



30 October 2023

Ref: DOIA 2324-0844

Privacy of natural persons

Tēnā koe **Privacy of natural persons**

Thank you for your email of 17 October 2023 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

2324-0714, "Interim support to exploited migrants in Auckland", dated 7 September.

Please find attached the document relevant to your request.

Please note some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

I do not consider that the withholding of this information is outweighed by public interest considerations in making the information available.

Please note that this response and enclosed documents, with your personal details removed, may be published on the MBIE website: <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/document-library/>

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, or if you require any further assistance, please contact OIA@mbie.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

Kirsty Hutchison
Manager Immigration (Border and Funding) Policy
Labour, Science and Enterprise, MBIE





BRIEFING

Interim support for exploited migrants in Auckland

Date:	7 September 2023	Priority:	Urgent
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	2324-0714

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Andrew Little Minister of Immigration	Agree to the recommendations in this briefing. Agree to forward this briefing to Joint Ministers who have power to act over the general election and government formation period.	7 September 2023
Rt Hon Chris Hipkins Prime Minister	Agree to the proposal to enable INZ to support the identified cohort of exploited migrants on an interim basis, until Cabinet decisions can be taken.	7 September 2023
Hon Carmel Sepuloni Deputy Prime Minister	Agree to the proposal to enable INZ to support the identified cohort of exploited migrants on an interim basis, until Cabinet decisions can be taken.	7 September 2023
Hon Kelvin Davis Minister of Corrections	Agree to the proposal to enable INZ to support the identified cohort of exploited migrants on an interim basis, until Cabinet decisions can be taken.	7 September 2023
Hon Grant Robertson Minister of Finance	Agree to the proposal to enable INZ to support the identified cohort of exploited migrants on an interim basis, until Cabinet decisions can be taken.	7 September 2023

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Privacy of natural persons			✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

- Approved
- Declined
- Noted
- Needs change
- Seen
- Overtaken by Events
- See Minister's Notes
- Withdrawn

Comments



BRIEFING

Interim support for exploited migrants in Auckland

Date:	6 September 2023	Priority:	Urgent
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	2324-7014

Purpose

To seek your agreement on an interim package of support for the cohort of exploited migrants who had been granted Accredited Employer Work Visas, who require immediate support from Immigration New Zealand.

A Cabinet paper proposing a broader package of support will be provided to Cabinet for its consideration on Monday, 18 September.

Recommended action

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a **Note** that the Minister of Immigration took an oral item to Cabinet on 4 September noting his intention to provide support to migrant workers who had been granted an Accredited Employer Work Visa and had not been offered work

Noted

- b **Agree** that Immigration New Zealand provide an interim package of support to the affected migrants, comprising accommodation and living cost support, effective from Thursday, 7 September

Agree / Disagree

- c **Note** that the indicative cost of this package is approximately \$200,000, and that these costs can be met within Immigration New Zealand's baseline funding, through reprioritising Crown funding

Noted

- d **Note** that the Treasury considers the provision of this package to be a new initiative, which requires the approval of Joint Ministers who have the power to act over the General Election and Government Formation period

Noted

Kirsty Hutchison
**Manager, Immigration (Border and Funding)
Policy**

Labour, Science and Enterprise, MBIE

06 / 09 / 2023

Hon Andrew Little
Minister of Immigration

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Rt Hon Chris Hipkins
Prime Minister

..... / /

Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Deputy Prime Minister

..... / /

Hon Grant Robertson
Minister of Finance

..... / /

Hon Kelvin Davis
Minister of Corrections

..... / /

Background

1. On Sunday 13 August 2023 Immigration New Zealand (INZ) became aware of a number of Indian nationals residing at a Papakura property, who had arrived in New Zealand on Accredited Employer Work Visas (AEWV) and the promised employment had not materialised¹.
2. These migrants told INZ that they had paid large sums of money to obtain the visa and the job in New Zealand.
3. An MBIE investigation was launched and almost immediately 5 other properties in Auckland, housing Indian and Bangladeshi migrants with similar stories were discovered.
4. As of Thursday, 17 August 144 migrants have been identified as an initial cohort of migrants who are in need of immediate support.
5. This identified cohort of migrants is currently living in substandard housing and are at risk of eviction, and require accommodation to be provided by Friday, 8 September.
6. On Monday, 4 September the Minister of Immigration, took an oral item to Cabinet expressing concern regarding the cohort of identified migrants, and the need for further work to be undertaken to identify a broader package of support for the holders of a Migration Exploitation Protection Visa (MEPV).
7. On Tuesday, 5 September the Minister of Immigration wrote to MBIE with Ministerial instructions for MBIE to provide advice for Cabinet on a systematic approach to support those claiming migrant exploitation. This advice will be provided for Cabinet's consideration on Monday, 18 September.
8. However, in the interim MBIE will offer accommodation and welfare support to the migrants who will require housing from Friday, 8 September. The cost of this interim support package will be met from INZ's baseline funding through reprioritising Crown funding from other initiatives.
9. Treasury have advised that, as this is a new initiative, the provision of this support requires a decision from Joint Ministers, under the Joint Minister's delegation from Cabinet who have power to act in the over the General Election and Government Formation period, to authorise this.
10. Joint Ministers' approval is urgently required so that INZ can contract with an accommodation provider.

Scope of the interim package of support

11. MBIE proposes an interim package of support be provided to this cohort of identified migrants. This package is expected to cost approximately \$200,000, and includes:
 - a. Approximately \$50 per person, per day, for accommodation in a motel (paid directly to the accommodation provider); and
 - b. Approximately \$220 per person, per week of living cost support payments.
12. While this package of support will be available to all members of the identified cohort of migrants, INZ is currently unclear as to the exact numbers of migrants who will take up the offer. There is a risk that more migrants may be identified as being in a similar position and

¹ See, for more detail: [Update: Investigation underway into the exploitation of Indian and Bangladeshi nationals in Auckland | Immigration New Zealand](#)

may require this assistance as well. A package of \$200,000 will enable INZ to provide support to the identified cohort of 144 migrants until Monday, 18 September, and up to 100 additional migrants if required.

Accommodation cost

13. INZ has existing relationships with accommodation providers, and are currently negotiating to contract the provision of accommodation services.
14. The indicative cost of approximately \$50 per person, per day. This is comparable to similar support available to asylum claimants who cannot work.

Living cost support payments

15. INZ will organise interim living cost support payments for the cohort of identified migrants of approximately \$220 per person, per week. This is approximately \$32 per person, per day, to cover food, transport, and other essential items.
16. This level of living cost support is also in line with existing support available to asylum claimants who cannot work.

Next steps

17. A Cabinet paper is being prepared for consideration on Monday, 18 September which will outline a broader package of support for MEPV holders.