



INZ Quality Review

Terms of Reference/Scoping Document

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Document Review

Name	Role	Review Status
Stephen Dunstan	GM, Service Design & Performance	Comments incorporated
Steve Cantlon	Business Lead	Comments incorporated
Bruce Burrows	Internal Stakeholder	Comments incorporated
Chris Hubscher	Manager	Comments incorporated
Geoff Scott	Business Owner	Comments incorporated
Liana Bunting	Vision 2015 BT Lead	Comments incorporated

Kristina Nelson	Internal Stakeholder	Comments incorporated
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Document Contribution

Name	Version	Content Description
Steve Cantlon	2 and 3	Quality related expert content
Stephen Dunstan	4 and 7	Scope and objectives
Bruce Burrows	5	General comments
Geoff Scott	5	Objectives and scope and general comments
Geoff Scott, Steve Cantlon	6 and 7	Further adjustments to content
Stephen Dunstan, Steve Cantlon	8	Redefined deliverables and general content changes.

Document Sign-off

The following signatures indicate approval and acceptance of this document, subject to any caveats below:

Name	Role
Geoff Scott	Business Owner
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Purpose

1. This document scopes the INZ Visa Processing Quality Review (work package M23 of the Vision 2015 Programme) and provides an estimation of the timeframe for completion and the effort required. It also sets out the priority order and approach to the completion of the work.

Problem Definition

2. INZ has identified the need to design and implement a new visa processing quality framework to support the 2015 Visa Processing Operating Model (2015 VPOM) and to ensure compliance with immigration related statutory requirements and instructions. Quality processes need to be standardised across the INZ network and aligned to a wider quality framework that will look at the broader quality tools and systems used.
3. The new operating model will introduce the ability for customers to apply for visas online, better identity management, eMedical and e-visa enablers and smart global triage. This will create a fundamentally different working environment and changes to office roles and activities. A culture shift will be needed in INZ offices to accept reliance upon the automated triage rules that are designed to support the new model and to focus work effort. To maintain trust in the accuracy of the automated settings regular quality assurance checks will need to be made involving triage outcomes and connecting with established feedback loops that will adjust the settings when necessary.
4. The new operating model also sees greater involvement of third parties in the visa process¹. These relationships will be managed through performance management processes and systems that will require the development of quality assurance processes.
5. INZ has quality assurance procedures in place that support the current visa issuing process however there are a number of identified issues that require improvement. There is a single pre-decision two person check (2PC) and this check is compulsory only for permanent residence applications. The 2PC checks are carried out by a variety of staff and are not consistently applied across INZ offices. The in-house checking is neither objective nor independent, and learnings from 2PC are not captured in any formal way.
6. There are two post decision checks – the QAP and Q3. The QAP checks are not objective as they are undertaken in-house and generally performed by technical advisers looking at the decisions made by their teams within the office. The QAP process provides an opportunity for teams within offices to share knowledge and to reduce the likelihood of making the same errors in subsequent applications, but these learnings are not always shared with other offices, which can create an inconsistency of approach between offices.
7. There is little central oversight, governance or co-ordination of the 2PC and QAP processes, and there are minimal effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms, limiting the opportunity to gain and share learnings.
8. Q3 assessments are carried out by the Wellington based Performance and Assurance Team within the Service Design and Performance branch. This process is objective and

¹ Industry Partnerships, the eMedical system, Visa Application Centres

centrally managed but while it provides assurance to external stakeholders and high level reporting on visa decision quality, the data is sparse and Q3 reporting has limited ability to provide specific information on product types or performance by offices. This limits its value as a business improvement tool. There is an opportunity to link the Q3 assessments to frontline operations to achieve consistency and higher quality decisions.

9. This review will analyse and assess the current quality assurance processes for visa processing and will present some recommended options that best meet the outcomes of the 2015 VPOM, including estimates of the resource implications, costs and any technical constraints.
10. Once the preferred option is agreed to, an implementation plan will be developed.

Approach

11. The review will be undertaken in two phases. The **first phase** will assess the purpose, design and usage of the current INZ quality instruments (2PC, QAP and Q3) for visa applications to determine their relevance under the new INZ operating model.
12. This phase will ensure that planned new processes are accounted for in any new approach to quality assurance. Dependencies and integration with other INZ Vision 2015 clusters and projects as they are developed and refined, will be accounted for and project deliverables reprioritised where necessary. The need for any transitional arrangements for quality assurance, as we move to a new operating model, will also be explored.
13. Recommended changes in the form of quality assurance options that achieve the outcomes required by the 2015 VPOM will be presented for decision, followed by an implementation plan that will include advice on steps to be taken to deliver the agreed option.
14. An immediate need to review quality processes to support Immigration online is noted, and a review of our existing quality tools (to determine the extent that they are able to be applied to electronic applications in terms of the assessment of the quality of decision making) will be completed.
15. The **second phase** of the review will determine the quality standards and instruments needed to provide assurance involving other INZ business functions, including compliance, identity, industry partnerships and the new eMedical system.

Objectives

16. To review current quality practices and, as necessary, design and implement a new quality framework that supports visa processing and decision making, that fosters a learning environment under the new operating model, and includes advice on how and when process or decision checks are completed.
17. The following outcomes will be achieved:
 - a. Consistent application of quality processes across all INZ sites;
 - b. Alignment of quality activity and standardisation of practices so that branch staff are performing the same tasks in the same roles (e.g. Technical Adviser or above performing the 2PC);

- c. Contribution towards broad business wide feedback loops that will be established via the triage feedback mechanism project, to ensure learnings from quality outcomes and to inform business improvements;
- d. Updates and refinements to technical training as the business improves quality;
- e. To enable INZ to be able to effectively monitor, report and provide assurance on the quality of visa decision making processes.

In scope

18. The scope of the first stage of this review is limited to visa processing and Visa Services and to providing recommended options for improved quality processes, including a business rules assurance system. Other areas of INZ requiring quality processes will be part of a second phase, as outlined above.

Out of Scope

19. While an end to end quality framework encompasses all aspects of the INZ operating environment including recruitment, training, performance and remuneration, these aspects are not part of this review. They are informed, however, by the base quality standards and settings that are within scope of this review.

Current State Quality Processes

20. The main 'quality instruments' in the visa processing space are described in the diagram below.

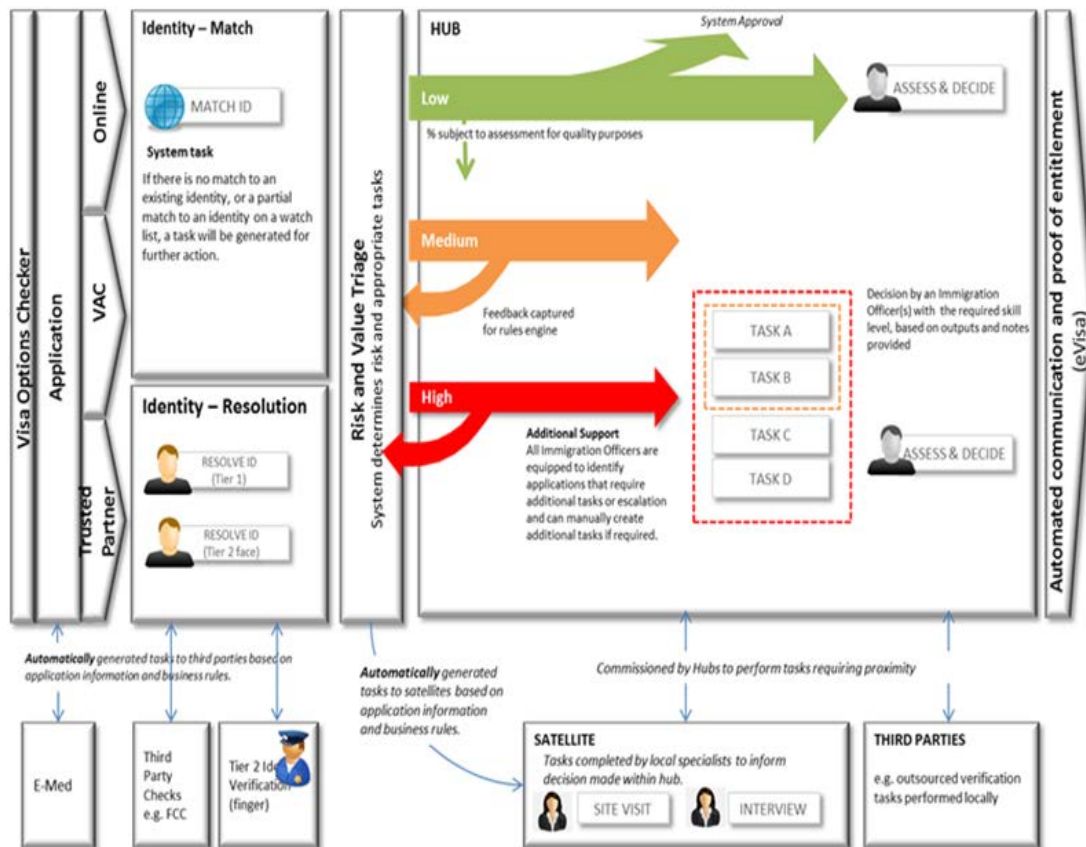
Stage	Process	Description	Purpose	Feedback mechanism
Pre-Decision	2PC -undertaken in offices just prior to final decisions being made on a range of applications.	All residence applications undergo a 2PC. Temporary applications are checked at the discretion of the office, depending on who has made the decision, and this practice differs from office to office.	Various, including training, performance management and a final check for decisions that involve complexity	Immediate feedback to case officers and recommended decisions corrected if necessary prior to the final decision being made.

Post Decision	QAP – undertaken in offices on a monthly basis.	These are checks made on a random sample of decided cases, generally undertaken by a Technical Advisor at the office.	Pre-audit quality assurance, performance management and rating measures for INZ offices	Issues and inaccuracies are fed back to the case officers and may be shared within the office and the TA network.
	Q3 – a centrally managed audit process of a small subset of visa decisions. Recommended by the OAG and audited by Audit NZ. Reported quarterly.	Q3 is undertaken by Q3 assessors within the Performance and Assurance Team. The results are high level ones for INZ.	Independent QA/Audit External reporting to auditors, the Minister and Government via the Output Plan.	Quarterly reporting and feedback to ILT and Visa Services managers. One off qualitative reports at intervals on specific findings.

The New Operating Model

21. The new operating model envisages consistent and streamlined application processes, with INZ resource focused where it can add the greatest value. Low risk applications (as identified by a centralised triage engine) will be processed in a low touch queue. This will free up resource and ensure effort is applied to verifying and assessing higher risk cases. This approach will need to be supported by quality instruments that are appropriate to the new operating model to ensure compliance with immigration related statutory requirements and instructions, whilst reflecting the desire to expend less resource on low risk applications.
22. Digitisation will involve (over time) converting all applications into the online system which will change the activities undertaken by INZ branches. This will in turn require a change to business performance measures.
23. With the introduction of a greater involvement of third parties in the visa process the quality instruments also need to recognise and support industry partnerships.
24. INZ is also introducing new tools such as IDME and eMedical. Usage of these tools by visa officers will also need to be monitored through quality metrics which will be explored in the second phase of the quality review.
25. The 2015 VPOM envisages standardised quality processes across the INZ office network aligned to a wider quality framework. Quality will form part of the learning system with lessons learnt enabling the organisation to improve the quality of visa decisions and staff behaviours.

The New Operating Model – diagram



Dependencies and alignment

26. This review is part of a large number of initiatives that are being implemented across INZ to support the new operating model. Each project has been clustered into like groups with some well-defined while others are currently being elaborated and the scope defined. Some dependencies have been identified and are set out in the table below.
27. The INZ Vision 2015 programme team is currently working through the clusters and identifying dependencies and pre-requisites to inform an order for implementation. As the programme prioritisation exercise progresses the specific projects that impact on the quality review will become more apparent and will inform the lower level details that will be contained in the implementation plan.

New Operating model cluster projects	Details
Assess and Decide	<p>In particular the Visa Assessment Tools, and the SMC End to End Review projects will create standardised assessment processes to cover the period to process/workflow automation</p> <p>Online application and submission will require different quality assurance methods.</p> <p>Assess and Decide Workflow</p>
Manage Risk	<p>Standardised triage and verification - the triage and verification project is creating a consistent standard and approach to identifying and treating risk.</p> <p>The triage feedback mechanisms project will establish a feedback mechanism to adjust/improve the triage rules.</p>
Customer	<p>Assessment of onshore application lodgement with centralised onshore online lodgement at NADO and a review of onshore counter services.</p>
Monitor	<p>New performance management and reporting systems</p> <p>The Process Management Framework project will create an INZ-wide framework to improve process consistency.</p>
Submit and validate	<p>Increased reliance on industry partners and other third parties and expansion of the industry partnership network will require different quality assurance processes.</p> <p>The eMedical/Immigration Health System will involve online submission of medical examinations directly by accredited panel physicians, automated decision making via business rules and creation of a centralised assessment team, delivering consistency of health status processing.</p> <p>Identity management and resolution processes and the use of biometrics.</p>

Proposed priority list and timeframe for quality review deliverables

28. The timeframe for implementation will be informed by the programme priorities and once all of the project charters are completed and timings agreed.

29. The following section contains some proposed timeframes, deliverables and resource estimates:

Description - PHASE ONE	Deliverable	October 2014 to July 2015
1. Current state analysis and assessment	Identify current quality processes and issues and align to the future operating model and dependencies.	By end February 2015 .5 PM FTE 1 BA FTE
2. Review current instruments (2PC, QAP, Q3) against the FOM requirements and (re)design process. Develop options.	Recommended options paper, including some advice on new process, procedures and templates.	By end April 2015
3. Implementation plan completed	Specific timeframes, resource requirements and project deliverables defined for phase one and aligned to dependent Vision 2015 projects	By June 2015 .5 PM FTE 1 BA FTE
4. Implementation phase	Implementation Plan delivered, including Comms & Training	By end September 2015 .5 PM FTE 1 BA FTE TBA
5. Phase two project plan completed.	Phase two project scope, timeframe and deliverables defined.	