



AIDE MEMOIRE

Meeting with Minister Robertson to discuss MIQ allocation for Winter Games NZ

Date:	9 April 2021	Priority:	High
Security classification:		Tracking number:	2021-3204

Information for Minister

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister for COVID-19 Response

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Kara Isaac	General Manager, MIQ Policy	Privacy of natural persons	
Privacy of natural persons	Manager, MIQ Allocation and Supply	Privacy of natural persons	✓

Minister's office to complete:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seen | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |

Comments



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Purpose

Minister Robertson has requested to meet with you and Minister Nash to discuss MIQ allocations for people taking part in Winter Games NZ. This Aide Memoire provides you with:

- background on the Winter Games NZ request – including support from MBIE Major Events and Sport New Zealand
- background on the high demand for Group Allocation spots in July (the requested timeframe for arrival)
- MBIE MIQ's view that the Winter Games NZ request does not meet the criteria for a Group Allocation.

Privacy of natural persons

Manager, Allocation and Supply
MIQ, MBIE

9 / 4 / 2021

Background on the Winter Games NZ request

The Winter Games NZ request

1. Winter Games NZ is currently scheduled for 22 August - 5 September 2021.
2. MBIE Major Events has sponsored an expression of interest for 60 athletes and other workers to arrive between 12 - 25 July.
3. The event has been significantly scaled back – around 700 athletes would typically attend.
4. MBIE Major Events and Sport NZ highlight the following considerations in favour of the event:
 - The event will result in approximately \$5 million being spent in the Southern Lakes region (along with morale benefits), which has been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 response.

- The event is one of two prioritised major events for 2021 (along with Crankworx in November 2021).
 - The event is aligned with Government investment: ^{Commercial information} from the Regional Events Fund for Winter Games NZ 2021 itself; ^{Commercial information} into Winter Games NZ across the period 2018-2021; and ^{Commercial information} into Snow Sports NZ over the Beijing Olympic quadrennial.
 - Coverage of the event will serve as promotion for New Zealand.
5. MBIE Major Events and Sports NZ highlight the following risks and downsides were the event not to proceed:
- The event, including associated infrastructure such as a halfpipe, are viewed as key to New Zealand athletes' preparation for the Winter Olympics – training overseas would be higher cost, ^{Free and frank opinions} and with heightened risk around COVID-19.
 - ^{Free and frank opinions}

Why Winter Games NZ has made a group allocation request

6. Winter Games NZ has advised it has a 'go/no-go' deadline of 14 April. Without a guarantee that attendees will be able to secure spots in MIQ, ^{Commercial information}
- ^{Commercial information}

MBIE MIQ advice

Briefing 2021-3123 for the upcoming Border Exception Ministers meeting, which you have also been provided with on 9 April, provides full detail on the upcoming border exception and group allocation pipeline.

7. There is a high demand for group allocation spots in July. You have already agreed to increase the number of rooms in the group allocation to 500 per fortnight for July, but accommodating Winter Games NZ would still likely take places from NZDF returnees, international students, and/or the Construction Accord (as compared to our recommended 'balanced package', supported by the Senior Officials Group for Border Exceptions, in Briefing 2021-3123).
8. The Senior Officials Group continues to advise that sports teams have taken up a disproportionate amount of group allocation space, creating issues for social license and reducing the availability of spaces for other government priorities.
9. Based on the information received from MBIE Major Events, the Winter Games NZ request does not meet the criteria for group allocation: around 60 yet-to-be-confirmed individuals would be travelling from 12 different countries, flying separately, and arriving at yet-to-be-determined different dates and times. Holding rooms for uncertain arrival dates creates a risk of significant room wastage.
10. There is currently availability for July on MIAS (although Winter Games NZ have indicated the event is likely untenable without *ongoing* certainty that spots are available). Winter Games NZ athletes and other critical workers are able to apply for border exceptions on the

basis that they are undertaking a time critical role that is essential for the delivery or execution of a government-approved event.

11. For these reasons, we do not support a group allocation for Winter Games NZ.
12. Were Winter Games NZ to be provided with a group allocation, there would be much less impact on other groups if attendees were required to arrive in June, when there is more space available.
13. We are currently developing advice on our approach to MIQ 'name swaps' going forward. We could allow Winter Games NZ to undertake name swaps where they are able to confirm arrival dates.
14. Because approval of a group allocation for Winter Games NZ would displace other requests – and therefore impact other portfolios and Government priorities – we suggest that it is discussed at the next Border Ministers Meeting if Ministers consider it a priority.