



Immigration New Zealand Channel Uptake Strategy 2015 - 2018

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Document control

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Approved by

Name	Role	Date	Signature*
Stephen Dunstan	Project Sponsor	6 March 2015	 Channel Uptake Strategy UNCLASSIF
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Mark Bermingham (post PDG)	Business Integration Director	20 March 2015	 RE Channel Uptake Strategy sign-off UN

Reviewed by

The following people have a formal quality assurance role with respect to this document and confirm that the document is acceptable for the content noted.

Name	Role	Content	Date Sent
Sarah Thompson for Nicola Kilkelly	Process Specialist	Operating Model and Benefits	16 February 2015 26 February 2015
Martin Collison	Programme Integration Manager	Programme plan alignment	26 February 2015
Alejandra Mercado	Project Director – Business Solution Delivery	Integration	25 February 2015

Consulted

The following people have been consulted in the production of this document (list excludes approvers and reviewers).

Name	Role	Date
Catriona McKay	Director, Vision 2015	16 February 2015 25 February 2015
Kirsten Lloyd	Commercial Relationship Manager, Visa Services, INZ	26 January 2015
Jocelyn Mikaere	Assistant General Manager, Visa Services, INZ	26 January 2015
Peter Elms	Assistant General Manager , Visa Services, INZ	11 February 2015
Geoff Scott	Assistant General Manager, Visa Services, INZ	11 February 2015
Sarah Kemp	Principal Business Advisor, Visa Services, INZ	11 February 2015
Jason Judd	Manager, Planning & Performance, Visa Services, INZ	11 February 2015
Sarah Watson	Senior Business Advisor, Visa Services, INZ	26 January 2015
Jason Hallam	Manager, Immigration Contact Centre, INZ	26 January 2015
Michael Carley	Area Manager, Visa Services, INZ	26 January 2015
Gordon Barlow	IGMS Senior User Representative	26 January 2015
Tanya Katterns	Senior Communications Advisor, Vision 2015 Programme	26 January 2015
Jonathon Corlett	Senior Advisor, A & S Marketing Services, INZ	26 January 2015
Craig Walsh	Relationship Manager, Skills & Investment, SPA, INZ	26 January 2015
Andrew Johns	Sector Relationship Manager (Tourism), INZ	26 January 2015
Celia Coombes	Sector Relationship Manager (Education), INZ	26 January 2015
Kristina Nelson	Area Manager, Business Initiatives, Visa Services, INZ	26 January 2015
Kathy Tait	Team leader Operational Policy,	26 January 2015

	Service Design & Performance, INZ	
Anaru Silao	Senior Policy Advisor, Immigration Policy, Science, Skills and Innovation Group, MBIE	17 February 2015
Christine Hyndman	Manager Immigration Policy, Science, Skills and Innovation Group, MBIE	17 February 2015
Jude Hogan	Team Leader, Marketing Communications, Strategy and Governance, MBIE	17 February 2015
Sarah Thomson	Visa Services Deployment and Implementation Director, Visa Services, INZ	03 March 2015
Martin Collison	Programme integration Manager, Visa Services, INZ	03 March 2015

Distributed to

The following people / groups have been sent a copy of this document (list excludes approvers, reviewers, and consulted).

Name	Role	Date
Matt Hoskin	National Manager Skills & Investment, SPA, INZ	26 January 2015
Greg Forsythe	Manager, Attraction & Settlement, SPA, INZ	26 January 2015
Rob Stevens	Director International & Strategic Sector Engagement	26 January 2015
Margaret Cantlon	Manager Government Relations, Office of the Deputy Chief Executive, INZ	16 February 2015
Dean Wightman	Senior Management Accountant, Finance, Corporate Services, INZ	16 February 2015
Marc Piercey	Lead Advisor (INZ) Communications, Communications Services, MBIE	16 February 2015
Paula Hanekom	Business Analyst, Vision 2015 Programme, INZ	16 February 2015

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Executive Summary

This strategy outlines the ideal channel mix for lodging applications, and sets a clear pathway for transitioning to preferred channels. As part of this, it outlines targets for, and levers to, promote uptake of Immigration New Zealand's (INZ's) new online visa application channel, Immigration ONLINE. The key aim of this strategy is to support INZ's Visa Processing Operating Model (VPOM) by making Immigration ONLINE the default channel for visa applications. To this end, the strategy incorporates a framework to monitor the uptake of Immigration ONLINE, and an action plan to promote online uptake.

Uptake targets for Immigration ONLINE are:

- 20% of eligible student, work and visitor applications to be lodged online within six months after the launch of the online work and visitor forms in June 2015 (that is, by January 2016), and
- 80% of eligible student, work and visitor applications to be lodged online within three years, that is, by June 2018.

Uptake will be measured as a percentage of applications available through Immigration ONLINE.

Lever to promote online uptake range from communications, to a fee differential between paper and online applications, to more restrictive activities such as ceasing to hold and send out paper forms and closing onshore counter services. Section 8 of this document outlines possible actions and the point at which they will be deployed. Appendix One outlines the levers in more detail and assigns the responsibility for authorising them and carrying them out.

This channel uptake strategy will also inform future planning of how INZ will provide services and interact with clients in future.

1. Introduction

INZ is transitioning from a paper and office-based model with nearly all applications and documents lodged directly by mail or over the counter, to a new channel mix featuring Immigration ONLINE, eMedical, and a comprehensive network of Visa Application Centres (VACs) offshore. The new channel mix may also feature centralised lodgement services onshore.

Future changes will also impact upon the way applications are lodged, such as the review of onshore counter services and digitising applications which are not going to be available through Immigration ONLINE. The differences between the current state, the state as at the end of Vision 2015 and an ideal future state are summarised in Appendix Five.

At the same time as new channels are being launched, however, legacy online channels (such as those to apply for Working Holiday Schemes (WHSes) and Silver Fern) and digital, business-to-business channels such as StudentsOnline (SoL) are still in operation and likely to remain so in the foreseeable future, given their ease of use and their popularity. To be useful, a channel uptake strategy needs to include consideration of both old and new channels.

All of this entails major changes to the way that INZ operates, and how clients interact with us. Well-planned channel management is vital to enable the benefits of the government's investment in INZ's new visa processing operating model and Immigration ONLINE. To plan this and make sure INZ meets its goals, INZ needs a channel uptake strategy.

This is not INZ's first strategy that sets out to envisage its ideal channel mix. The previous one, in 2012, was finished:

- before Immigration ONLINE had been launched, and
- when it was assumed that legacy channels were soon to be retired, and
- after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade had scaled back from visa services they provided on behalf of INZ, but
- before VACs were the only channel to lodge applications outside of New Zealand.

Since 2012 there have been significant changes. Many of the services that were only conceptual in 2012 are in operation, such as Immigration ONLINE and the comprehensive network of offshore VACs. It is therefore timely to develop a channel uptake strategy, to optimise uptake of Immigration ONLINE and the preferred Vision 2015 operating model. Based on this, and other current programmes of work, Service Design & Performance (SDP) will be developing a new overarching Channel Strategy to inform post-Vision 2015 priorities and programmes of work.

2. Why a channel uptake strategy is needed

Vision 2015 articulates the characteristics of INZ's future operating model and, through a series of linked work packages, provides the roadmap and articulates the steps INZ needs to take to meet Vision 2015 goals. There are work packages to effect the process, organisational or technological change needed for the new visa processing system to come into effect. The channel uptake strategy is part of the customer cluster of these work packages, and has links with work considering the future of onshore counter services, the future role of retained legacy digital channels and the role of the Immigration Contact Centre (ICC).

This uptake strategy outlines the most efficient and effective channel mix for lodging applications, and sets a clear pathway for transitioning to the preferred channels, notably Immigration ONLINE. The strategy also identifies actions and methods to promote uptake of the preferred channel if uptake lags behind what is needed to meet the eventual targets.

Active promotion of the online channel will be required to generate the desired uptake. A channel uptake strategy is necessary to set targets, and define how they will be measured, in order to develop a plan and set milestones for uptake. SDP will use these to measure whether INZ is on track to meet its online uptake targets, or whether INZ needs to promote Immigration ONLINE or direct applicants towards Immigration ONLINE more actively.

INZ also needs an effective channel uptake strategy to manage how the increase of Immigration ONLINE will impact on other channels. If the volumes of applications made through Immigration ONLINE increase as they need to, this will impact on the numbers of applications that are lodged through offshore VACs and onshore offices. This will affect the allocation of some tasks for INZ staff. It will also affect how many VACs (offshore) and counter services (onshore) INZ needs, where they should be located, and what roles VACs and counters will play.

2.1. Scope of this strategy

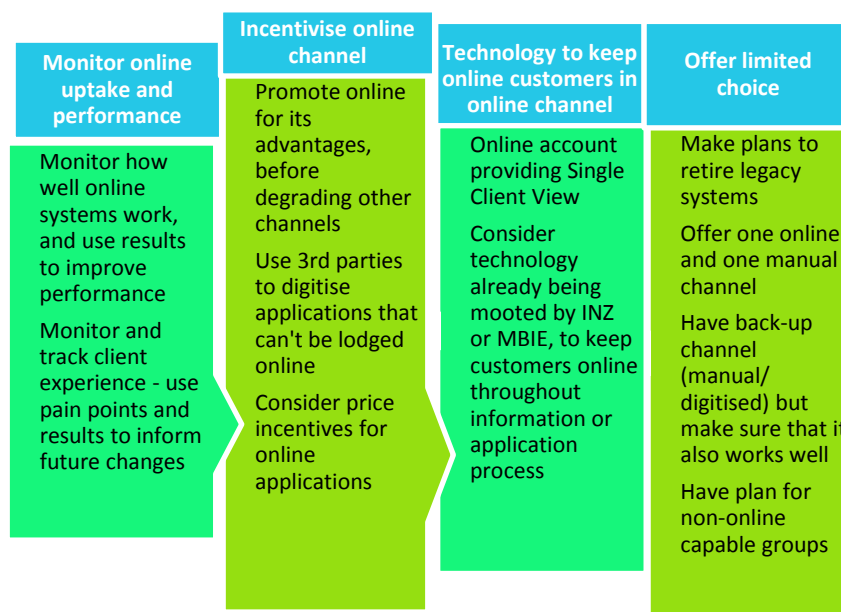
This uptake strategy is about the visa application process and includes targets and a framework for monitoring and reporting on channel uptake. It provides a roadmap to highlight where uptake is lagging behind schedule, and actions to promote greater uptake or analyse performance issues that deter clients from using the preferred channel to lodge applications. It also assigns responsibility for a range of action that will promote online or direct clients to online.

INZ is transitioning away from receiving queries via counters, ICC and the current INZ website. As part of this process, INZ has closed counters in offshore offices and introduced a comprehensive network of VACs, is developing a new, more intuitive and interactive INZ website, and is part of work considering webchat for all of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) contact centres. This version of the channel uptake strategy will focus on the application process, however, not on queries. This is because, unlike application channels which are already operational or soon will be, new query channels are either still under consideration or in the design phase.

2.2. Principles of the channel uptake strategy

INZ's ideal channel mix, outlined in Table One below, is informed by overarching principles of how services will be delivered and what choice clients will have.

Table One: Main principles of the channel uptake strategy



2.2.1. Online will be INZ's default channel for visa applications

The mix will be predominantly online applications, with 80% or more of the applications that are eligible to be lodged online being done through this channel¹. There will still be a role for existing online and online-like services, such as WHSs, Silver Fern and SoL, but these may change over time, or be superseded or incorporated into Immigration ONLINE. These longer term channel management decisions will be informed by other Vision 2015 programmes of work in the short term, such as a review of SoL, and the full Channel Strategy post-Vision 2015.

With the shift to online, the role of VACs will also change over time, as increasing numbers of online applications affect their volumes. The role of onshore counter services is also likely to change over time, presenting an opportunity for a review of these services. Lastly, there will also be a change to the types of tasks allocated to many staff in INZ offices, as the tasks involved in administration or decision-making roles will change with more applications arriving via Immigration ONLINE, with documents already uploaded.

2.2.2. There will be one online and one manual channel for each major application type

Restricted choice will be important – one manual and one online/ digitised channel for each major application type, with some niche products, such as WHSs, available online only. This is already happening, with offshore counter and drop-boxes being replaced with VACs, and Northern Area Documentation Office (NADO) acting as a central lodgement office for Auckland applications, and onshore online applications²; there is more to be done, however, with the review of the role of onshore offices counters and drop-boxes.

¹ Overall Immigration ONLINE targets are for 60% of all applications by volume to be available through Immigration ONLINE with the launch of visitor, work and Apply on Behalf of functionality

² A review considering centralising onshore lodgement is scheduled for later in 2015

2.2.3. Online channels will be convenient, easy to use and economic

In order for online to become the default channel it has to work and inspire client trust that it will work. Problems and issues need to be identified and fixed promptly.

2.2.4. INZ will cater for both the majority of clients who can go online and the exceptions who can't.

The experience of other government agencies is that 100% online may not be achievable: this was the conclusion reached by New Zealand agencies and overseas immigration agencies that had transitioned to online services. Some groups will be unable to use online easily enough to make it worth their while. This will be catered for, while pushing everyone who can move to online to use that channel.

3. Alignment with government, MBIE and INZ goals

This strategy needs to align with wider INZ, MBIE and government goals for service delivery.

3.1. New Zealand government goals

The government's Better Public Services (BPS) initiative aims to deliver public services that meet the needs of New Zealanders, requiring agencies to be more innovative in the way they deliver services. The BPS Result 10 goal is that *"New Zealanders can complete their transactions with government easily in a digital environment"*. The BPS Result 10 target is:

- *By 2017 an average of 70% of New Zealanders' most common transactions with government will be completed in a digital environment.*
- *We will support New Zealanders through the digital transition: Assist customers to transact digitally, and provide alternatives for those who can't.*³

To measure this, a range of common transactions with government were chosen, including "Apply for a visa". By developing Immigration ONLINE uptake targets, and a reporting and monitoring framework for tracking uptake, this strategy will provide a framework for MBIE to report on how well it is achieving this measure.

3.2. INZ and MBIE goals

INZ is working through fundamental changes to its operating model. These are outlined in the goals of Vision 2015, which will, among other goals, deliver a more flexible, customer-focused and cost-effective global service delivery model, based on the move to online visa processing. The drive to online visa processing is also recognised in early businesses cases for the Immigration Global Management System (IGMS, delivered as Immigration ONLINE) to make the online channel the preferred channel for visa applications, with comprehensive client self-service.

The channel uptake strategy also aligns with wider MBIE goals for expanding and maintaining MBIE's online presence and capabilities. These are expressed in the MBIE Digital Channel Strategy which,

³ Department of Internal Affairs Result 10 Blueprint

among other aims, has the following drivers for managing the services that MBIE provides through online channels:

- the web will continue to be the main channel for customers engaging with MBIE, and will expand as more services become digital, and
- MBIE will deliver more online services and increase their ease of use.⁴

4. Channels INZ currently uses

There are a range of channels used by clients to communicate with INZ and vice versa to:

- request information, for example, by calling ICC
- apply for a visa or accreditation, for example, by applying for a visa through Immigration ONLINE or lodging a paper-based application, and
- receive a visa, information or other service, for example by getting information about their eligibility for a visa or the validity of their current visa.

Channels can be either manual or electronic. As Table Two shows, each high-level channel is made up of other inbound and outbound channels used throughout the customer journey. It is important to note the distinction between providing general information and providing advice, as VACs are not able to provide advice.

Table Two: Channels that INZ uses

Tier 1 Channel	Tier 2 Channel	INZ	Inbound or Outbound?	Advice, Information or Transaction?
Manual	Counter	Onshore Visa offices	Both	All
		VACs	Both	Information and transactions
	Drop-box	Onshore visa offices	Inbound	Transactions
	Post	Visa offices	Both	All
		VACs	Both	Information and transactions
	Telephone	ICC	Both	Advice and information
Visa offices		Both	All	
VACs		Both	Information	
Electronic	Non-automated email (specific)	Visa offices (application queries)	Both	Information and application notifications
	Non-automated email (general)	ICC (general web queries)	Both	Information
	Automated text	Auckland Central Area Office (ACAO)	Outbound	Information and application notifications
	Automated email	ACAO	Outbound	
	Website	SDP	Outbound	Information
	Online application	Visa offices	Inbound	Transaction
	Online account	VisaView, Online suitcase	Inbound	Information

Clients and INZ will mix and match between channels during the course of a single transaction: this happens currently and is likely to continue even when most applications are lodged online. For example, someone might apply for a visa by delivering a paper application to a VAC, then, once the

⁴ *Digital Channel Strategy: MBIE Roadmap for Delivery of External Facing Information and Services*

application had been allocated, communicate with an immigration officer through email. Clients may apply through Immigration ONLINE, but ring ICC to check they are filling in the application correctly.

At the same time, INZ might use an automated text or email message to tell clients that their current visa is nearing expiry or that a decision has been reached on their application. This flexibility needs to be protected to enable customers and INZ to retain the ability to use the channels that suit them best for what they need to do at different points in an application process.

4.1. Responsibility for different channels

The business owners of INZ's current channels have been clarified and listed as a RACI table, attached as Appendix Two. If online uptake lags behind what is needed to meet targets, it may be necessary to deploy levers quickly. Having a list of who is responsible for which part of INZ operations is important, as it will enable INZ to establish easily who is responsible for authorising actions to promote or drive increased uptake of preferred channels, if needed, and who will be responsible for making sure this is done.

4.2. Costs of different channels

The costs of different channels are also a factor in deciding the preferred channels for INZ to promote. Online channels for lodging applications are cheaper to INZ than the traditional manual channels, in part because clients are effectively doing some of the data entry required when going through the online application process. VACs offload the costs of lodging applications to the client by charging a service fee, but also incur management costs from INZ, to manage the relationship and contractual arrangements between VACs and INZ.

As electronic or automated channels are generally quicker, cheaper and easier for routine or simple transactions, there is value in pushing mid and low-complexity transactions towards automated or electronic channels, saving the face-to-face resource for clients who have genuinely complicated situations or need extra help. The strategies of Inland Revenue (IR) and the New Zealand Police, detailed in Appendix Three, show how other New Zealand agencies are trying to direct clients to different channels based on the complexity of their transactions.

It is important to note that the information in Table Three is, in some places, based on estimated costs:

- There are operational variations between INZ offices and visa types (e.g. residence and temporary).
- Statistics are based on the average of a range from different offices and application types.
- The analysis does not include data/information from every office.
- Some data has not been updated for several years, for example, the Fees model (not updated since 2009).

Nevertheless, there are clear differences in manual and online channels, particularly with regards to the cost to serve involved in applying for a visa.

Table Three: Cost to respond to information enquiries via different channels

Channel		Total volume	Time/serve (minute)	FTE cost/serve	Adjusted cost/serve (incl overheads)
Information and enquiries					
Counter service	NZ	-	5.6	\$2.07	\$5.33
	Pacific	-	8.4	\$1.01	\$4.22
VisaView	-	56,474	0	\$0	\$1.06
ICC	Telephone	678,100	8.25	\$2.89	\$4.76
	Licensed Immigration Advisor	51,491	6.95	\$2.43	\$4.01
	VisaView	4,548	7.28	\$2.55	\$4.20
	Email	33,905	13.13	\$4.60	\$7.58
	Letters	323	15	\$5.25	\$8.66

Table Four: Cost to receive lodged applications via different channels

Application for a visa					
VACs (Counter/Post/Drop-box)	-	388,310	-	\$2.5	\$6.0*
Online submission	Immigration ONLINE	-	3	\$1.4	\$3.36**
	WHS (iBranch)	53,380	0	\$0	\$0***
Manual submission via drop box, post, counter at onshore offices	Residence	19,168	49.2	\$18.20	\$33.13
	Temporary	190,475	15.2	\$5.62	\$10.24

*Note: This is only the cost to INZ, as offshore clients also need to pay a VAC fee of between \$16-60 to lodge an application via VAC.

**Note: This is only the cost to INZ, as offshore clients also need to pay a VAC fee of between \$10-50 to submit their passport via a VAC.

***Note: Online WHS applications received in iBranch are not subject to any checks prior to processing. In contrast, Immigration ONLINE applications are subject to data integrity checks and passport authentication prior to processing.

5. Consultation

As part of determining the ideal channel mix and how it was achieved, information was gathered from other New Zealand agencies and other immigration agencies on how they:

- researched client preferences for which channels and ways to interact
- developed and tested new technologies and channels
- steered customers towards preferred channels, and
- managed client resistance to using preferred channels.

Although agencies had a wide variety of experiences and services that they had put online, some common themes emerged. There was also existing INZ research on client preferences, from data from customer satisfaction surveys, the INZ2 website development project and the Vision 2015 programme. A summary of the findings from the research is attached as Appendix Three. More detailed findings are available on request.

6. Targets for channel uptake

The targets for online channel uptake are:

- 20% of eligible student, work and visitor applications to be lodged online within six months after the Immigration ONLINE launch in June 2015 (BSD2), that is by January 2016, and
- 80% of eligible student, work and visitor applications to be lodged online within three years, that is, by June 2018.

Uptake will be measured as a percentage of applications available through Immigration ONLINE. For student applications, this includes Fee-paying and Scholarship applicants making a single application (that is, not bringing dependants who needed their own visas). It would not include applications for student visas as a dependant of a work or student visa holder, until these types of applications can be made through Immigration ONLINE. When it is possible for applications to be made through an agent following the BSD2 launch in June 2015, student applications made by an agent will also be included in uptake figures.

The three year period will start from June 2015, as the Apply on Behalf of functionality lays the foundation for majority uptake of online student visa applications.

6.1. Assumptions about measuring uptake

Measurement of uptake rates by channel will be based on the following assumptions:

- Student uptake excludes SoL (which will be counted as separate channel)
- Work uptake includes WHS and Silver Fern Job Search in online targets, and
- In calculating online uptake, uptake will be measured as a percentage of application types that are available online.

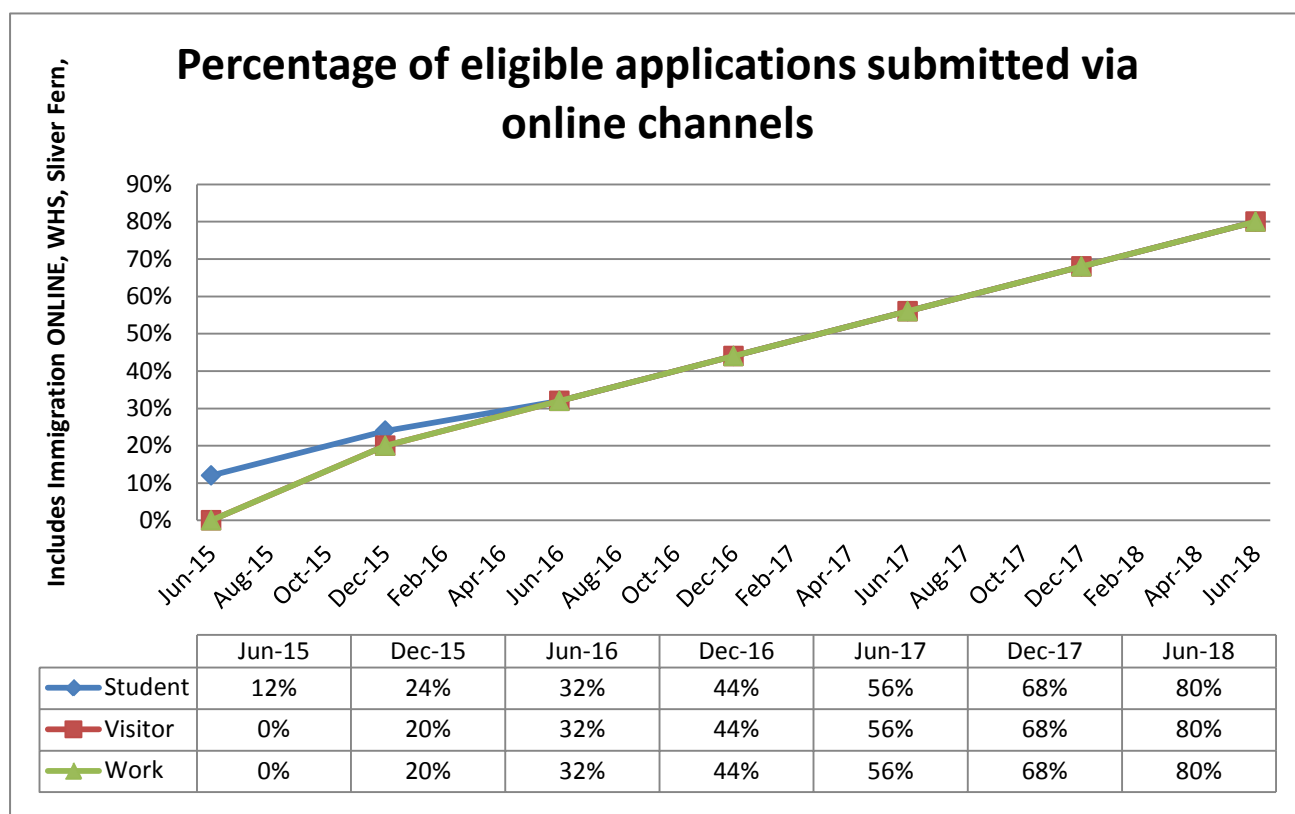
It is also dependent on a few key factors:

- After June 2015 launch: 60% of the current visa application mix will be able to be made through Immigration ONLINE (Visitor, Work, Apply on Behalf of), and
- Chinese language visitor visa forms will be available in online application by June 2015.

In tracking uptake, Table Four shows how ratios of applications made through Immigration ONLINE will need to grow over time to meet the eventual targets. Along the way, there are likely to be deviations from this steady growth for different application types. For example, the percentage of student applications submitted through Immigration ONLINE, will drop suddenly in June 2015, as the Apply on Behalf of functionality increases the pool of eligible student applications.

Uptake by application types will also be affected by seasonal peaks: the student peaks in June to July and December to January, and visitor peaks in the summer months. It is not yet clear whether how peaks will affect Immigration ONLINE uptake: early experience of Immigration ONLINE – Students is that the student peak resulted in a lower ratio of applications submitted through Immigration ONLINE, due to the popularity of SoL. The experience for visitor and work applications is likely to be different, though, as they do not have a similar alternative channel.

Table Four: Uptake targets for Immigration ONLINE applications in eligible categories



7. Monitoring and reporting on uptake and channel mix

It will be important to monitor the uptake of Immigration ONLINE. The reporting will include:

- a brief weekly report, updating numbers and ratios of student, visitor and work applications received by the main channels: Immigration ONLINE; other online-like channels; VACs; NADO; manual applications direct to INZ offices, and
- a detailed monthly breakdown of ratios of applications received via each channel, along with a commentary on trends and uptake, and on levers employed to increase online uptake.

A sample of the more detailed report format is attached as Appendix Four. Because the three different application types have different trends and peaks, it will be necessary to provide both an overall report on uptake, and a more granular report for each of the three main application types. This will help to pick up lagging uptake in specific areas, and target actions towards those clients.

SDP will be responsible for the reporting, which will go out primarily to managers in SDP, Visa Services, SPA and the Office of International and Strategic Sector Engagement. These teams will need to be kept updated, as they are responsible for many of the actions in the Implementation Plan to increase online uptake (Appendix One). SDP will also monitor uptake and decide whether certain actions are needed to drive uptake higher: carrying out these actions will be the responsibility of the team who is listed in Appendix One under that item. While SDP bears the primary responsibility for initiating some actions that would not otherwise be carried out, there are other actions that teams will do on their own behalf as part of their normal work.

8. Promoting the uptake of preferred channels

There are a range of levers that can be employed to increase online uptake, ranging from promotional activities to restrictive or directive activities. The range of levers available are outlined in detail in Appendix One, along with the role and team who will be responsible for deploying each lever and the trigger points that will prompt levers to be used.

8.1. A continuum from promoting to restricting

There is a continuum from easy and cheap promotional activities that can be deployed as part of existing work streams, to restrictive activities that will actively push clients towards online channels, but which risk adverse feedback from clients and stakeholders.

Nearly all agencies surveyed used the stronger incentives to push people online, either price differentials or restricting access to manual or face-to-face channels. There was initial resistance, but over time the online channels increased.

All agencies accepted that 100% online uptake was not feasible, as there will always be high needs clients or clients who are disadvantaged when using online, either by language problems or lack of technical access. However, resistance and barriers to online uptake was often due to unexpected reasons: it will be important to survey and analyse the client experience in using online and become aware of the real barriers to online uptake.

A common theme among agencies was that, in order for the online channel to succeed in becoming the default channel for applications, transactions or queries, it had to be easy, convenient and reliable. Agencies who went online without foreseeing possible problems or what the experience would be like for people with home computers (particularly older computers) faced problems in the early stages of adoption, with call centres being flooded with technical help queries, adverse publicity or reduced quality of service to clients. As these took time and effort to fix, it was advisable to start with a soft launch of online options, and address barriers to online uptake early in the life-cycle of the new channel. Only after these have been addressed will it be timely to launch active promotions.

The experiences of other countries, notably Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), were that barriers to online uptake were often unexpected. Language barriers, for example, were not as much of a problem as expected, particularly when applicants were digital natives used to googling terms and using translation sites. Unexpected points in the application process, however, caused applicants to abandon online and phone call centres for help. As it

expands its online offerings, DIBP has continued to rely heavily on customer satisfaction surveys, data analytics and customer focus groups to get better information about its customer base and the unexpected factors that dissuade people from applying online.

8.1.1. Promoting Immigration ONLINE

The experience of other agencies indicated that there was wide acceptance of online applications, with many clients expecting it, as they were used to going online with services providers such as banks. Because of this, many agencies did not often need to promote online channels heavily. In many cases word of mouth was enough to ensure uptake.

While uptake often climbed rapidly in the early stages, as early adopters tried it out, it often plateaued and then agencies had to promote or incentivise the online channel more actively. To encourage clients to use online channels, it was also important to limit the channels available to avoid client confusion and wasted effort, as clients faced with too many options started a transaction in one channel and then restarted in channels they were used to.

In promoting Immigration ONLINE it will be important to make clear the benefits of Immigration ONLINE to clients and stakeholders, such as advisers and education providers. This is being developed as part of the communications strategy to accompany the launches of different phases of Immigration ONLINE.

Methods to promote Immigration ONLINE include INZ websites, social media, text message campaigns and ICC on-hold messages, some of which is already can be rolled out as needed. Table Five, below, recaps on recent promotional activities that have been done and can be repeated.

Table Five: Promotional activities which have already been done

Activity?	When?	By whom?	Next steps?
Email sign-off blocks changed to promote Immigration ONLINE	Instructions sent to VS staff in February 2015	Operations Support, Visa Services	Likely to be refreshed when visitors, work and Apply on Behalf of go live
Promotional collateral created for presentations that INZ staff give to clients, the public and other stakeholders	Done for promotions in Sept-Oct 2014	Visions 2015 Communications team	New promotional campaign planned for when visitors, work and Apply on Behalf of go live
Settlement promotions, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emailing 24,000 full-fee paying students whose visas were due to expire in six months' time • posting NZ Now Facebook page, and • posting on Education New Zealand's Study in NZ Facebook page. 	October - December 2015	Settlement and Attraction Marketing	Can be redone, depending on need
Updates to INZ website to promote Immigration ONLINE - Students	February 2015	Operational Policy	Website can be updated as needed, or in preparation for when visitors, work and Apply on Behalf of go live
Changes to ICC welcome	February 2015	ICC	Training is ongoing. Welcome

Activity?	When?	By whom?	Next steps?
messages, training for staff to mention Immigration ONLINE to eligible callers			message can be updated in 48 hours, so can be refreshed when visitors, work and Apply on Behalf of go live

Promotions are unlikely to attract negative feedback, but may not cause significant shifts in applicant behaviour. There is a risk of the messages being lost in the barrage of information that most people receive as part of their work and social media use. While promotion has a value, it is not the strongest way to drive people towards online channels: it may encourage early adopters and digital natives, but not people who are resistant to online. Over-wide promotion could also waste time and resources if promotions are not targeted accurately enough, and promotion which oversells the benefits of Immigration ONLINE could cause disappointment in the system.

8.1.2. Analysing technical barriers to Immigration ONLINE uptake

To increase the uptake of Immigration ONLINE, it has to work smoothly for applicants and not present its own barriers. If it is difficult or unreliable to apply through, the word will get out and clients will drift back to manual applications, because they distrust the online system.

Since Immigration ONLINE is new, there is opportunity to learn how to improve it and change aspects that users find cumbersome or that cause operating problems. SDP, in conjunction with information analysts from the Information Reporting and Analysis team, will analyse information on applications by submission channel to find out:

- where Immigration ONLINE applications are coming from, the growth regions and regions in decline
- what types of applications are being lodged through Immigration ONLINE, or
- where there are any major gaps, for example applications which could be lodged in Immigration ONLINE being all lodged through manual or VAC channels,

Depending on trends it is also possible to request data from Datacom to monitor behaviours:

- analysing drop-out rates and drop-out points from Immigration ONLINE applications to learn where the problem points are, and
- monitoring the performance and prioritising solving any technical problems.

Another tool is surveys of applicants done through Migration Research:

- surveying applicants who have used Immigration ONLINE
- surveying eligible applicants who did not use Immigration ONLINE to find out what stopped them, and
- adding survey questions to the bottom of the online application form, or the receipt page, to find out about the client experience.

For surveys and findings to be of value, the problems that emerge will need to be addressed in further development and refining of Immigration ONLINE.

8.1.3. Incentivising the use of Immigration ONLINE

A fees differential between online and manual/ digitised applications is likely to help shift client preferences. Immigration Policy will follow this up in its review of immigration fees in late 2015. Fees will need to strike the balance between encouraging people to use online applications, while not slowing down the timelines for recouping the cost of developing Immigration ONLINE. A two tier fees structure, with a higher increase for manual applications and lower increase (but still an increase) for online applications is the best way to reflect the costs of different application channels, encourage online applications and recoup the cost of Immigration ONLINE.

There are other ways to incentivise online uptake, for example, by prioritising online applications in the queue, as high priority residence applications currently are. This, however, may not show enough of a time difference to matter to applicants, given how quickly most temporary applications are decided. It could also be administratively complex and not consistent with current triaging systems that INZ offices run. This option has not been ruled out, but will only be deployed if there is a strong argument that it is needed and will strongly effect a move towards online applications.

8.1.4. Restricting non-preferred channels to push clients to Immigration ONLINE

The ultimate way to boost online uptake is by closing off the paper option entirely. INZ has successfully done this for WHSs and it is an option for meeting online uptake targets.

The more directive tools, such as not holding any paper forms in counters or posting them to clients, not accepting applications dropped off to branches, and the results of a review of counter services in New Zealand, will push clients online, but probably cause adverse feedback and media in the short term. The part of INZ most likely to bear the brunt of this is Visa Services. When canvassed, Visa Services senior managers were in support of, not only the softer promotional methods, but also the restrictive actions.

In order for the restrictive levers to work, however, Immigration ONLINE will need to be working reliably, and have built up a high degree of client trust.

8.2. What will trigger these actions?

Appendix One contains guidelines on what would trigger each action. Some actions will be ongoing, and become part of the ongoing work of INZ managers and staff: others, such as a review of the future of onshore counters, are part of related projects and will follow the timelines for those projects. The launch of different stages of Immigration ONLINE, such as the June 2015 BSD2 launch enabling work and visitor applications and Apply on Behalf of functionality, will also be the trigger for a plan of communications and promotions activities, which the Vision 2015 Communications team will develop.

Appendix One also outlines which roles will be responsible for authorising each action and, where necessary, finding the budget for it. It also outlines which roles will be responsible for carrying out each action.

9. Dependencies and assumptions

9.1. Dependencies

If the targets in the channel uptake strategy are going to be met, Immigration ONLINE needs to

- keep to its schedule for roll-outs to include different visa types, including the roll-out of visitor, work and Apply on Behalf of functionality in June 2015, and
- have technical and operating problems addressed and fixed quickly, so that confidence is maintained in the system.

9.2. Impacts on other channels

The impact of ONLINE on the VACs has not been overly significant to date. This is primarily for two reasons. Firstly, the take up rate of Immigration ONLINE is still a long way from being fully realised, and secondly, VACs still have a revenue stream from their role in transiting passports from Immigration ONLINE visa applicants to INZ offices.

More significant volume changes for VACs are likely to occur with the launch of Immigration ONLINE for visitor and work applications in June 2015. A further change is expected with the advent of e-visas. The first phase of the e-visa project is for all onshore visitor visa applications and all offshore temporary visa applications from nationals of visa-waiver countries, so many offshore visa-free clients will no longer have to send their passports to VACs to get a visa label. This is expected to have significant impacts on the amount of business that VACs receive through INZ. The future model is likely to see INZ using VACs quite differently: they may be able to expand their services by taking on digitisation of paper applications or doing biometric enrolment work for INZ. This is similar to the way that DIBP are considering using their Service Delivery partners (equivalent of VACs).

There are related programmes of work on the future of NADO and SoL. It is possible that an onshore lodgements service will be developed that is used as a de facto VAC, and is also responsible for digitising applications that are not yet developed as an online form. SoL is likely to be retained in the foreseeable future, due to its popularity with providers and the ability it provides to streamline and expedite huge numbers of low-risk student applications, particularly in peak periods. High volumes of applications lodged through SoL will affect the growth in applications through Immigration ONLINE, as there will be less incentive for SoL providers to promote Immigration ONLINE to their students.

These programmes of work are still at the planning stage, however, so decisions have not yet been made. Planning to boost uptake of Immigration ONLINE will need to be done with the future roles of onshore VAC-like services and business-to-business services such as SoL in mind.

10. Appendices

10.1. Appendix One: Implementation plan – levers to drive uptake of Immigration ONLINE

Activity/ Mechanism	Impacts?	How?	Who will authorise this?	Who is responsible for doing it?	What needs to be done?	When?	What would trigger this?	Risks	Mitigation	Existing project?
Promote										
• Promotion on INZ websites	• Medium	• Banners, news and updated content for NZNow, NZReady, INZ website • Enhanced content steps people through visa process and directs to ONLINE pages	• GM SDP	• Attraction & Settlement Marketing owns NZReady, NZNow • Operational Policy (for INZ website)	• Plan for using these sites • Draft and develop text – both promotional and general visa info • Timetable for launching content	• Early push for students only in Feb/March 2015 • From mid-2015, before BSD2, then as needed	• Leading up to June 2015 BSD2	• Over-promising • Service failure	• Make sure service meets claims, tech problems sorted out	• INZ2 project
• Promotion on social media, facebook	• Low	• Develop posts for NewZealandNow, NewToNewZealand facebook pages	• Manager, Attraction & Settlement Marketing	• Attraction & Settlement Marketing	• Agree ways to promote Immigration ONLINE via existing social channels	• Early push for students only in Feb/March 2015 • Before BSD2, then as needed				• Ongoing Attraction & Settlement Marketing work streams
• Add to NZNow post-registration emails series	• Medium	• Create text for Attraction & Settlement Marketing to use			• Agree way to insert information about Immigration ONLINE into communications	• From late 2015, then as needed	• If uptake rates are below targets three months after June 2015 BSD2	• Spamming • Over-promising	• Stick to information • Don't oversell	
• Add to pro-comms messaging	• High	• Tweak pro-comms messages to highlight • Add to staff address blocks	• AGM NZ/Northern Visa Services	• iBranch part of ACAO	• Work with iBranch to input into pro-comms message	• From 2015, then as needed	• Just before June 2015 launch	• Spamming • Too much to read on phone	• Provide link in emails to web links • Don't oversell	
• Add messages about applying online to relevant paper forms, INZ website pages, letter templates etc	• High	• Update forms and guides and website pages as part of normal release cycle	• GM SDP	• Manager, OpPol, SDP	• Update forms and website pages, include into Op Pol release schedule	• From mid-2015, to coincide with BSD2, then as needed	• Should be part of normal updating of forms and websites	• Spamming • Over-selling • Distracts from main purpose of forms	• Don't oversell: one message up top and that's it	
• Develop collateral as part of communications strategy to launch	• High	• Draft comms action plan, with handouts, flyers, banner text	• Vision 2015 team	• Senior Communications Advisor, Vision 2015 programme	• Draft communications strategy for promotion of Immigration ONLINE • Design and create	• Timed for BSD2	• Part of further roll-out of Immigration ONLINE	• Over-selling	• Don't oversell – be positive but realistic about the benefits	

Activity/ Mechanism	Impacts?	How?	Who will authorise this?	Who is responsible for doing it?	What needs to be done?	When?	What would trigger this?	Risks	Mitigation	Existing project?
BSD2 of Immigration ONLINE					promotional material • Distribute to offices, VACs					
• Create video clips, showing how to use Immigration ONLINE	• Medium	• Create screen videos that can be used as a how-to	• VSLT	• Vision 2015 programme	• Create video clips, with screen shots of pages for use at trade fairs etc	• As needed for trade fairs	• Because of cost, will only be deployed if a clear need is established	• Could be expensive for not much effect	• Assess costs and needs before doing it	•
• Use collateral in presentations and seminars etc to stakeholders, clients, share with parts of MBIE who find it relevant (e.g. Labour Inspectorate)	• High	• Incorporate collateral into seminar material, newsletters, material for presentations at trade fairs	• VS AGMs • Director International and Strategic Sector Engagement	• VS managers and staff • Sector Relationship Managers	• Make sure that all promotional and seminar material incorporate messages and info about Immigration ONLINE where relevant	• As parts of regular comms and engagement with stakeholders, leading up to June 2015 BSD2	• Part of ongoing promotional/ educational activities	• Inaccurate info • Overselling Immigration ONLINE, continuing to promote past where this is needed	• Check content and audiences with Vision 2015 team • Target promotion to audiences where useful , don't oversell	•
• Add key messages to bottom of email address blocks	• Medium	• Emails – advice in VisaPak	• Visa Services Leadership Team (VSLT)	• Template letters – Operational Policy, SDP • Email sign-offs – Ops Support, Visa Services	• Update template letters with standard text • Send visa to INZ offices with instructions on updating sign-off blocks with standard text	• From mid- 2015, to coincide with BSD2, then as needed	• To promote BSD2, after launch		• Don't use forever - use for period and adapt to changes to online	•
• Promotion to education providers and education agents	• High	• Presentation to education provider groups and agents via ENZ • Training material for presentations to education providers • Articles for in- house publications • Text for social media	• Director International and Strategic Sector Engagement	• Education Sector Relationships Manager	• Liaise with Education NZ and IAA, ask if they can add text or news items in their regular communications. • Adapt or reuse PowerPoint slides from communications strategy	• From June 2015 BSD2, in time for Apply on Behalf of functionality	• A few months before June 2015 BSD2	• Systems failure • Doesn't work for advisers – out of date technology	• Monitor systems problems that results in calls to ICC	• Education Sector Relationships Manager • IPP Relationship Manager, Palmerston North Student Office
• Promotion to immigration advisers, lawyers	• Medium	• Promotion to advisers – via IAA and Law Society, advisers reference group • Articles for in- house publications	• AGM NZ/Northern Visa Services	• AGM NZ/Northern Visa Services	• Bring up as part of regular meetings with reference group, or with IAA or NZ Law Society • Possible to use existing Vision 2015 material					• Sector Relationships team? • Industry Partnership Programme
• Promotion to employers and employer groups	• Medium	• Incorporate content to seminars for accredited	• Manager Skills and Investment, SPA	Relationship Managers, Skills and Investment, SPA	• Provide standard PowerPoint slides, newsletters text for short articles, in time for May	• For June 2015 BSD2	• Include in next employer seminar that Settlement runs	• Over-promising • Service failure • Not targeted well	• Be clear who Immigration ONLINE is for, and what visa	• Attraction & Settlement Marketing employer

Activity/ Mechanism	Impacts?	How?	Who will authorise this?	Who is responsible for doing it?	What needs to be done?	When?	What would trigger this?	Risks	Mitigation	Existing project?
		employers and other employer groups • Incorporate content into email newsletters			2015 seminars to employers and groups • Reuse suite of PowerPoint slides to include in next employer seminar • Update as needed			enough – waste of effort	types are excluded • Make sure service meets claims, tech problems sorted out • Pick key audiences to target	seminars
• Promotion through TourismNZ	• High	• Contact TourismNZ • Agree plan for promotion	• Director International and Strategic Sector Engagement	• Tourism Industry Relationships Manager	• Meet NZInc partners to get buy in for displaying posters	• For June 2015 BSD2	• A few months after June 2015 launch			•
• Investigate platforms for promoting to emerging markets	• High	• Liaise with TourismNZ to find avenues to promote to emerging markets (esp China, India)	• Director International and Strategic Sector Engagement	• Tourism Industry Relationships Manager	• Work with TourismNZ on how to communicate with China and India markets (e.g. no facebook in China) • Develop collateral that works in those markets	• Following on from June 2015 BSD2	• After June 2015 launch			•
• Promotion to employers via channels such as Chambers of Commerce, EDAs, industry associations	• Medium	• Incorporate content into communications that organisations send members	• Manager Skills and Investment, SPA	• Relationship Managers, Skills and Investment, SPA	• Adapt of reuse PowerPoints, key messages, for	• For June BSD2 - work visas the key product here	• After June 2015 launch			•
• Add to ICC on-hold messages	• Medium	• Re-do ICC on-hold message to include Immigration ONLINE info	• AGM NZ/Northern Visa Services	• ICC management and training teams • ICC management and training teams	• Re-do ICC on-hold message	• From 2015 for Visitor and Work drops?	• A few months after June 2015 launch, if uptake rates lag more than 10% behind what is expected	• Message not clear	• Make sure message works, has clear links and info	• ICC review – Jason Hallam(?) • Ongoing ICC management
• Outbound phone campaign led by ICC	• Medium	• IC lead outbound phone campaign to promote Immigration ONLINE to potential users			• Draft text and questions for outbound calls	• As needed	• As soon as uptake lags significantly behind what is expected	• Overselling to people – spamming to people who have already been emailed • Selling to people who can't use Immigration ONLINE	• Choose target group carefully • Only phone people with no email contact (so they only get one message)	•
• ICC promote in their calls - not a script, but training new staff to promote Immigration ONLINE	• Medium	• Adjustments to ICC training to include Immigration ONLINE			• Work with ICC trainers, to include messaging about Immigration ONLINE for ICC staff to use when appropriate • Change to email format • Add items and links in Knowledge Base	• Add to regular training schedule, ongoing work, change messaging as Immigration ONLINE rolls out	• A few months after June 2015 launch, if uptake rates lag more than 15% behind what is expected	• Over-promising • Giving irrelevant information • Extends length of call times	• Only provide information to callers for whom it is relevant • Have website URLs to hand to send to people to look up later	• ICC review – Jocelyn Mikaere, Jason Hallam • Ongoing ICC management

Activity/ Mechanism	Impacts?	How?	Who will authorise this?	Who is responsible for doing it?	What needs to be done?	When?	What would trigger this?	Risks	Mitigation	Existing project?
Analyse										
• Monitor performance of online products to fix problems	• High	• Feedback to ICT manager of any technical issues	• GM SDP	• Manager ICT, SDP	• Ongoing work to assess problems with online products • Identify issues, through client performance data, results from surveys • Analyse results • Prioritise which will be addressed, depending on business need and cost get funding to fix online forms	• From first launch	• Ongoing	• If problems not addressed, less trust in IGMS • If no budget to fix problems, no point in doing this	• Address all technical problems as quickly as possible	•
• Study drop-outs to learn where pain points are	• High	• Inspectlet • Formissimo				• Ongoing			• Agree source of funds to fix things beforehand • File actions we can't yet afford	•
• Survey applicants who have used Immigration ONLINE or who decided not to use Immigration ONLINE – find out what stopped them	• Medium	• Build questions into Migration Research's Customer Satisfaction surveys • In-house survey run by Migration Research	• GM SDP • Manager, Attraction & Settlement Marketing	• Migration Research • Attraction & Settlement Marketing, SPA	• Arrange data extraction for emails of student visa holders, to survey who used Immigration ONLINE and those who didn't • Draft survey questions with Migration Research	• For students in February • For other groups after BSD2 launch	• A few months after launch, if uptake rates lag more than 10% behind what is expected	• People get spammed • Surveys onerous and put people off or don't get completed • Particular groups (e.g. students) have very low survey response • If we can't act on findings of surveys (as no budget) wasted effort	• Keep surveys short and targeted • Use Migration Research tools to avoid spamming • Find budget to fix issues before launching surveys	• Ongoing Migration research Customer Satisfaction Surveys
• Add survey questions to bottom of online application form, or offer options of online survey to people who applied online	• Medium	• Changes to Immigration ONLINE forms	• GM SDP	• Manager ICT, SDP	• Re-use NZNow "What is wrong with this page?" to pick up pain points	• When we can afford it	• Ongoing		• Keep surveys targeted • Focus on change we can make now • File actions we can't yet afford	•
• Maximise search engine optimisation	• Medium	• Web analytics tools to track traffic and popularity of website especially Immigration ONLINE pages • Consider paid side bar ads to boost awareness of Immigration ONLINE	• GM SDP • Manager, Attraction & Settlement Marketing	• Manager ICT, SDP • Manager, Attraction & Settlement Marketing	• Use web analytics tools, in use by SPA to track traffic • If paid side bar ads agreed to, commission these	• With launch of INZ2	• Launch of INZ2	• Could be expensive and not achieve big changes, particularly side bar ads • If changes aren't implemented as a result of findings, could be effort wasted	• Only use in targeted way • Commit to acting on findings from analytics	•

Activity/ Mechanism	Impacts?	How?	Who will authorise this?	Who is responsible for doing it?	What needs to be done?	When?	What would trigger this?	Risks	Mitigation	Existing project?
Incentivise										
• 2015 fees review – cheaper fee for online applications	• High	• Seek Cabinet agreement to fee differential	• Immigration Policy with input from INZ Finance team	• Immigration Policy with input from INZ Finance team	• Business agreement on need and timing for introducing fees differential	• Early 2015	• Part of Immigration Policy fees review in late 2015	• Online fees not enough to cover costs of IGMS • Complaints about higher fees for paper apps	• Promote benefits of online • Explain why paper costs more and takes longer	• 2015 First Principles Fees Review – ImPol and INZ Finance
• Time differential – do online applications ahead of queue before paper ones. Advertise this	• Low	• Set up system for holding back manual applications?	• VSLT	• Visa Services offices	• Set system to hold back manual applications, communicate to offices and on website	• Only if uptake of Immigration ONLINE lags more than 20% below what is needed	• Very low take up of Immigration ONLINE	• System too administratively complex to work • Will conflict with existing triaging and queues in INZ offices • Time difference not enough to matter to applicants • Adverse reactions	• Will only deploy this if there is marked problem with Immigration ONLINE uptake • Need to advertise heavily first, to maximise effect	•
Restrict/ Direct										
• Take away paper forms from INZ office counters	• High	• Warning of change – news items on INZ.govt.nz • Take all paper forms away from counters	• Responsible Area Managers and AGM	• Responsible Area Managers and AGM	• Advance warning of change and timetable in website • Posting alternatives on website and in email communications to stakeholders	• Mid-2016	• Online uptake rates more than 10% behind forecast	• Opposition from clients, advisers, stakeholders • Adverse media interest	• Promote benefits to stakeholders, clients, industry partners • Warn of change • Make it easier to find Immigration ONLINE on INZ site	• NADO/ Front of house review, Visa Services- Jocelyn Mikaere, Christine McGaughey, Ross Grigg, Bolen Ng
• Stop posting out paper forms	• Medium	• Tell clients who ring or drop in	• ICC management • AMs and AGMs	• ICC management • AMs and AGMs						• ICC review – Jason Hallam
• Review of counter services in onshore INZ offices – visits to INZ offices appointment only	• High	• Stop providing	• Onshore Visa Services AGMs	• Onshore Visa Services AGMs	• Reduce, then close opening hours of counters at INZ offices onshore • Appointment system • Close counters onshore	• Following timelines of NADO Centralised lodgement	• Already in line with other projects, will happen anyway		• Promote benefits and ease of DIY • Ensure website makes it easy to find forms and guides	• NADO/ Centralised Onshore Lodgement project
• Stop printing paper forms	• High	• Stop printing paper forms	• Service Design and Performance?	• Service Design and Performance?						• ICC review – Jason Hallam
• Stop accepting paper forms in INZ offices (except NADO)	• High	• Website news • Remove forms from counters	• Onshore Visa Services AGMs	• Onshore Visa Services AGMs	• Website item – a few months before • ICC message, link to forms in emails to clients					•

10.2. Appendix Two: RACI for current channels

INZ Channel Uptake Strategy Project: RACI for current state channels

The R.A.C.I diagram below identifies the positions within INZ business units with responsibility for channel uptake and use. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible (R)** – oversees day-to-day channel operations, maintenance and use. Implements any improvements
- **Accountable (A)** – approves change initiatives, ultimately accountable for overall channel performance
- **Consulted (C)** – major stakeholder in a channel’s performance
- **Informed (I)** – minor stakeholder in a channel’s performance.

	Visa Services AGM NZ/Northern	Visa Services AGM NZ/Pacific	Visa Services AGM Operations	Visa Services Area Manager Operations	Visa Services Area Manager responsible	Visa Services Commercial Relationship Manager	Visa Services ICC Manager	Service Support GM	Service Support Op Policy Manager	Compliance, Risk and Integrity GM	Settlement, Protection & Attraction GM
Manual: VACs (Counter/Post/Drop-box)	C	C	C	R	R	A	C		C	C	I
Manual: counter NZ/Pacific	A	A	C	R	R	C	C		C	C	I
Manual: drop-box & post onshore	A	A	C	R	R	C	C		C	C	
Manual: telephone & non-automated email	C	C	A	R	R	C	C		C	C	
Manual: telephone ICC	A	C	C	C	C	C	R		C	C	
Electronic: automated email	A	C	C	C	R	C	C		C	C	I
Electronic: automated text	A	C	C	C	R	C	C		C	C	C
Electronic: online submission*	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	R	C	I
Electronic: Visa View	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	R	C
Electronic: website	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	R	C	C

* includes the online suitcase

10.3. Appendix Three: Consultation findings

10.3.1. INZ client preferences

The INZ Global Customer Satisfaction surveys and client profiles done as part of the INZ2 website project have shown that many clients would like to apply online. In a survey done before Immigration ONLINE, clients expressed a preference to communicating with INZ via email:

Table Four: Applicants' preferred means of communication with INZ
(How would you prefer to communicate with INZ when you are making an application?)⁵

	2009	2010	2011	2012
In person (face to face)	23%	25%	21%	17%
Phone	17%	16%	19%	17%
Email	54%	53%	55%	61%
Mail/post	6%	6%	5%	4%
Internet	0%	0%	0%	0%
Via agent	0%	0%	0%	0%
OTHERS	0%	0%	2%	1%
Total (Base)	4,530	1,958	4,340	3,707

They were also in favour of the option of applying for visas online before this was an option:

Table Five: Applicants who would apply online
(Immigration New Zealand is considering having the application process for some visas available online. If you had the option, would you prefer to apply online?)⁶

	Sep-11	Mar-12	Sep-12	Mar-13
Definitely	63%	68%	66%	66%
Probably	20%	19%	20%	21%
Maybe	11%	9%	10%	9%
Probably not	3%	3%	2%	2%
Definitely not	1%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%
Total (Base)	2,305	4,373	3,916	3,821

More recently, INZ engaged DNA to carry out user research to understand INZ clients in order to shape INZ service delivery into the future, and to inform the INZ2 website project. DNA held workshops focusing on people applying for different INZ visa types, including work, study, visitor and family residence. The resulting profiles captured existing knowledge of clients and provided a high level view of their preferences and needs in interacting with INZ. This included a preference for online applications:

- Most people believed a more digital-focussed, multi-channel solution would be preferable to manual applications
- Participants used the Immigration New Zealand website as their go-to information source, knowing the information and forms would be up to date

⁵ INZ Customer Satisfaction Survey Annual 2009-2012

⁶ INZ Customer Satisfaction Survey Quarterly 2011-2013

- The ability to collaborate on an application and save fields in online forms was seen as a highly desirable feature
- People look for tools to assist them in their roles, and when there are none available, often resort to creating their own.⁷

However, there was also preference for a mix between an online application and the ability to ask questions through a call centre, or have direct contact with a case officer throughout the course of an application. So, while there was support for increasing the uptake on online applications, this did not mean that clients would be content to stay in the online channel throughout the visa process. Related pieces of work, such as INZ2 and changes to ICC may help to address this and persuade clients to stay online and self-serving throughout the course of an application or query.

10.3.2. Experiences of New Zealand government agencies

Many New Zealand government agencies have undertaken significant projects to shift services online, including:

- Online passport applications (Passport Office)
- Online chat for queries (Careers New Zealand)
- Paying fines (New Zealand Police)
- MyIR (Inland Revenue)

The experiences of these agencies have shown many of the unexpectedly easy and difficult aspects of making a transition to online and persuading clients to use online channels.

Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) Passport Office

DIA offer online applications for adult passport renewals. They started with the easy passport types, which is adult renewal. The next phase will be child renewal, then family groups. By December 2014, about 40% of eligible applications were done online (29% of total passport applications). They are aiming for 50%. Online passport applications are also cheaper, so there was that incentive.

DIA didn't advertise or promote the service, apart from a limited pilot (an online trial to employees of some government agencies). They had a surge with early adopters, then uptake peaked.

Early on, there was a surge of calls to the DIA call centre, mostly technical problems from people with their home computers. Call centre staff ended up being a de facto IT help desk which was not the plan. The call centre staff don't have webchat, but do lots of email conversations with clients.

There were unexpected barriers to going online: about 30% of people want to pay by cheque and people who could renew their own passport online but not their kids, just did paper for the whole lot. Ideally DIA would have the resource to call customers back and find out about the customer experience: they are putting in a bid for funds for this.

Their vision is to get everything online by 2020, with an assisted digital channel for people with barriers to applying online.

⁷ Immigration New Zealand Profiles (DNA/INZ paper), page 6

Careers New Zealand

CareersNZ started using online chat a few years ago. They contract an American company, Boldchat, and have 10 licences so up to 10 people can be enrolled as users. They currently have a team of six who do all the queries that CareersNZ receive, from telephone calls, email queries, online chat and texts. Boldchat also provides some technical support (though the basic web hosting is done by CareersNZ's in-house team) and some 'canned' messages, that advisers can use (such as standard greetings text or standard URLs that they often refer clients to) to speed up responses.

The online chat option accounts for about 20% of all traffic. The most common channel is still phone, online chat is popular with young clients (like school-leavers) and people who don't speak English well. The youth market, a large sector of the CareersNZ market, are used to online and have similar options from agencies such as Youthline.

On average phone calls take around 4 minutes, but a webchat about 20 minutes. Once a chat is over, the client can have the entire conversation emailed to them, for reference, and to look up any links.

Switching between channels is not uncommon: a client may start with webchat, but if they have complicated queries, the adviser will set up a phone appointment with a careers consultant.

CareersNZ have done marketing campaigns, often through high schools, using texts. Students text and get links texted back to them. This is likely to grow with more sophisticated phones. The option of going mobile friendly, enabling people to access chat functions on their phone is being considered for the future. The solution might be an app.

Inland Revenue – My IR and eGST:

IR has 1.7 million registered accounts in MyIR and launched e-GST for business customers in 2012. The uptake for e-GST, an authenticated online GST filing services, has been very high: their uptake targets were 70% uptake within five years and then 5% growth year on year. With new products, at first the uptake is very high (as coming from nothing) and then it levels off. Sometimes no more innovations are done on a product, as the gains are less dramatic. It is important to keep improving mature products even if the growth is less dramatic.

They have marketed some new services: for example, a postcard and e-direct marketing campaign for voice biometric registration for My IR and enhancements to MyIR, letters out to promote e-GST, big promotions on their website, mail-outs, inclusions into existing mailouts.

Their main driver for online was a no-touch, no-paper services for business, not just front end loading with the back office doing data entry and digitisation. They also want a system which remembers information from last time, as clients tend to be repeat ones, and want to do half a draft and go back to it. IR use rules engines to pick up on obvious errors (such as tax more than earnings), and a More Info button for queries (better than a Help button). An application has to be complete before it can be submitted.

They have also been uncompromising about cutting off options: for example, people with MyIR accounts have the paper option turned off for them; businesses with e-GST can no longer use unauthenticated online filing.

It is important to restrict the choices and channels, otherwise people get confused and half start in one channel and then start again in another. IR accepts that online might not work for everybody.

They are considering options like apps, for areas where internet is unreliable, but most people have mobile phones.

When they design online forms, they focus on cutting repeat questions and catering for the 80% who can do it end-to-end online. The 20% who can't, need to call the call centre, as their situations are genuinely very complicated. They try to weed out the 20% as soon as possible in the online application process and direct them to the call centre, rather than have them fill in the whole form and then be told they can't do it online. They do a lot of customer analytics, seeing where people come unstuck in the online process.

The online world creates expectations of 24/7 services, which the call centre isn't providing at present. They still have call centres, but the basic queries (such as "What's my IRD number?") have gone down. Their call centres have voice-activated routing, so by the time the client gets to a call centre operator, the operator knows what they want to talk about. The call centre also runs an online dedicated inbox: people logged into their MyIR accounts can email questions. IR will answer specific tax questions only through the MyIR account. They answer general questions through open emails. They have a counter service, but this is by appointment only.

They don't have a centralised Client Records Management (CRM), though it is possible to record calls against an IRD number, when clients say that to the call centre. All calls come in through a speech engine and voice authentication system. This allows customers to do easy but high fraud risk transactions (like changing your bank account number for a tax refund) over the phone, as IR can have total confidence that it is that person, not someone else who has got their IRD number. IR has 1.2 million biometric voice records, so can match customers with a high degree of confidence. This contributes to one of the key goals, which is to reduce face-to-face contact for easy interactions. Another goal is for everyone with a MyIR account to do all their transactions in the MyIR account, but for this to be a reality, the MyIR has to be simpler and more customer-centric to use.

Other technology that IR is interested in is a web-chat service, and an assisted digital service, like web chat, but more intuitive. For example an assisted digital box might pop up if people spend a long time on a page or go back at a certain point in a form, asking if they have any questions. The questions typed in can become part of the database of questions, if they are common enough.

New Zealand Police – putting straightforward transactions online:

The police have put a number of simple transactions available online (such as paying fines, applying for a change of address for a firearms license, requesting police vetting). The alternative (paying at a Westpac branch) is a much more expensive transaction for the police.

Minor tweaks, such as putting the online options on their home page and making it the first option on infringement notices, or that police officers list when telling people how they can pay, have been quite successful. However the percentage of online transactions is still quite small. They are considering a combined Police/ Ambulance/ Fire Service 111 line for faster service, and using Verified/ Authenticated Real Me accounts for easy transactions.

Face-to-face is a key part of their role, but they would like more calls for mid and low-complexity transactions through online. This enables them to have enough frontline resources for people who need police presence and protection. They have mapped out channels for helping a victim of a

burglary: one call to a dedicated line could line up the police report, Victims Support visit, insurance claim, and a visit from a police officer to record the crime scene.

10.3.3. Experiences of other immigration agencies

Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP):

DIBP has had online options since 2001, when they offered student visas, but they are resigned to never being 100% online. There will always be resistance from clients who can't speak English or use the internet. DIBP's focus is on incentivising online usage rather than cutting off channels.

They haven't found that marketing of their online services has been needed, apart from a push to promote their Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) service to employers. Most of their clients expect online, as they are used to dealing with banks and other service providers online.

Keeping online customers online is a key focus: rather than the current situation, where people lodge online but call the call centre for status updates and so on. When applications exceed the processing timeframes on the DIBP website (because of increased volumes), this leads to calls to the call centre, which are both costly and delaying: 46% of calls to call centres are checking on the status of an application. Like New Zealand, Australia does not charge a premium rates for calls.

DIBP is trying to work out how to get better information and updates out to applicants, so they don't call so much. They are looking into systems whereby updates can come directly to a client's IMMI account or mobile phones via texts or an app. Another idea is building in an online chat function on the website, which clients can access to send queries to while they are making applications online.

DIBP are looking into paperless options. All of their visas are already e-visas and in the VEVO system, clients can download their visa conditions, and email them to others (e.g. prospective employers who want to be confident that someone can work legally). Another plan is to enable people to print off their movement records themselves, as DIBP doesn't issue border stamps anymore.

DIBP are also looking into making more use of their Service Delivery Partners (SDP, Australian version of VACs) by having them lodge applications, do data entry, check that forms are complete before sending them, as well as taking biometric data on DIBP's behalf.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC):

Only temporary visas can be applied for online, and are about 30% of temporary visas. CIC are planning to have permanent residence visas and passport applications online from early 2015, and to have online electronic authorisation (Apply on Behalf of functionality) by April 2015. They are considering e-visa functionality but don't have it yet.

Of the four channels (In Person; By Mail; Over the phone; Internet), In Person and Mail are much less common now and not favoured. CIC offices no longer have counters, and are looking at alternatives to mail. However to require people to apply online, CIC would need to change its legislation.

CIC have to provide a free call centre service in Canada. Overseas there are no phone lines: people who want to contact CIC offices overseas email queries. Some VACs have a premium (like 0900) call centre line, but the VAC charges for this and it is part of their budget: it doesn't get sent back to CIC.

The move to shift people towards online has happened incrementally. Over time CIC offices reduced their counter hours, then the 10% budget cuts as a result of the Global Financial Crisis led to more drastic reductions, with call centre staff numbers being cut drastically as well as completely cutting counter services. This led to complaints and a nadir of a 10% answer rate in the call centres (though it is now back up to 85%) and an overflow of queries to Service Canada (the front office service desk of the Government of Canada) who were not equipped to deal with complex immigration queries. Clients did adjust, however, and it probably had the effect of driving them towards online services. There were also gains from scaling back call centre services, as the online answers were more consistent than answers from different call centres.

CIC haven't done a customer service survey for four or five years, but try to get customer feedback by questions embedded in the bottom of website pages ("Did this answer your question?" "Was this easy to complete?" etc). They don't have client satisfaction data about how the online tools are working, but hear anecdotally. A lot of their most useful feedback comes from twitter, for example people venting when the system goes down, so they have got much more proactive on twitter, for example announcing systems outages.

CIC's main priority is making sure that everything they receive is incorporated into their Global Client Management System (GCMS). Their telephony is in GSMC, so calls to call centres are recorded in someone's client record. They would ideally have their VACs do data entry and lodgement of paper applications straight into GCMS: it is ok if people want to submit a paper application, as long as it gets to CIC in online format. They are also interested in restricting the channels available for clients to ask questions, e.g. using a KnowledgeBase type of system like ICC, to direct people towards online information services not the call centre.

United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA):

The UKBA's impetus for going towards digital services is their Government's commitment to digitise services, expressed in the Digital Strategy⁸ and the Digital by Default agenda⁹.

UKBA has no plans to restrict access to any channels for onshore applications. There is quite low take up of online applications from onshore.

They started with a small group of Tier 2 (skilled worker) Priority visa applicants, then developed an online option for the China Visit visa. Development of other services is continuing.

For applications from offshore, UKBA are more directive, however. The new UK visa application website, Visa4UK, is for applicants not in the United Kingdom, and mandates online applications for the vast majority of groups. It is estimated that more than 90% of applicants based offshore apply through this online process.

The complete online application process is:

- Apply online via <https://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/> <https://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/> which includes:
 - completing the online application form

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-digital-strategy/government-digital-strategy>

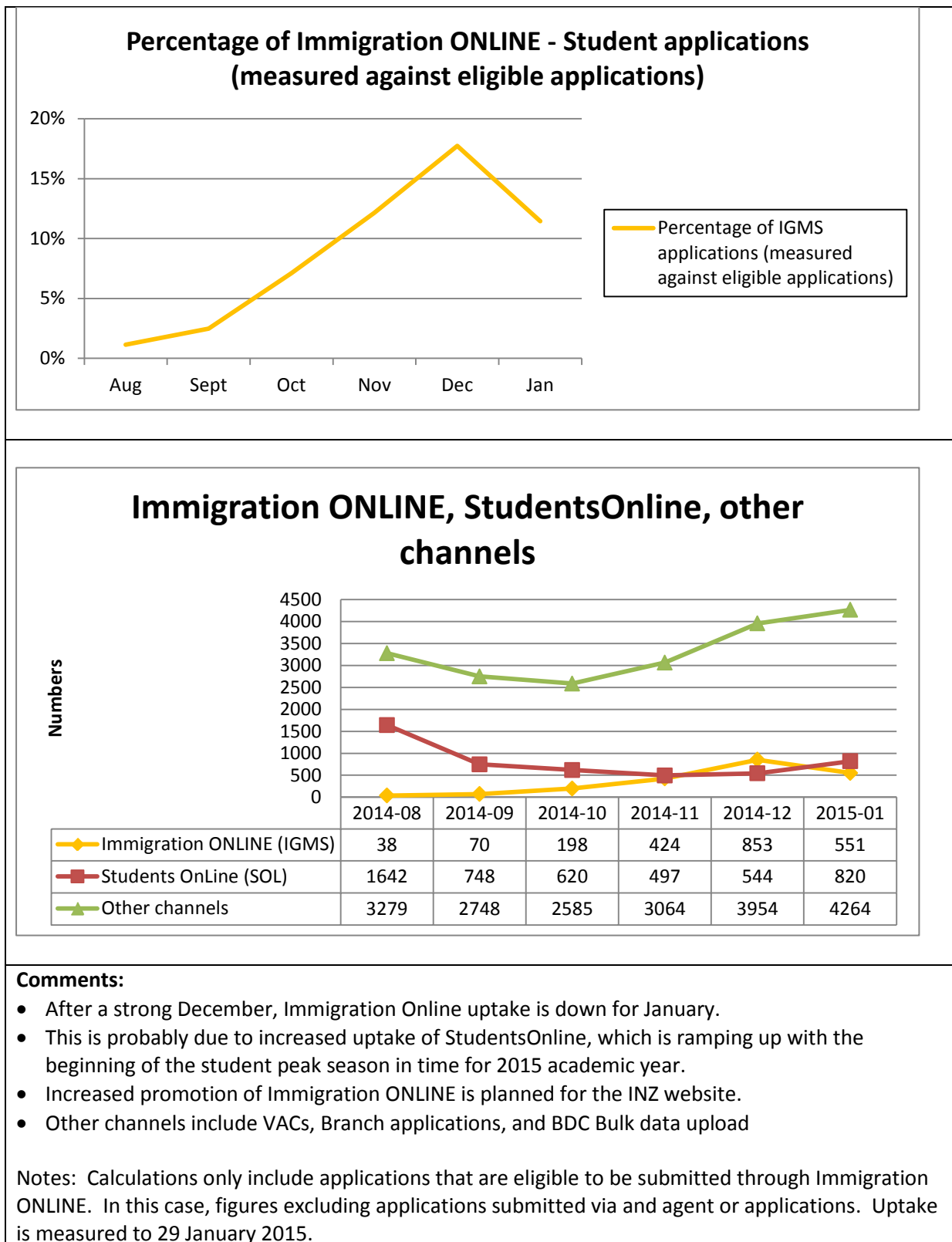
⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/digital-by-default>

- paying online (large range of payment options available)
- making an appointment at a VAC to submit biometrics
- Attend appointment to give biometrics and hand over supporting documents (these are not submitted online at the point of original application)
- Once decision has been given, pick up passport and documents from VAC or pay extra for these to be couriered.

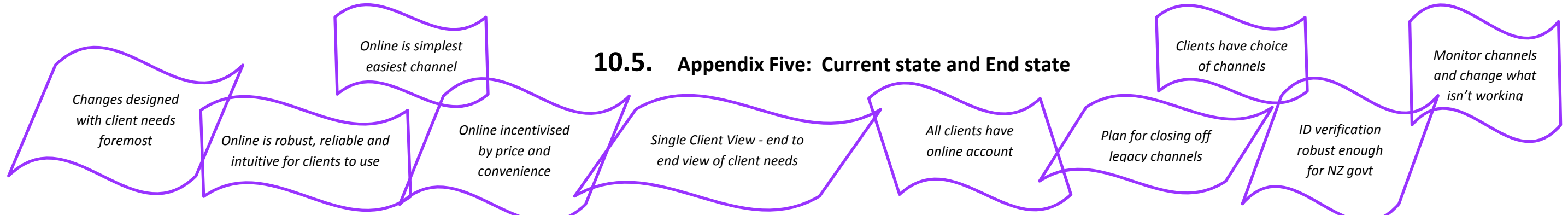
The exceptions are largely for very small markets, such as North Korea, or markets where online payment is hard, such as Venezuela or Cuba. There are also exceptions for regions which carry particular sensitivities: for example, there are a lot of Nepalese applications from former Gurkhas with close ties to the UK through their military history, so they have retained ability to submit manually to the VAC to ensure they have facilitated access to UK visas. These exceptions are reviewed regularly to see if they still have merit, as UKBA would ideally like to get as near to 100% online applications as possible.

10.4. Appendix Four: Reporting framework

The following report format is suggested:



10.5. Appendix Five: Current state and End state



Current state	Vision 2015 (status by December 2015)	Ideal future state
COUNTER		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Onshore offices provide counter services with varying hours ➤ Apia and Nuku'alofa have counter services ➤ VACs in 40 locations provide counter services ➤ Customers may also be invited for an interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consistent opening hours across all offices ➤ Plan underway for transitioning to future state ➤ Plan for future role of VACs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No counter services. Customers only see officer, if invited in for an interview ➤ VACs do range of tasks as well as receipt and lodge applications, digitise paper applications, do identity verification, local verification work ➤ Other 3rd party providers do tasks like biometric enrolment on INZ's behalf
POST		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Most common channel for lodging applications ➤ Onshore: About 295,000 temp & 29,500 res applications lodged via mail (including drop-boxes in onshore offices) pa ➤ About 39,6000 temp & 4,600 res applications lodged via mail (including drop-boxes in MFAT posts) per annum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Posted applications being superseded by online applications ➤ Applications lodged online use the client's online account ➤ Label-less visas (e-visas) and passport-free applications further reduce need for post 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No drop boxes, onshore or offshore ➤ No post directly to INZ ➤ Very limited volume of post to VACs or other 3rd parties ➤ Vast majority of docs needed are uploaded via online accounts ➤ Label-less visas for all applicants, passport-free applications for some
PHONE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Customers can contact case officer once allocated ➤ ICC offers 24/7 services globally ➤ ICC responds to about 670,000 calls per annum ➤ One third of calls are status update, one third are policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interaction with case officer by phone greatly reduced ➤ Task management superseding case management approach to applications ➤ Role of ICC in supporting online applications, clear to clients, stakeholders and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No case officers. Different officers do different tasks in an application ➤ Majority of customers use their online account ➤ ICC focused on pro-active outbound transactions, e.g. marketing calls ➤ Volume of status update calls greatly reduced ➤ Some complex policy calls and exceptions will still be handled
EMAIL		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Customers can email case officer once allocated ➤ ICC responds to about 30,000 email queries per annum ➤ Emails to ICC go through Knowledge Base system ➤ Automated "Pro-Comms" email to connect with customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Applications lodged online use the client's online account ➤ Original documents required only on request ➤ Task management superseding case management approach to applications ➤ ICC logs fewer status and info calls as online account and INZ website clearer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Email channel only used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ advising customers about new information in their online accounts; and ○ pro-active outreach comms
ONLINE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Possible to apply online for WHSes, EOIs for SMC, SoL, Immigration ONLINE - Students ➤ Some self-service online for info requests via VisaView, Visa Options Checker, Knowledge Base ➤ Limited use to Trusted Partners for online-type applications ➤ INZ website, other INZ-run websites one of the main places people go for information on how to apply etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Online forms cover 60% of visa applications ➤ 100% digitisation of visa applications ➤ Applicants can review history using online account, fewer update calls to ICC ➤ VisaView extended to education providers and other 3rd parties seeking to validate staff or student's visa status ➤ Limited use of trusted partners to lodge on behalf of and triage applications ➤ INZ2 (next generation of website) main place people go for visa information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nearly 100% of temporary applications can be lodged online (with a few outliers, such as RSE, Group Visitor Visas) ➤ All residence applications lodged in digitised format ➤ All other customer transactions (e.g. general info requests, status updates) are online ➤ INZ3 (integration of INZ web and NZNow) the main place people go for general visa information

Related work

