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DECEMBER 2017

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Immigration New Zealand Office Restructure and Closures

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) has formulated the view that the standardisation of visa processes in recent years, supported by new technology platforms, has provided them with the confidence to move to a product model that will better serve the needs of customers in a digital world.

INZ are therefore restructuring visa processing, both by assigning specialised offices for processing visas, and closing a number of current offices offshore over the next 18 months.

The visa specialisation and applicable branches are as follows:

- Business Visas: Manukau, Porirua, Christchurch
- Education Visas: Mumbai, Palmerston North, Beijing
- Tourist Visas: Beijing, Porirua
- Community Visas: Hamilton, Porirua
- Specialist Visas: Manukau, Porirua

In relation to offshore branch closures, it is understood that by June 2019 INZ will have ceased processing activities in Dubai, Hong Kong, Pretoria, Ho Chi Minh, Moscow, Jakarta, Bangkok, Shanghai, Washington DC, New Delhi and Manila.

It has also been proposed to cease processing in London. However, this is yet to be confirmed. A decision on the processing future for London will be made this month once the staff consultation period required by UK law has been complied with. However, we expect this is merely a formality and the announcement of the closure of that branch will be made at the end of that consultation period too.



It is proposed that the remaining two major offshore processing centres will be in Mumbai (Education Visas) and Beijing (Tourist Visas [including Chinese Education Visas]). The three Pacific offices in Suva, Apia and Nuku'alofa will also be retained, and Pretoria/Dubai will retain risk and verification capability only.

INZ released the following table to outline the timing and sequencing of change across the INZ global network.

Date	Location	Change
March 2018	Hong Kong	Office closed
March 2018	Dubai	Processing withdrawn, risk and verification retained
April 2018	Pretoria	Processing withdrawn, risk and verification retained
May 2018	Ho Chi Minh	Office closed
June 2018	Moscow	Office closed
July 2018	Jakarta, Auckland Central	Office closed
September 2018	Bangkok	Processing withdrawn, risk and verification retained
October 2018	Shanghai	Office closed
November 2018	Washington DC	Processing withdrawn, risk and verification retained
December 2018	London	Proposal subject to confirmation December 2017: Processing withdrawn, risk and verification retained
March 2019	New Delhi	Office closed
June 2019	Manila	Processing withdrawn, risk and verification retained
June 2019	Henderson	Office closed

Whilst there are likely to be some “teething issues” initially, we do expect that the proposed changes will ultimately lead to a more consistent, efficient, accurate and coherent system of processing migration applications where these underlying principles seem to have been lost by some branches and/or the individuals processing visas in them for many years.

The loss, however, of the London Branch and processing in Washington DC will be quite a big blow for employers who have international employees being seconded to New Zealand from their off-shore offices, who have relied on the efficient and “in time zone” processing of urgent visa applications from time to time, by the teams of highly skilled and engaged service providers in the London and Washington branches..

For further information or assistance with emigration please contact the Lane Neave on + 64 3 379 3720 or email liveinnewzealand@laneneave.co.nz.





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Christmas in New Zealand – a summer wonderland

Christmas can be quite a unique experience for many newly-settled migrants, particularly for those accustomed to cooler festive seasons. For many of those who move to New Zealand from the Northern Hemisphere, it's hard to reconcile summer with Santa Claus. The most common sentiment from those who made the move, even decades ago, is "it just doesn't feel like Christmas!"

The warmer weather is undoubtedly one of the hardest adjustment to make for most Northern Hemisphere arrivals. Days are long and hot in a New Zealand summer. Rather than burning brightly, lights on Christmas trees and street lamps dissolve into the evening sunlight. The full impact of festive lights and fireworks can only really be appreciated very late into a balmy evening. Santa Parades, held in most towns and cities in the weeks leading up to Christmas, are an odd combination of summer-themed floats and Santa sweltering in heavy clothes in soaring temperatures. It really is a [summer wonderland](#), rather than a winter one. This can feel paradoxical for many, with winter-themed carols, cards, decorations, and celebrations still reflecting New Zealand's British heritage.

There are upsides to a summer Christmas down under. New Zealand is one of the first countries in the world to greet a long Christmas day, with parts of the South Island experiencing dawn at 5am and dusk around 10pm. Many Kiwi families take full advantage of this, spending the afternoon at the local park (with children trying out their new skateboards and bikes) or at the beach swimming, surfing, playing cricket or just catching the sun late into the day.

The 'traditional' Christmas roast meal with all the trimmings is increasing an endangered species, with the weather-appropriate BBQ more popular with Kiwis. Many families still opt for festive ham, and chicken or turkey, and finish off the meal with pavlova (a Kiwi meringue dessert), fresh strawberries and ice-cream. A cold beer and a glass of 'bubbly' (sparkling wine) are popular thirst-quenchers. Christmas lunch is often a more informal affair than many migrants are used to, and it's common to eat outdoors.

Increasingly a secular nation, over 41% of New Zealand's population recently identified with having 'no religion'. A significant number of others (including many migrants) hold a faith other than Christianity. Despite this, Christmas church services



are usually packed to overflowing, particularly the popular midnight masses. For most Kiwis, however, Christmas marks a celebration of the end of the work and school year, and signals the welcome start to a long summer break.

Meri Kirihimete ki a koe me te whānau! Merry Christmas to you and your family! *Te Reo Māori*.

Article provided by Lisa Burdes – SkillsConnect Canterbury Business Advisor at the Canterbury Employers’ Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber offers migrant employment assistance, and support to employers of migrants in Canterbury. This service is fully funded by Immigration New Zealand (INZ). If you have questions about living and working in New Zealand, you can visit <http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz>.

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A time to reflect on a new city and a buoyant economy

Christmas is all but upon us. This gives us the time to take a breather and reflect on the past year, and, in-fact think about the past six years since Christchurch was changed forever.

Christchurch City has experienced its boom following the earthquake in February 2011 and the city is well on its way to re-establishing its identity, albeit in a somewhat different context.

The new infrastructure and building have been engineered to be future-proofed and we are only now starting to see what the new Christchurch will offer. The teasers on offer currently have certainly wet everyone’s appetite and we look forward to a truly modern “first world” city to enjoy in the future.

Construction still is a vital cog in the local economy and will no doubt still be an integral driver over the next decade, as the city fully recovers.



The underlying economic drivers are now coming to the fore, such as tourism which is predicted to exceed pre earthquake levels shortly.

The building of a smart city has been one of the goals of the Christchurch City Council. Technology has therefore been a focus, with the attraction of international talent to our city to facilitate and create business opportunities.

New Zealand's economy as a whole remains buoyant with 2.5 percent GDP growth in the year to 1 September 2017. Infrastructure projects throughout New Zealand remain strong leading to a forecast of positive regional growth.

We welcome contact and offer obligation free assessments of your employment chances in New Zealand. I can be contacted on steve.baker@enterprise.co.nz or 00 64 3 3530680.

Enterprise Recruitment and People wish everyone a Happy and Safe Christmas and New Year period.

Enterprise Recruitment and People has a national presence. We remain interested in providing obligation free advice to offshore candidate's about their chances of securing employment in New Zealand. Steve Baker Group Workforce Sourcing Manager: steve.baker@enterprise.co.nz: 00 64 3 3530680 / 00 64 27 2125483



Bank of New Zealand

Worker shortages remain in key sectors

In the most recent 12 month period 3.7 million people visited New Zealand to see the sights, catch up with friends and relatives, engage in short-term study, and undertake business. This is a 44% increase from five years ago which has caught everyone by surprise. That is because in the five years ending late-2012 total growth amounted to only 4%, and in the five years ending October 2007 just 24%.

NZ inward tourism has boomed and when we add in domestic tourism we find that over 250,000 people one way or the other are employed in the sector. This is a lot more people than the numbers benefitting from dairying – still technically our biggest single export product.



The trouble however is that because of the sudden surge in tourist growth the country is short of accommodation. Tourist hotspots are struggling to adjust to higher numbers. And, in spite of a net gain to the NZ population from long-term migration flows in the past five years of 270,000 people, staff are in short supply.

In fact it is not just in the tourism and more broadly defined hospitality sector that businesses cannot find the number of staff they want – let alone the quality. There are insufficient employee numbers in construction, healthcare, elderly care, teaching, engineering, and agriculture – especially dairying and horticulture.

Ahead of the general election on September 23 the now governing (in coalition) Labour Party campaigned on reducing gross migrant inflows by 30,000. Actual inflows are near 132,000. The nationalistic NZ First Party wanted the net migrant inflow (currently 71,000) cut back to 10,000.

But perhaps with strong feedback that cutting migrant inflows would decimate some sectors we have seen virtually no mention of cutting migration numbers since the election. In particular there was no discussion of cutback numbers in the document signed to form the Labour-NZ First-Greens coalition government – although there is a secret 33 page document of discussion points which the Prime Minister is refusing to release.

It is looking increasingly likely that migrant rules will be changed a lot less than we all thought would be the case pre-election – and that is a good thing not just for those wanting to shift to New Zealand but for employers and for the economy as a whole. That does however mean the anticipated reduction in housing demand pressures will not come about. That in turn means that the chances of house prices falling for any sustained period of time in Auckland are now fairly minimal.

On that front however there is something new to keep an eye on in New Zealand – and it is not the recent slight easing of minimum mortgage deposit rules imposed by the Reserve Bank. There is a drought spreading around New Zealand. Water supplies are tight in most places and fairly soon farmers will have to start cutting stock numbers. That will mean a flood of stock to the slaughter which will lower meat prices, while milk production will decline through lack of enough grass to eat.

The outcome will be a severe cutback in farmer spending (if the drought is still here come Christmas). And if there is one thing we city-based economists have learnt over the past two decades it is that although we usually greet dry conditions with a smile in our suburbs, the rural downturn will cause a slowing of growth.

For that reason we need to accept the possibility that the Reserve Bank's monetary policy could conceivably be eased next year. That will cause some lowering of the NZ dollar and deliver an extra spurt to the housing market.

If this happens (and for now we still think the next move is a rise in interest rates late next year) will migrants need to move as quickly as possible to buy a house before



prices soar? No. The housing cycle has finished its upward leg in Auckland and things are slowing elsewhere. Plus there is a ban on buying by foreigners to come soon and new rules hitting landlords which will reduce their returns.

The chances are that the overall NZ housing market will do little of major interest until perhaps 2021 when the combination of the Americas Cup racing and APEC meeting in Auckland will kick-start a new price cycle.

Tony Alexander, Chief Economist, Bank of New Zealand

BNZ Migrant Banking can assist you with opening an account pre arrival via a simple online application at www.bnz.co.nz/movingtonewzealand or contact the team on +64 9 976 6318 or email bnzmigrant.banking@bnz.co.nz

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