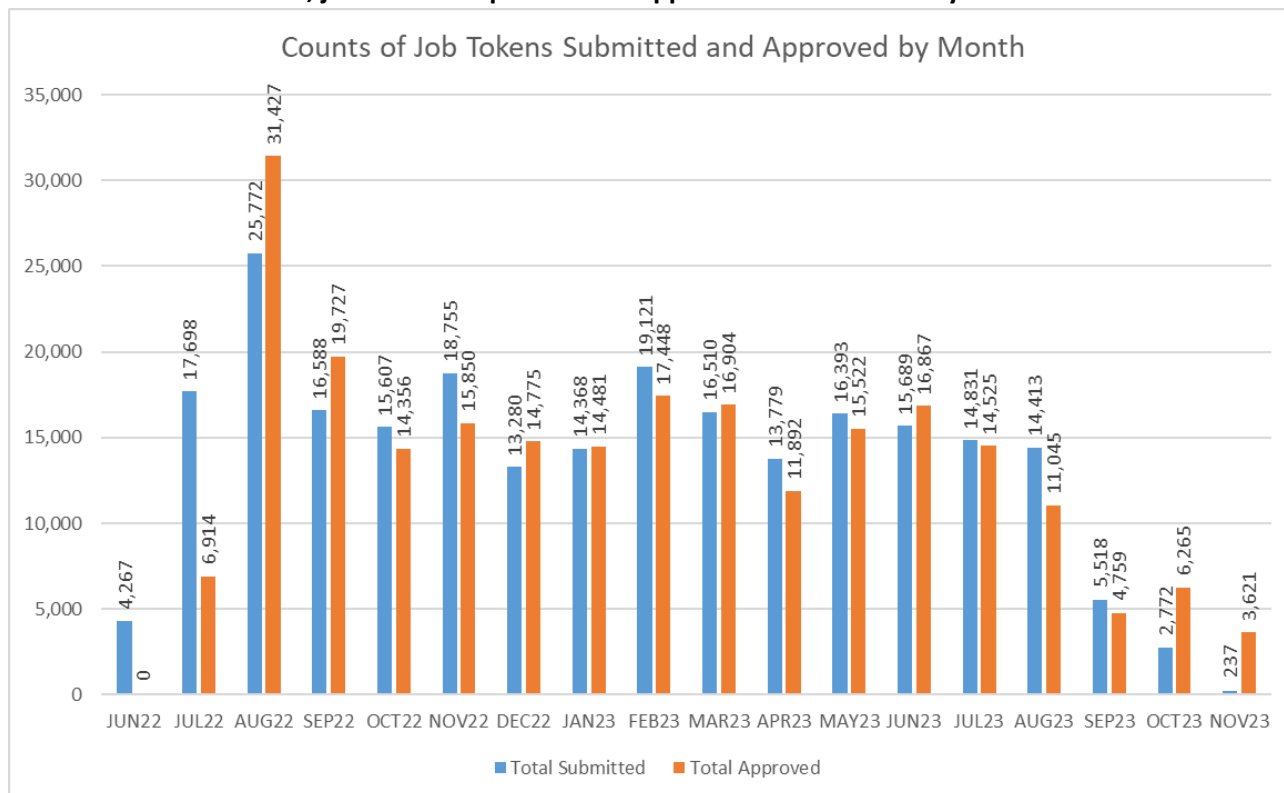
As at 13 November 2023, number of approved job tokens broken down by month and ANZCO skill level

Number of approved job tokens broken down by month and ANZCO skill level
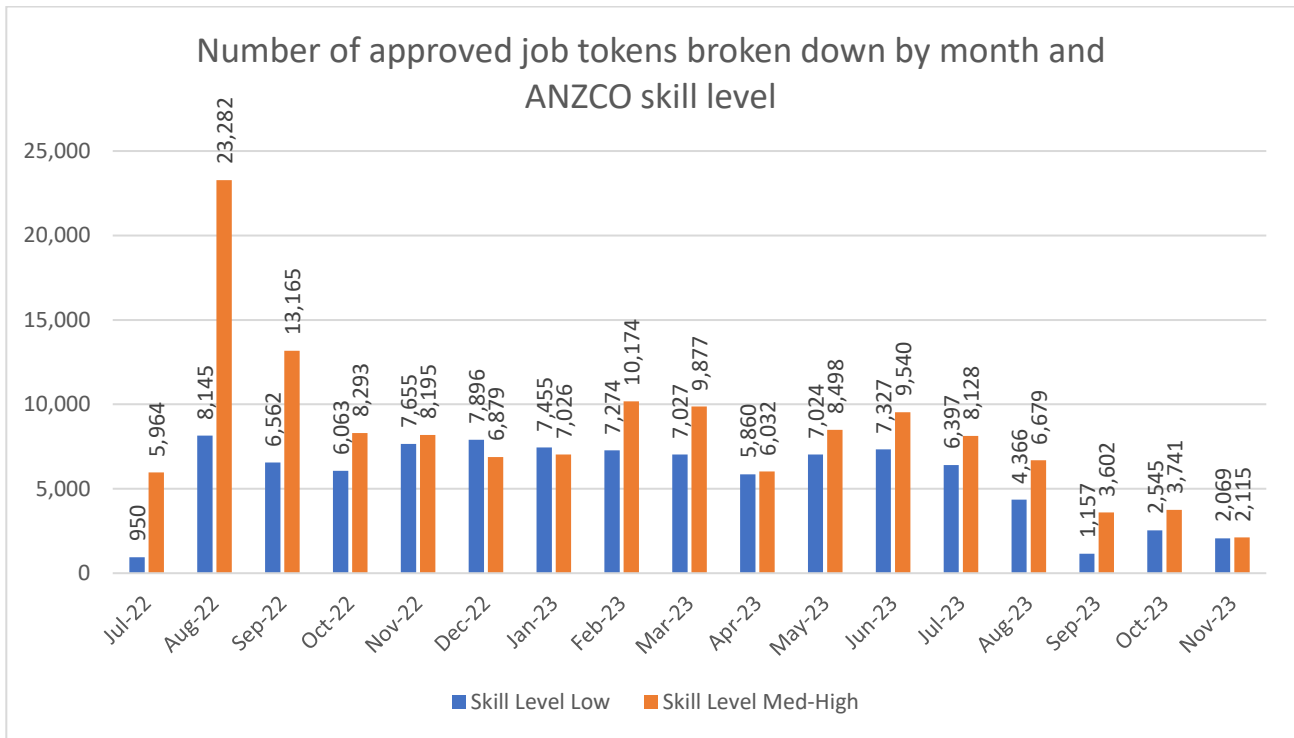
As at 13 November 2023, number of approved job tokens by month broken down by ANZCO skill level

Month	ANZCO Skill level		Total positions approved
	Low (4-5)	Medium-high (0-3)	
July 2022	950	5,964	6,914
August 2022	8,145	23,282	31,427
September 2022	6,562	13,165	19,727
October 2022	6,063	8,293	14,356
November 2022	7,655	8,195	15,850
December 2022	7,896	6,879	14,775
January 2023	7,455	7,026	14,481
February 2023	7,274	10,174	17,448
March 2023	7,027	9,877	16,904
April 2023	5,860	6,032	11,892
May 2023	7,024	8,498	15,522
June 2023	7,327	9,540	16,867
July 2023	6,397	8,128	14,525
August 2023	4,366	6,679	11,045
September 2023	1,157	3,602	4,759
October 2023	2,545	3,741	6,286
November 2023	2,069	2,115	4,184
Total	**95,772**	**141,190**	**236,962**

AEWV forecast

Each quarter, INZ forecasts the incoming volume of applications over the next three years across a variety of products. Each AEWV gateway is forecasted separately. INZ first forecasted the three AEWV gateways in January 2023 as data from 2022 could be used.

INZ use a statistical modelling technique to forecast incoming applications. These models accuracy is based on the quantity of historical data. Ideally, at least five years of historical volumes is needed for models to accurately predict yearly patterns and trends. AEWV is a new product with limited historical data. Therefore, INZ's forecasting models are considered less accurate compared to other products.

The forecasts rely on advice from subject-matter-experts (SMEs) within INZ to predict incoming application volumes for the three AEWV gateways. Each quarter, the predictions from the models are reconciled with the predictions provided by SMEs. As more data becomes available overtime, INZ expects our forecasting models to become more accurate which means there should be less reliance on SME advice for our predictions.

Below are key AEWV forecast assumptions:
- Historical volumes with outliers removed based on SME input.
- Renewal of accreditation or visa based on expiry dates.
- Assumed behaviour of employers (e.g., they will apply 3 months before expiry of accreditation and 90 percent of employers will decide to renew).
- Assumed visa holder behaviour (e.g., approximately 80 per cent will choose to reapply for an AEWV).
- Policy changes

Border entries and turn arounds

Over 65,700 AEWV holders have arrived onshore as at 28 October 2023. Since July 2022, there have been 18 AEWV on-holders who were refused entry, with the majority coming from Vietnam and India. This number does not include AEWV holders interdicted offshore.

The reason for turnarounds includes a near equal share of:

- Character concerns;
- lack of experience and training to fulfil intended job;
- lack of knowledge about role and what it entails; or
- employer in liquidation or offer of employment withdrawn.

Migrant Exploitation Protection Visa (MEPV)

As at 28 October 2023, 600 MEPV have been issued for previous AEWV holders, and 81 MEPV applications from AEWV holders were in progress.

Refugee (Asylum) Claims from AEWV holders to date

In the first quarter of 2023, 18 refugee and protection claims have been lodged from previous AEWV holders. These refugee and protection claims are yet to be decided. As of 3 November 2023, there are no AEWV holders who have had a refugee and protection claim approved. A breakdown of claims by entry visa is provided in the document attached for comparison.

Claims from AEWV holders as at September 2023

20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
6	2	13	18

Investigations

As at 7 November 2023, number of investigations relating to employers (2020 to 2023)

Year	Total number of investigation cases created	Number of allegations received involving at least one employer	Number of allegations that proceeded to investigations (Number of investigations unassigned)
2020	1,567	421	81
2021	1,237	590	257
2022	1,321	467	138
2023	1,220	880	426 (58)
Total	**5,345**	**2,358**	**902**

As at 7 November 2023, number of investigations received relating to employers since the introduction of AEWV (by month)

By month since 4 July 2022 (introduction of AEWV)	Number of allegations received involving at least one employer	Number of allegations that proceeded to investigations
July 2022	20	4
August 2022	51	13
September 2022	53	13
October 2022	29	12
November 2022	233	14
December 2022	26	11
January 2023	29	15
February 2023	47	19
March 2023	58	28
April 2023	48	19
May 2023	66	39
June 2023	100	57
July 2023	72	56
August 2023	114	64
September 2023	168	74
October 2023	178	55
Total	**1092**	**493**

These number include all employers and are not specific to accredited employers only. To specify whether the investigation was related to AEWV which required significant time and resource as it would require a manual search of each case.

These numbers are the totals of unique investigations cases, not the count of employers or the individuals involved. There may be duplicates in cases or multiple employers in one case.

The number of allegations received has increased in recent months and this is expected to continue. There are a range of factors that contribute to whether an allegation proceeds to an investigation including whether there is sufficient evidence to proceed.

As at 13 November 2023, number of National Prioritisation Process allegations themed as exploitation in 22/23FY

Referred to	Count
Immigration Compliance	22
Immigration Investigations	66
Migrant Exploitation Team (Employment Services)	716
Grand total	**804**

Allegations of migrant exploitation have increased compared to historic volumes, and this has led to a greater proportion of active investigations related to employers then previous years. In addition to indicating higher levels of migrant exploitation occurring, it reflects the recent focus on providing information and education for migrants on how to report claims of exploitation, leading to more allegations. Whether exploitation has occurred must be determined through an investigation and therefore, until this has occurred, it is difficult to confirm the extent and nature of the harm. The temporary support package for MEPV holders has also likely increased volume of exploitation allegations in recent months.