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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Report of the Parliamentary  
Delegation to New Zealand:  
Australia-New Zealand  
Committee Exchange  
Program

**27-31 August 2006**

Joint Standing Committee on Migration

November 2006  
Canberra

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## Foreword

Australia and New Zealand have a close and cooperative relationship. The relationship between the two countries at a government-to-government level, for example, is well developed and extensive. Ministers and government officials from both countries regularly participate in meetings on a wide range of issues. Australia and New Zealand also have close economic and trade ties. New Zealand is now Australia's fifth largest market, while Australia is New Zealand's principal trading partner. Thousands of Australians and New Zealanders also cross the Tasman each year as tourists, for business purposes or to visit family members.

Against this background of cooperation and strong linkages between the two countries, I was honoured to lead the Joint Standing Committee on Migration delegation to New Zealand in August 2006 as part of the annual Committee Exchange program between the two parliaments. The delegation took the opportunity to examine New Zealand's skilled migration program, as well as its overseas skills recognition process.

This report provides some background on the program assembled for the visit and a brief comparative overview of migration arrangements in Australia and New Zealand. Over the course of the visit, several immigration related issues emerged that were of interest to the delegation. The report concludes with a discussion on these key points of interest.

The visit to New Zealand was particularly timely given that, at the time, the Committee was finalising its inquiry into overseas skills recognition, upgrading and licensing. The terms of reference for the inquiry required the Committee to 'consider how Australia's arrangements compare with those of other major immigration countries'. New Zealand was one of the countries under examination.

The Committee concluded its report, *Negotiating the Maze: Review of Arrangements for Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing*, shortly after visiting New Zealand. The report was tabled in Parliament in September 2006.


The delegation program was a busy and interesting one, providing a balance between formal meetings, and informal discussions and inspections. This provided us with an excellent overview of New Zealand's migration system. On behalf of the delegation, I would like to thank the New Zealand Parliament and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, the Hon Margaret Wilson MP, for the hospitality extended to the delegation. Our visit coincided with a sitting week in the New Zealand Parliament and this provided us with a great opportunity to observe parliament in session.

I would also like to thank the New Zealand parliamentarians, government and non-government officials, and peak ethnic groups with whom we met for the time they took to ensure that the delegation was well informed. Particular thanks go to our counterpart committees in New Zealand – the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee and the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee. The delegation very much appreciated the briefing they received from both committees.

The Parliamentary Relations Office of the Australian Parliament coordinated arrangements in their usual efficient and professional way. In New Zealand, the high quality of support provided during our visit by Ms Ruth Delaney, Visit Manager, Department of Internal Affairs, was much appreciated. The Australian High Commission in New Zealand also provided support over the course of the visit, and our thanks go to His Excellency Mr John Dauth, Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand.

Finally, I thank the other members of the delegation – Senator Linda Kirk, the Deputy Leader of the delegation; Mr Laurie Ferguson MP; and Senator Stephen Parry – for their active and constructive contribution to the delegation.

**Don Randall MP**  
**Chair**



# Membership of the Committee

Chair            Mr Don Randall MP

Deputy Chair   Senator Linda Kirk

Members        Senator Andrew Bartlett  
                    Senator Alan Eggleston  
                    Senator Stephen Parry  
                    Mr Laurie Ferguson MP  
                    Mrs Julia Irwin MP  
                    Mr Michael Keenan MP  
                    Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence MP  
                    Dr Andrew Southcott MP



## Membership of the Delegation

Leader	Mr Don Randall MP
Deputy Leader	Senator Linda Kirk
Members	Mr Laurie Ferguson MP Senator Stephen Parry
Delegation Secretary	Dr Kate Sullivan





## Visit objectives

At the time of the delegation visit to New Zealand in August 2006 by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, the Committee was finalising its inquiry into overseas skills recognition, upgrading and licensing. The terms of reference for the inquiry required the Committee to 'consider how Australia's arrangements compare with those of other major immigration countries'. One of the countries under examination was New Zealand.

The Committee had received evidence about New Zealand policy and procedures in the area of skills recognition and welcomed the opportunity to supplement this with discussions with the relevant New Zealand ministers, parliamentary committees, and government and non-government officials.

Australia and New Zealand both face considerable skills shortages, and with the high degree of economic integration between the two economies and high rates of cross-Tasman migration, the Committee welcomed the opportunity to examine the New Zealand skilled migration program in detail. The New Zealand Government announced changes to its skilled migration program in December 2005 and had recently commenced a review of the New Zealand *Immigration Act* 1987. In February 2006 the New Zealand Minister of Immigration also announced a nationwide initiative, *Settlement Support New Zealand*, aimed at providing improved settlement assistance to migrants and refugees. These were all issues of direct relevance to the work of the Committee.

The Committee was also interested in pursuing the following matters with its New Zealand counterparts:

- appeals processes regarding migration decisions;
- regional migration issues;
- border control issues; and
- immigration document and identity fraud.

The Committee concluded its report, *Negotiating the Maze: Review of Arrangements for Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing*,<sup>1</sup> a few weeks after visiting New Zealand.

Chapter 6 of the Committee's report provides an overview of how Australia's skills recognition arrangements compare with those of other major immigration countries, including New Zealand. The section on New Zealand in the report incorporated some of the Committee's observations as a result of the visit.

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1 Joint Standing Committee on Migration, *Negotiating the Maze: Review of Arrangements for Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing*, Commonwealth of Australia, September 2006.



## List of abbreviations

DIMA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
DRT	Deportation Review Tribunal
EOI	Expression of Interest
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
INZ	Immigration New Zealand
ISSL	Immediate Skill Shortage List
LisNZ	Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand
LTSSL	Long Term Skill Shortage List
MRT	Migration Review Tribunal
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
RMS	Refugee and Migrant Service
RRA	Removal Review Authority
RRB	Residence Review Board
RRT	Refugee Review Tribunal
RSAA	Refugee Status Appeals Authority
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees



## Overview

- 1.1 This chapter provides some background on the delegation program and a brief comparative overview of migration arrangements in Australia and New Zealand.

### **Official program**

- 1.2 The program assembled for the visit provided the delegation with an opportunity to examine New Zealand's skilled migration program, as well as its overseas skills recognition process.
- 1.3 The delegation met with New Zealand parliamentarians, government and non-government officials, and peak ethnic groups. (The official program is set out in Appendix A.)

### **Parliamentarians**

- 1.4 Delegation members were honoured to meet with the Speaker of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, the Hon Margaret Wilson MP. The delegation was interested to learn more from the Speaker about New Zealand's unicameral parliamentary system (New Zealand abolished its upper house in 1950) and mixed member proportional electoral system, which has increased the parliamentary representation of minor parties. Under this electoral system it is unlikely that any one party would gain a majority of seats in the House.

- 1.5 The delegation also valued the briefings it received from New Zealand's senior ministers with immigration portfolio responsibilities – the Hon David Benson-Pope MP, Minister of Social Development and Employment,<sup>1</sup> and the Hon David Cunliffe MP, Minister of Immigration. Issues discussed included New Zealand's skilled migration program, skills shortages across the professions and trades, migrant and refugee settlement, and the current review of the New Zealand *Immigration Act 1987*.

Figure 1.1 Delegation members with the Speaker of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, the Hon Margaret Wilson MP



- 1.6 The delegation also met opposition members with responsibilities for immigration matters – the Hon Dr Lockwood Smith MP, National Party Spokesperson on Immigration, and Mr Keith Locke MP, Green Party Spokesperson on Immigration, Ethnic Affairs and Pacific Island Affairs. Delegation members were interested to hear their different perspectives on New Zealand's immigration and settlement policies.

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1 Immigration New Zealand falls within the broader social development and employment portfolio and is administratively part of the Department of Labour.

## Parliamentary committees

- 1.7 The delegation enjoyed wide-ranging discussions with its counterpart committees in New Zealand – the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, chaired by Ms Dianne Yates MP, and the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee, chaired by the Hon Mark Gosche MP.
- 1.8 New Zealand’s select committees are made up of members from government and opposition parties, represented in proportion to party membership in the House. The committees consider bills, petitions and other matters referred by the House or related to their subject areas, as specified under standing orders.

Figure 1.2 Delegation members with the Chair and members of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee



- 1.9 The scope of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee includes immigration related issues, while the scope of the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee includes labour related issues. Labour market issues and migration are closely intertwined in New Zealand, and the Department of Labour plays a lead role in coordinating New Zealand’s migrant and refugee settlement support program.

- 1.10 Discussions with the two committees touched on issues relating to the review of the Immigration Act, border security, regional migration, and migrant and refugee settlement. Committee members also had several questions for delegation members about Australia's immigration policy.

## Immigration New Zealand

- 1.11 The delegation held lengthy discussions with senior officials from Immigration New Zealand (INZ). INZ, which has 750 staff based in offices overseas and within New Zealand, is part of the Department of Labour.<sup>2</sup> Its role includes:
- providing advice on New Zealand's immigration policies and obligations to employer and community groups;
  - facilitating the entry of visitors, students, investors, workers and permanent migrants;
  - supplying prospective migrants with the information they require to make an informed decision;
  - offering settlement assistance and support in conjunction with other government and community agencies; and
  - managing the legal entry of people into New Zealand.<sup>3</sup>
- 1.12 Departmental officials spoke of being at a major 'crossroads' with the current review of the Immigration Act and associated review of New Zealand's immigration policy and changes to program delivery. (These issues are discussed in Chapter 2.)
- 1.13 Other issues discussed included changes to New Zealand's skilled migration program, English language requirements for migration, New Zealand's refugee program and temporary business migration. Pacific islander migration was also raised as a particular challenge, in terms of ensuring that these communities retain skilled workers and maintain viable economies and cultures.
- 1.14 The delegation was pleased to note the high level of information sharing and cooperation between Australia's and New Zealand's immigration departments.
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2 INZ website, <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/aboutnzis/newzealandworldwide.htm>.

3 INZ website, <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/aboutnzis/makingadifference.htm>.



- 1.15 Delegation members also gained insight into New Zealand's border control operations at Auckland International Airport, following a briefing by senior officers from INZ's border operations unit. One of the issues discussed was immigration document and identity fraud.

## Appeals tribunals

- 1.16 Delegation members met with:
- the Refugee Status Appeals Authority;
  - the Removal Review Authority; and
  - the Residence Review Board.
- 1.17 The Refugee Status Appeals Authority determines appeals relating to decisions of the Refugee Status Branch of INZ, declining refugee status. The Removal Review Authority decides appeals under section 47 of the Immigration Act against the requirement for a person who is unlawfully in New Zealand to leave the country. The Residence Review Board decides appeals under section 18C of the Immigration Act by unsuccessful applicants for New Zealand residence visas or permits.
- 1.18 The delegation noted from its discussions with senior officials from the appeals tribunals that, under the current review of the Immigration Act, it is proposed that the appeals system in New Zealand be streamlined through combined tribunals. (This issue is discussed in Chapter 2.)

## Mangere Refugee Reception Centre

- 1.19 Under the government's refugee quota program, New Zealand currently accepts up to 750 refugees each year. All refugees accepted under the program complete a six-week orientation program at the Department of Labour's Refugee Reception Centre (Mangere) in Auckland. Asylum seekers are also housed at Mangere.
- 1.20 The delegation visited Mangere and members were taken on a tour of the facility. Officials also gave a detailed presentation on New Zealand's refugee program, as is discussed further in Chapter 2. Delegation members were interested in the structured orientation program provided to refugees on entry to New Zealand.

## Refugee resettlement services

- 1.21 The delegation met with senior officials from Refugee and Migrant Service (RMS) Refugee Resettlement, New Zealand's primary refugee resettlement agency. RMS, a non-government organisation, provides practical support to the quota refugees accepted by New Zealand each year for resettlement.
- 1.22 The RMS national office in Wellington coordinates the agency's work around the country. In total, RMS employs a paid staff of over 50 people in nine offices, many of whom come from former refugee backgrounds. RMS is also assisted annually by several hundred trained volunteers.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.23 The delegation was interested to hear of the volunteer training program coordinated by RMS. New Zealand's refugee settlement services and volunteers program are further discussed in Chapter 2.

## Peak ethnic councils

- 1.24 The delegation very much welcomed meeting with New Zealand's peak ethnic councils. The delegation was impressed by the forward vision of these groups and their commitment to improving settlement outcomes for migrant communities, under the leadership of Mr Pancha Narayanan, National President, New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils; Dr Nagalingam Rasalingam, President, Refugee Council of New Zealand; and Mr Dinesh Tailor, President, Auckland Regional Ethnic Council.
- 1.25 The New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils, established in July 1989, acts as an umbrella organisation for the regional ethnic councils and ethnic communities of New Zealand. The delegation noted the Federation's work in improving migrant workforce outcomes and its projects concerning women, youth and volunteers. (The contribution of New Zealand's peak ethnic councils is further discussed in Chapter 2.)

## New Zealand Qualifications Authority

- 1.26 The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), established in 1991, has legislated responsibility for the assessment of overseas qualifications held by people seeking residence, employment,

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4 RMS website, <http://www.rms.org.nz/how-we-work.html>.

professional registration or opportunities for further study within New Zealand.

- 1.27 The delegation received a very informative briefing from NZQA. Delegation members were particularly interested in New Zealand's overseas skills recognition framework given that, at the time of the delegation to New Zealand, the Committee was finalising its inquiry into overseas skills recognition, upgrading and licensing. As discussed earlier, the terms of reference for the inquiry required the Committee to compare Australia's arrangements with those of other major immigration countries, and New Zealand was one of the countries under examination. (This area is discussed further in Chapter 2.)

## Comparative summary

- 1.28 Over the course of discussions held with New Zealand officials, numerous statistics were referred to relating to New Zealand's migration and refugee programs. The delegation was interested in comparing aspects of Australia's and New Zealand's immigration arrangements. This information provides context to the delegation's discussions.

## Migration program and statistics

- 1.29 Commentators have noted common policy trends in immigration occurring across Australia and New Zealand, with both countries having:
- prioritised skilled migration in the recent period;
  - diversified immigrant source countries and skill levels;
  - utilised points systems designed to improve selection objectivity while maximising employment outcomes;
  - increased scope for 'two-step' migration (transition from temporary to permanent status);
  - strengthened regional initiatives to encourage more geographically dispersed settlement patterns, in relation to both policy input and settlement options; and
  - attempted to minimise abuse, through the introduction of more coherent and transparent systems.<sup>5</sup>

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5 B. Birrell, L. Hawthorne and S. Richardson, *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration Categories*, Commonwealth of Australia, March 2006, p. 128.

- 1.30 One issue for New Zealand, as the delegation heard from a number of parliamentarians and officials over the course of the visit, concerned the steady outflow of New Zealanders to Australia. In 2004, for example, 400,000 of New Zealand's 4.2 million population were resident in Australia.<sup>6</sup> However, the net outflow of New Zealand citizens tends to be more than replaced by the net inflow of non-New Zealand citizens, with the net gain over the past decade averaging 10,300 per annum.<sup>7</sup>
- 1.31 Under various arrangements since the 1920s, there has been a free flow of people between Australia and New Zealand. The 1973 Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement has enabled New Zealanders to travel to, live and work in Australia without restriction and Australians to do the same in New Zealand. The Special Category Visa that enables New Zealanders to travel to and work in Australia is not considered a permanent residence visa.
- 1.32 The New Zealand Government has launched a drive to encourage the return of expatriates in Australia and elsewhere through a campaign called New Zealand Now. The New Zealand Now website provides current information on New Zealand lifestyle and its business environment.<sup>8</sup>
- 1.33 The delegation also heard about the New Zealand Government's recent announcement to encourage skilled New Zealanders to remain resident in the country by providing interest-free student loans. New Zealanders returning home have interest charged on their loan reversed.<sup>9</sup>
- 1.34 Like Australia, New Zealand has an active immigration research program, which is an important part of immigration policy development. Several recent reports, commissioned by the Department of Labour, were drawn to the attention of the delegation, including:
- *Migration Trends 2004-05*, December 2005;
  - *Skilled Migrants in New Zealand: Employers' Perspectives*, January 2006;

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6 Birrell et al, *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration Categories*, p. 131.

7 Department of Labour, 'Quarterly Migration Update – June 2006', <http://www.dol.govt.nz/PDFs/lmr-external-migration-june-06.pdf>.

8 New Zealand Now website, <http://newzealandnow.info>.

9 Hon Dr Michael Cullen MP, 'Labour delivers on key election pledges', 8 November 2005, <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=24326>.

- R. Wallis, *Skilled Migrants in New Zealand: A Study of Settlement Outcomes*, February 2006; and
- P. Shorland, *People on the Move: A Study of Migrant Movement Patterns to and from New Zealand*, March 2006.

### Skilled migration program

- 1.35 As set out in Table 1.1, New Zealand's skilled migrant intake for 2004-05 was 29,826. Almost 10,000 more migrants were approved for residence in 2004-05 than in the previous year and the majority of these were approved through the skilled stream.<sup>10</sup> As the delegation heard from INZ, in 2005-06 New Zealand will raise its overall skilled migration target to 32,000.
- 1.36 Similarly, in Australia, some 97,500 places were allocated for skilled migration in 2005-06, an increase of almost 20,000 places on the numbers approved in 2004-05.<sup>11</sup> Table 1.2 compares the major countries of origin for permanent skilled migrants for the two countries.

Table 1.1 Overall migrant/refugee intake, 2004-05

<b>Australia</b>		<b>New Zealand</b>	
Skills	77 880	Skills	29 826
Family	41 740	Family	13 500
Refugee/ Humanitarian	13 200	Refugee	1 050
		Samoan quota	1 482
		Pacific access category	1 491
<b>Total</b>	<b>132 820</b>		<b>47 349</b>

Source Birrell et al, *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration Categories*, pp. 156-157

Table 1.2 Major countries of origin for permanent skilled migrants, 2004-05

<b>Australia</b>		<b>New Zealand</b>	
	<b>%</b>		<b>%</b>
UK	25	UK	49
India	13	South Africa	12
China	11	China	6
South Africa	5	India	5
Malaysia	5	USA	4

Source Birrell et al, *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration Categories*, pp. 156-157

10 Department of Labour, *Migration Trends 2004-05*, Wellington, December 2005, p. 2.

11 Australian Government, Budget speech 2005-06, <http://www.budget.gov.au/2005-06/speech/html/speech.htm>.

Table 1.3 Points test for skilled migrants

Category <sup>12</sup>	Australia (July 2005)	Points	New Zealand (2004-05)	Points
<b>Points required</b>		120 <sup>13</sup>		100 <sup>14</sup>
<b>Skill</b>	Occupation specific training	60	Masters or PhD	55
	General professional occupations	50	Trade/tertiary	50
	Other general skilled occupations	40		
<b>Age</b>	18-44 years		20-55 years	
	(18-29 years)	30	(20-29 years)	30
	(30-34 years)	25	(30-39 years)	25
	(35-39 years)	20	(40-44 years)	20
	(40-44 years)	15	(45-49 years)	10
			(50-55 years)	5
<b>English language ability</b>	Competent English (IELTS 6)	20	Since November 2002, IELTS 6.5 average a pre-requisite for skills stream principal applicants	
	Vocational English (IELTS 5)—(IELTS 5 is generally the minimum requirement for skills stream principal applicants)	15		
<b>Recent work experience</b>	<u>Offshore applicants</u>		<u>Skilled work experience</u>	
	Experience related to nominated 60 point occupation	10	Greater than 12 months	60
	If experience is in any 40, 50 or 60 point occupation	5	Less than 12 months	50
	12-24 months experience essential, depending on specific skill category		Current job offer plus	50
	<u>Onshore applicants</u>		<u>Relevant work experience</u>	
	Work experience waived for applicants with recent Australian qualifications		10 years	30
			8 years	25
			6 years	20
			4 years	15
			2 years	10
<b>Occupational demand</b>	Nominated occupation on Migration Occupation in Demand List, with job offer	20	(See bonus points)	
	Nominated occupation on Migration Occupation in Demand List, with no job offer	15		
<b>Bonus points</b>	Capital investment, Australian work experience, fluency in a community language	5	Qualification in growth area	10
			Qualification in skills shortage area	10
			Job, job offer or spouse job offer in skills shortage area or select region	5-10
			Extended work experience in skills shortage area or select region	5-15
			2-6 years NZ work experience	5-15

Source Birrell et al, *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration Categories*, pp. 158-160

12 Not all categories listed.

13 Fewer points required for regional migration.

14 Applicants are then selected by ranking. There is automatic acceptance of applicants with 140 points or more.

- 1.37 Australia and New Zealand both use a points test to determine eligibility under their skilled migration programs. Table 1.3 sets out the points test arrangements for the two countries.
- 1.38 Both countries have mandatory pre-migration qualifications screening as a condition of eligibility for skilled migration and award bonus points for completion of qualifications onshore. Similarly, both Australia and New Zealand have pre-migration English language screening, based on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Notably, as will be discussed in Chapter 2, New Zealand has a higher minimum English language requirement than Australia.
- 1.39 The Department of Labour maintains two occupational shortages lists, the Immediate Skill Shortage List (ISSL) and the Long Term Skill Shortage List (LTSSL),<sup>15</sup> which can be compared to Australia's Migration Occupations in Demand List.<sup>16</sup> Potential migrants use these lists to understand where the opportunities for work lie in New Zealand. The ISSL and the LTSSL are reviewed twice yearly by the department, in consultation with industry groups.

### Refugee program

- 1.40 As discussed earlier, New Zealand's annual refugee resettlement quota is 750 places. In 2004-05, 715 people were approved for residence through the refugee quota and residence was granted to a further 335 successful refugee status claimants.<sup>17</sup> Table 1.1 sets out the total number of refugees settled.
- 1.41 Since 1980, some 16,500 people have been accepted into New Zealand as refugees, the majority being Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Iraqi, Somali and Ethiopian.<sup>18</sup> Chapter 2 looks at New Zealand's refugee program in more detail.

### Temporary visa program

- 1.42 As in Australia, the number of temporary visas granted in New Zealand over recent years has increased. There is also a similar trend

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15 INZ website, <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/news/Skill+shortage+lists+amended.htm>.

16 DIMA website, <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/skilled-occupations/occupations-in-demand.htm>.

17 Department of Labour, *Migration Trends 2004-05*, p. 3.

18 Office of Ethnic Affairs, *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy: A Resource*, Wellington, 2002, p. 22.

evident in the two countries where increasing numbers of temporary visa holders later apply for permanent residency. Like Australia, New Zealand has a successful working holiday scheme and international student program. Table 1.4 sets out the main categories of temporary visas issued over 2004-05.

Table 1.4 Temporary visas issued (main categories), 2004-05

<b>Australia</b>		<b>New Zealand</b>	
Short-term business entrants	339 424	Labour market tested work permits	28 317
Working holiday makers	104 353	Working holiday makers	21 025
International students	174 787	International students with graduate qualifications	77 563

Source Birrell et al, *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration Categories*, pp. 156-157



## Immigration related issues

- 2.1 A number of key points of interest emerged over the course of the delegation's visit to New Zealand, including:
- the current review of the New Zealand *Immigration Act* 1987;
  - the proposed amalgamation of appeal tribunals;
  - issues relating to the removal of unlawful non-citizens;
  - the recent changes to the skilled migration program;
  - the nature of New Zealand's overseas skills recognition framework;
  - the minimum English language requirements for skilled migration;
  - issues relating to the refugee program, including the role of volunteers in the provision of settlement services; and
  - the role and contribution of peak ethnic groups.
- 2.2 This chapter discusses each of these areas.

### **Review of the Immigration Act**

- 2.3 In May 2005, the New Zealand Government launched a comprehensive review of its immigration program. The review aims to ensure the effectiveness of labour migration, border security and migrant settlement.

- 2.4 The first part of this process involves a review of the *Immigration Act* 1987. The review is being undertaken by the government in light of greater global competition for skills and New Zealand's diverse population requiring effective settlement outcomes.
- 2.5 In April 2006, the Minister of Immigration, the Hon David Cunliffe MP, released a wide-ranging discussion paper on this area. The scope of the review includes the purpose and principles of the act, decision making processes, visas and permits, removals, appeals processes, compliance, enforcement and detention.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.6 The government has called for submissions to the review and it is anticipated that proposed revisions to the act will be considered by Cabinet in late 2006, with a bill to Parliament in 2007. This is the first major review of the act since it was established in 1987.
- 2.7 During its meeting with Immigration New Zealand (INZ), the delegation was interested to hear more about the review. Of note is that the new Immigration Act is intended to be framework legislation. It is perceived that the new legislation will provide a broad framework and not be as prescriptive as, for example, the *Migration Act* 1958 in Australia:
- In areas relating to detention, removal and deportation ... prescriptive legislation is useful. In other areas, prescriptive legislation can make it difficult to be responsive ... Australia has highly prescriptive legislation ... This means the legislation is very complex and the legislation and the regulations must be constantly updated.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.8 The proposed changes to the legislation include a simplified visa system for travel to and stay in New Zealand. New Zealand currently has a very different entry system for non-citizens compared with that of Australia. In New Zealand, there is a two-document system consisting of visas and permits, while in Australia entry is managed solely through a visa system. A visa provides the authority for a non-citizen to travel to New Zealand, while a permit provides the authority for a non-citizen to enter and remain in the country. Permits set the duration and conditions of stay, are granted onshore and expire when the holder leaves the country.

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1 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, Wellington, April 2006, pp. 13-22.

2 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, p. 29.

- 2.9 The discussion paper on the Immigration Act review comments that this terminology has proven ‘confusing’, with many people being ‘unaware of the distinction between visas and permits’.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore proposed to bring the various elements of the visa and permit system together into a single visa-only system, as exists in Australia.
- 2.10 The delegation will be interested in the outcomes of the review and subsequent changes to New Zealand’s immigration arrangements.

## **Streamlining the appeals tribunal system**

- 2.11 The delegation met with senior officers from the Refugee Status Appeals Authority, Residence Review Board and Removal Review Authority and heard more about the proposal, as part of the Immigration Act review, to establish a single immigration and refugee appeals tribunal, administered by the Ministry of Justice.
- 2.12 The new amalgamated tribunal will provide a single procedure for determining refugee and protection status and establish a single right of appeal, with all possible considerations being heard together. It is perceived that this will reduce multiple appeal routes, delays in awaiting determinations and the risks of backlogs, while improving the overall efficiency, fairness and transparency of the appeals system.<sup>4</sup>
- 2.13 The right to higher judicial review of tribunal decisions remains. However, to date there has been a low incidence of cases proceeding to the New Zealand High Court. New Zealand has significantly lower rates of judicial review in this area than Australia.
- 2.14 There are currently four immigration and refugee appeals authorities in New Zealand:
- the Residence Review Board (RRB);
  - the Refugee Status Appeals Authority (RSAA);
  - the Removal Review Authority (RRA); and
  - the Deportation Review Tribunal (DRT).

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3 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, p. 29.

4 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, pp. 8-10

- 2.15 The RRB, RSAA and RRA are administered by the Department of Labour and consist of both full-time and part-time members. The DRT is administered by the Ministry of Justice and consists of part-time members only.
- 2.16 The delegation heard that each of these tribunals had been established for a single purpose, meaning that individuals can therefore appeal to multiple authorities. The availability of these multiple avenues of appeal has led to considerable delays in the final determination of matters, particularly in the appeals system against expulsion:
- Such delays generally decrease the justification for expelling the person due to humanitarian considerations and undermine New Zealand's ability to regulate immigration.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.17 Australia does not have separate tribunals for appeals against declined immigration decisions and decisions to remove or deport, as has New Zealand – although it does have separate tribunals for migration and refugee matters. The Migration Review Tribunal (MRT) deals with immigration appeals and the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) deals with refugee appeals.
- 2.18 While Australia does not have a single tribunal system, as is proposed in New Zealand, the MRT and RRT continue to implement joint management and staffing structures, as well as a joint case management system to deal with changing caseloads. They have established a Joint Management Board and other joint corporate governance arrangements and are co-located in Melbourne and Sydney. Members and staff are also cross-appointed to both tribunals.
- 2.19 Also of interest to the delegation was the proposal for the new single tribunal to report to the New Zealand Justice Department rather than the Department of Labour, as is currently the case for three of the tribunals. In Australia, the immigration appeals tribunals come under the Immigration portfolio. The delegation noted that it is envisaged that the single tribunal consist largely of full-time permanent members rather than a mix of part-time and full-time, as is currently the case across the existing tribunals.
- 2.20 Table 2.1 provides some statistics on the two countries' appeal systems, to give some indication of comparative caseloads.

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5 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, p. 95.

Table 2.1 Appeals tribunal statistics, 2004-05

	New Zealand				Australia	
	RRB	RSAA	RRA	DRT	MRT	RRT
No. of appeals lodged	408	360	410	50	7 287	2 911
No. of decisions	418	570	300	28	8 308	3 033
Average time for decision-making	16.1 months	8.7 months	8.5 months	17.9 months	9 months <sup>b</sup>	5 months <sup>b</sup>
Cases on hand	440 <sup>a</sup>	302 <sup>a</sup>	227 <sup>a</sup>	74 <sup>a</sup>	4 685	1 115

a As at 31 October 2005

b Reports refer to weeks which have been converted here to months for comparison purposes

Source Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, p. 106; MRT, *Annual Report 2004-05*, pp. 2-3; and RRT, *Annual Report 2004-05*, p. i

2.21 For Australia, out of a total of 6,532 MRT cases in 2005-06, 3,366 (51%) were set aside (decided in the applicant's favour).<sup>6</sup> Out of a total of 3,287 RRT cases in 2005-06, 982 (30%) were set aside.<sup>7</sup> For New Zealand, the RRA published 303 decisions during 2005-06, with 53 appeals (17%) decided in the applicant's favour.<sup>8</sup> The RRB published 635 decisions during 2005-06, with 279 appeals (44%) decided in the applicant's favour.<sup>9</sup>

## Removal of unlawful non-citizens

2.22 The discussion paper on the review of the Immigration Act highlights location issues and concerns about how quickly removals are taking place, with tribunal appeal processes needing to be backed up by more robust procedures in this area.

2.23 Current enforcement work by the Department of Labour results in approximately 1,200 people who are in New Zealand unlawfully being removed from the country each year.<sup>10</sup> However, the current

6 MRT website, <http://www.mrt.gov.au/statistics/MRT%20lodgements%20decisions%20and%20cases%20on%20hand%2005-06.pdf>.

7 RRT website, <http://www.rrt.gov.au/statistics/RRT%20lodgements%20decisions%20and%20cases%20on%20hand%2005-06.pdf>.

8 RRA, *Annual Report, 30 June 2006*, Wellington, 2006, p. 5.

9 RRB, *Annual Report, 30 June 2006*, Wellington, 2006, p. 5.

10 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, p. 137.

Immigration Act makes it difficult to locate people who are subject to investigation for immigration fraud because immigration officers lack the power to access and obtain contact details and address information:

Officers do not have any powers to require information to assist them to locate a person here lawfully, but who may have obtained that status through fraud or misrepresentation. In order to investigate such cases, the officer must generally first locate the person and give them an opportunity to respond.<sup>11</sup>

- 2.24 Estimates of the number of over-stayers in New Zealand (people whose permits have expired), as highlighted to the delegation by different parties, varied considerably. The new Immigration Act seeks to improve the ability of immigration officers to locate people unlawfully in New Zealand.

## **Changes to the skilled migration program**

- 2.25 The delegation noted interesting differences between Australia's and New Zealand's skilled migration programs. In New Zealand, prospective migrants are required to complete an Expression of Interest (EOI) form, including a self-assessment against age, health and character, English language skills, employability and recognised qualifications or work experience.
- 2.26 Applicants are awarded points on their suitability and need to gain 100 points for their EOI to be placed in a pool. EOIs are selected on the basis of score attained. The information in selected EOIs is then verified and successful candidates are invited to apply for residence.
- 2.27 The New Zealand Government announced changes to its skilled migration program in December 2005. Under the new selection process, those who score 140 points or above on the points test on their EOI are automatically selected from the pool.
- 2.28 Additional places have also been made available for skilled migrants with job offers. Applicants scoring between 100 and 140 points who have a New Zealand job or job offer are ranked and selected in

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11 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, p. 137.

sufficient numbers to meet New Zealand migration program targets.<sup>12</sup> Employers are therefore playing an increasingly important role as a job offer is a key component of New Zealand's skilled migration program.

- 2.29 If an EOI is not selected, it remains in the pool for six months, after which it is withdrawn. Applicants are notified that this has occurred and are able to submit another EOI.

## Overseas skills recognition

- 2.30 Like Australia, New Zealand is facing skills shortages in key employment sectors and similar issues in terms of integrating migrants into the labour market. Both countries have mandatory pre-migration qualifications screening as a condition of eligibility for skilled migration.
- 2.31 Assessing the skills of those who wish to migrate is a key element of the migration system. Skills recognition processes play a crucial role in assisting migrants to gain employment commensurate with their ability, thereby maximising their productive potential and contribution to the economy. Barriers to timely recognition of skills, occupational licensing and employment of overseas trained individuals result in lost productivity and skills 'wastage'.
- 2.32 As discussed earlier, the delegation was particularly interested in New Zealand's overseas skills recognition framework given that, at the time of the delegation visit to New Zealand, the Committee was finalising its inquiry into overseas skills recognition, upgrading and licensing.
- 2.33 The Committee looked at Australia's current arrangements for overseas skills recognition and the related issues of licensing and registration for skills stream migrants. As skills recognition can also be an important issue for people who come to Australia outside of the skills stream, the Committee examined the arrangements in place for other migrant groups needing post-arrival skills recognition, licensing and upgrading, as well as arrangements for Australian citizens returning to Australia with overseas qualifications.

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12 Hon David Cunliffe MP, Minister of Immigration, 'Skilled Migrant Category changes benefit NZ employers,' Media Release, 21 December 2005, <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=24681>.

- 2.34 The Committee also compared Australia's overseas skills recognition arrangements with those of other major immigration countries, including New Zealand, and sought to identify areas where Australia's procedures could be improved.<sup>13</sup>
- 2.35 The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) assesses international qualifications against New Zealand qualifications for migration purposes. NZQA can provide prospective migrants with a Pre-Assessment Result and a Qualifications Assessment Report.
- 2.36 A Pre-Assessment Result is a report that compares an applicant's nominated qualification to a level on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications. When an application for residence is made, a full assessment, a Qualifications Assessment Report, is required to determine whether a qualification or group of qualifications will qualify for points.
- 2.37 A Pre-Assessment Result would normally be submitted at the initial Expression of Interest stage of the skilled migration program. A Qualifications Assessment Report is formal, binding and a requirement of the final stage of residence application.<sup>14</sup>
- 2.38 The delegation heard that NZQA receives approximately 12,400 applications for overseas qualifications assessment each year. The main countries making applications to NZQA are the UK (22.8%), the Philippines (20.4%), South Africa and Zimbabwe (9.2%), USA and Canada (6.1%) and India (5.9%).<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, INZ provides a list of recognised qualifications for immigration purposes from a range of institutions across a number of countries that do not require assessment by NZQA.<sup>16</sup>
- 2.39 There is no national coordinating body, like the NZQA in New Zealand, for overseas skills recognition in Australia. Instead, Australia has a range of assessing authorities for overseas skills across the trades and professions.

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13 The report of the inquiry by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, entitled *Negotiating the Maze: Review of Arrangements for Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing*, was tabled in the Australian Parliament in September 2006.

14 NZQA website, <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-international/qual-eval/international/faq.html>.

15 Presentation by NZQA, Wellington, 30 August 2006.

16 INZ website, <http://glossary.immigration.govt.nz/Listofrecognisedqualifications.htm>.



## Licensing and registration

- 2.40 There are 32 regulated professions in New Zealand, covered by 10 registration authorities.<sup>17</sup> Unlike Australia with its federal/state structure, New Zealand is a unitary state and does not have to deal with issues of different state and territory jurisdictional bodies regulating the same occupations. One of the terms of reference for the Committee's recent report on overseas skills recognition was to identify areas where Australia's procedures can be improved in terms of 'achieving greater consistency in recognition of qualifications for occupational licensing by state and territory regulators'.
- 2.41 For regulated professions in New Zealand, professional associations and registration authorities have their own requirements for membership or registration and individuals need to have their qualifications assessed by NZQA as well as by the appropriate professional body. NZQA assists applicants in making contact with professional bodies.<sup>18</sup>
- 2.42 Skills recognition for the purpose of registration in certain professions in New Zealand is therefore a separate process to that for the purpose of migration. Accordingly, migrants to New Zealand may experience similar frustrations to those experienced by some migrants to Australia, as is discussed in the Committee's report, as a result of there being a 'gap' between migration and registration skills recognition outcomes.<sup>19</sup>

## English language requirements for skilled migration

- 2.43 English language proficiency is a key factor in determining the ease of settlement and labour market success of migrants. However, there is some debate in New Zealand about the level of English language currently set for skilled migration and its effect on migration patterns. The delegation heard a range of views on this matter, with some suggesting that there is 'an overemphasis on the standard of English' and that 'the level of English is pitched too high'.

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17 NZQA website, <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz>.

18 NZQA, *Guide and Application for Assessment of International Qualifications*, Wellington, 2006, p. 8.

19 Joint Standing Committee on Migration, *Negotiating the Maze: Review of Arrangements for Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing*, pp. 95-97.

- 2.44 Under their respective skilled migration programs, both Australia and New Zealand have mandated pre-migration English language screening for principal applicants based on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).
- 2.45 The delegation was interested to note that New Zealand currently requires a higher minimum standard of English than that required by Australia. Principal applicants in New Zealand require an IELTS overall band score of at least 6.5 whereas in Australia the minimum required standard under the General Skilled Migration program is generally 'vocational' English – an IELTS band score of at least 5.
- 2.46 However, in Australia, additional points are awarded under the points test if the applicant demonstrates higher than 'vocational' English, and a number of Australian professions, such as the health professions, have mandated IELTS band 7 as the lowest allowable standard.
- 2.47 The delegation also noted that, under New Zealand's skilled migration program, if non-principal applicants (partners and dependant children aged 16 or over) do not meet the minimum standard of English they must pre-purchase English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training.

## **Refugee program**

- 2.48 New Zealand's annual resettlement quota is 750 places, comprising:
- women-at-risk (75);
  - medical/ disabled (75); and
  - United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) priority protection (600, including up to 300 places for family reunification).<sup>20</sup>
- 2.49 The delegation received a detailed presentation on New Zealand's refugee program while visiting Mangere Refugee Reception Centre. Tables 2.2 and 2.3 set out some of the statistics provided to the delegation on the refugee quota composition and some of the major source countries for refugees accepted by New Zealand.

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20 Department of Labour, *Refugee Quota Programme*, Wellington, August 2006, p. 2.

Table 2.2 Refugee quota composition, 2001-06

Quota categories	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Women at risk	33	10	53	9	73
Medical/disabled	28	23	17	16	14
Protection	432	535	243	46	409
Family reunification	107	32	459	682	232
Emergency	150	4	40	8	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>741</b>

Source Statistics from a presentation to the delegation by Ms Christina Fordyce, Branch Manager, Department of Labour, 28 August 2006

Table 2.3 Refugee quota source countries, 2001-06

Countries	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Afghanistan	257	72	386	324	67
Ethiopia	134	12	48	67	16
Iran	42	47	8	24	152
Iraq	116	355	88	59	76
Myanmar	30	4	26	2	174
Republic of Congo	0	0	0	0	96
Somalia	159	25	38	69	13
Sudan	0	11	74	76	54

Source Statistics from a presentation to the delegation by Ms Christina Fordyce, Branch Manager, Department of Labour, 28 August 2006

2.50 Officers from the Department of Labour based at Mangere highlighted to the delegation some of the main barriers to refugee resettlement, including:

- a lack of English;
- trauma experiences affecting resettlement;
- needing to retrain or change career;
- a lack of information about their new country;
- change/loss of role; and
- separation from family and friends.<sup>21</sup>

21 One recent study has set out the results of a three-year research program on the experiences of refugees resettling in New Zealand – see *Refugee Voices: A Journey Towards Resettlement – Refugee Resettlement Research Project*, Department of Labour, Wellington, June 2004.

- 2.51 Newly arrived refugees undergo a six-week orientation program at Mangere. The program is conducted in the refugee's own language and provides general information about life in New Zealand and relevant institutions and services. The Auckland University of Technology coordinates the English language and cultural components of the orientation program. Health and social services are other important components of the program.
- 2.52 The delegation visited the facilities at Mangere, including the accommodation blocks, classrooms, and general living and recreation areas. The centre can accommodate approximately 160 refugees and there are six intakes of refugees each year. On leaving Mangere, refugees are settled in locations across New Zealand.
- 2.53 For the duration of their stay at Mangere, resettled refugees receive a weekly allowance. On leaving the centre, they are eligible to receive an emergency benefit at the same rate as benefits provided to unemployed New Zealanders. A special grant for re-establishment costs is also provided to assist with acquiring household items.
- 2.54 Persons accepted for resettlement to New Zealand under the refugee quota program are granted a residence permit on arrival. As New Zealand residents, they are entitled to live in New Zealand permanently and enjoy similar rights to New Zealand citizens in terms of access to education, health care, employment and social welfare. After a qualifying period of five years residence, resettled refugees are eligible to apply for New Zealand citizenship.
- 2.55 Finding a job is one of the greatest challenges for resettled refugees and a number of agencies in New Zealand work to support refugees in this process. Resettled refugees are given priority consideration for government-funded work placement and training programs. NZQA also provides free evaluation of overseas qualifications for quota refugees.
- 2.56 Delegation members were interested to hear from officials about the need to balance UNHCR priorities with New Zealand's own resettlement objectives – the importance of growing existing small refugee communities in New Zealand, for example. Some officials spoke of 'targeting' New Zealand's refugee program, based on past settlement outcomes, to focus on particular communities and regions, such as Burma.
- 2.57 The discussion document on the review of the Immigration Act suggests that legislative change, in enabling New Zealand 'to control

the recognition of refugees selected offshore', could allow it 'to enter into regional or global refugee resettlement programs other than the current UNHCR program' and enable New Zealand 'to work closely with like-minded countries in the future to address humanitarian crises within [the] region'.<sup>22</sup> The delegation will be interested to note the outcomes of the review in this area.

## Refugee settlement services

- 2.58 The reception and settlement of refugees is conducted through partnerships between government and non-government organisations, including New Zealand's major agency in this area, Refugee and Migrant Service (RMS) Refugee Resettlement. Its professional staff include social workers, cross-cultural workers and trainers of community volunteers.
- 2.59 RMS provided the delegation with a detailed overview of its refugee resettlement program. RMS is concerned with refugee resettlement on three levels: service provision, public education and refugee policy. Since its establishment in 1975, RMS has helped over 40,000 former refugees settle in New Zealand.<sup>23</sup>
- 2.60 RMS provides support from the time of the refugees' arrival through to the first 12 months of their resettlement within local communities. RMS staff interview each adult to ensure appropriate resettlement locations, taking in account the location of friends and family, ethnic groups, essential services and personal needs.
- 2.61 The delegation noted New Zealand's structured approach to refugee resettlement, including the initial orientation program provided at Mangere. Interestingly, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) recently released a discussion paper on ways to improve settlement outcomes for humanitarian entrants in Australia, seeking views from the public.<sup>24</sup> The discussion paper looks at case support, youth support and the role of volunteers, and notes the need for a cooperative approach in this area because of the range of agencies involved.

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22 Department of Labour, *Immigration Act Review Discussion Paper*, p. 239.

23 Presentation by RMS Refugee Resettlement, Wellington, 30 August 2006.

24 DIMA, *Measures to Improve Settlement Outcomes for Humanitarian Entrants: Discussion Paper*, Commonwealth of Australia, October 2006.

Figure 2.1 Delegation members with Mr Brett Denham, Acting Chief Executive, and Ms Jenni Broom, National Manager, Client Services, RMS Refugee Resettlement



## Volunteers program

- 2.62 The delegation heard that refugee resettlement services in New Zealand are strongly underpinned by volunteers and the support of the community.
- 2.63 RMS spoke highly of its volunteer training program. It provides a nationally recognised certificate course, a Certificate in Refugee Resettlement Support, designed to equip volunteers with the knowledge and skills needed to assist newly-arrived refugees with the challenges of early settlement.
- 2.64 After successfully completing the training program, up to four volunteers are assigned to support each refugee family/individual for the first six months in their new community. The delegation was interested to hear that volunteers assist with setting up homes, as well as providing general practical support in relation to education, health and community facilities. RMS monitors the resettlement progress of quota refugees through a series of home visits by its trained social workers.

## Ethnic representation and government policy

- 2.65 The delegation was very interested in the comments from the peak ethnic groups it met with in New Zealand – the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils, the Refugee Council of New Zealand and the Auckland Regional Ethnic Council. The councils play an important role in contributing to the development of settlement policy and improving settlement outcomes for migrant communities across regional areas of New Zealand.
- 2.66 Representatives from the peak ethnic groups were generally very positive about New Zealand’s ethnic affairs policies, particularly the government policy manual, *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy*.<sup>25</sup> The manual provides guidelines to assist agencies in identifying, planning and evaluating policies and services for New Zealand’s growing and diverse ethnic communities. As Table 2.4 indicates, the ethnic population of New Zealand has grown steadily in size and complexity over recent years.

Table 2.4 Ethnic composition of New Zealand resident population (census data)

Ethnic groups	Percentage of total people (census year)		
	1991	1996	2001
European	82.5	79.6	76.9
Maori	12.9	14.5	14.1
Pacific	5.0	5.6	6.2
Asian	3.0	4.8	6.4
Latin American, Middle Eastern or African	0.2	0.5	0.7
People stating an ethnic group	99.2	95.9	96.2
Ethnic group not stated	0.8	4.1	3.8

Source Office of Ethnic Affairs, *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy: A Resource*, p. 9

- 2.67 The New Zealand Police were highlighted as having worked particularly successfully with ethnic communities to develop comprehensive policies in this regard. For example, the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils pointed to a New Zealand Police guide

25 Office of Ethnic Affairs, *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy: A Resource*.

on religious diversity, drafted to assist police in carrying out their duties.<sup>26</sup>

Figure 2.2 Delegation members with representatives of the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils



- 2.68 The councils also commented on projects under way concerning volunteers, youth and women. Some representatives emphasised, for example, that the successful ethnic migrant women's project was not about 'women for women' but about 'the community as a whole taking responsibility for the success of women'. Many of the regional ethnic councils also now have a youth representative to increase the visibility of younger people in council decision-making processes.
- 2.69 Interestingly, the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils highlighted a Canadian online career mentoring program, called CanadaInfoNet (Canadian Information and Networking Services), that assists in the integration of migrants into the workplace.
- 2.70 CanadaInfoNet provides mentoring and information resources to assist workers considering migration, or those who have already

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26 New Zealand Police, *A Practical Reference to Religious Diversity*, Wellington, June 2005.



migrated, make the most of their expertise.<sup>27</sup> Prospective and settled migrants interact with volunteer mentors through an online forum. In its recent report, the Committee noted the potential value of this program and made a recommendation to the Australian Government on this area.<sup>28</sup>

- 2.71 The delegation was impressed with the ethnic councils' work, seeing it as providing an excellent model for other groups.

## Migrant settlement services

- 2.72 In 2004 the government boosted settlement services for migrants, refugees and their families by launching the New Zealand Settlement Strategy. Effective settlement services for migrants and refugees, particularly at the initial settlement stage, are essential in ensuring that these groups establish themselves successfully in local communities and contribute positively to social and economic life.

- 2.73 The peak ethnic councils commented on the implementation of the strategy and the importance of ethnic community networks being involved in this process to ensure successful outcomes. The strategy seeks to ensure that migrants and refugees:

- obtain employment appropriate to their qualifications and skills;
- are confident using English in a New Zealand setting, or can access appropriate language support to bridge the gap;
- are able to access appropriate information and responsive services that are available to the wider community (for example housing, education, and services for children);
- form supportive social networks and establish a sustainable community identity;
- feel safe expressing their ethnic identity and are accepted by, and are part of, the wider host community; and
- participate in civic, community and social activities.<sup>29</sup>

- 2.74 Both Australia and New Zealand use survey information to track settlement outcomes of migrants and refugees – Australia through its Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia<sup>30</sup> and New Zealand

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27 CanadaInfoNet website, <http://www.canadainfonet.org/about%20us/default.asp?s=1>.

28 Joint Standing Committee on Migration, *Negotiating the Maze: Review of Arrangements for Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing*, p. 205 and p. 255.

29 INZ website, <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/community/stream/support/nzimmigrationsettlementstrategy>.

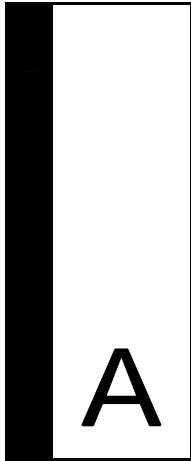
30 DIMA website, <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/research/lisa/index.htm>.

through its Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ).<sup>31</sup> This information is used to inform the development of immigration policy and settlement services and enable evaluation of current immigration selection policies and settlement programs.

Don Randall MP  
Chair

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31 INZ website, <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/community/general/generalinformation/research/lisnz>.



## Appendix A: Program

### **Sunday 27 August 2006**

Depart Australia

Arrive Auckland International Airport

7.00pm Delegation briefing

### **Monday 28 August 2006**

9.00am Meeting with Ms Ema Aitken, Chair, and Mr Brian Lewis, Branch Manager/Registrar, Refugee Status Appeals Authority

11.00am Visit Mangere Refugee Centre and meet with representatives from the Department of Labour: Mr Kevin Third, Director, Refugee Division, Service International Group; Ms Christina Fordyce, Branch Manager; and Mr Qemajl Murati, Immigration Manager

1.45pm Attend lunch meeting with Dr Nagalingam Rasalingam, President, Refugee Council of New Zealand; Mr Dinesh Tailor, President, Auckland Regional Ethnic Council; and other members of the Refugee Council of New Zealand and Auckland Regional Ethnic Council

3.00pm Briefing and tour of Immigration New Zealand's border control operations at the International Terminal, Auckland International Airport, and meet with Mr Craig White, Branch Manager, Onshore Border Operations; Mr Lee Wilson, Branch Manager,

Offshore Border Operations; and Mr Robert Clark, Immigration Manager, Border Operations

5.00pm Depart for Wellington

### **Tuesday 29 August 2006**

10.15am Meeting with Speaker of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, the Hon Margaret Wilson MP

11.30am Discussions, following by lunch meeting, with Ms Mary Anne Thompson, Deputy Secretary, Workforce, and other senior officers from Immigration New Zealand

1.50pm Proceed to Speaker's Gallery in the New Zealand Parliament to be introduced to the House

2.00pm View Parliament in session

2.45pm Guided tour of Parliament

3.30pm Meeting with the Hon Dr Lockwood Smith MP, National Party Spokesperson on Immigration

5.00pm Roundtable discussions with Mr Pancha Narayanan, National President, New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils, and other council members

7.30pm Attend dinner at the residence of the Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, His Excellency Mr John Dauth, with embassy staff and New Zealand parliamentarians

### **Wednesday 30 August 2006**

9.00am Meeting with Mr David Plunkett, Chair, and Ms Gail Powell, Senior Registrar, Residence Review Board and Removal Review Authority

10.10am Guided tour of Te Papa Museum

11.30am Meeting with the Hon David Benson-Pope MP, Minister of Social Development and Employment, accompanied by His Excellency Mr John Dauth, Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand

12.00pm Meeting with Mr Keith Locke MP, Green Party Spokesperson on Immigration, Ethnic Affairs and Pacific Island Affairs

- 12.40pm Attend lunch meeting with the Australian Friendship Group
- 2.00pm Meeting with Mr Brett Denham, National Manager Operations/Acting Chief Executive, and Ms Jenni Broom, National Manager, Client Services, RMS Refugee Resettlement
- 3.30pm Meeting with Ms Pamela Hulston, Manager, Qualification Recognition Services, New Zealand Qualifications Authority
- 5.15pm Meeting with the Hon David Cunliffe MP, Minister of Immigration
- 6.00pm Attend dinner at the New Zealand Parliament, hosted by the Hon Mark Gosche MP, Chair, Transport and Industrial Relations Committee; and Ms Dianne Yates MP, Chair, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

**Thursday 31 August 2006**

- 10.00am Meeting with Chair and members of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
- 11.15am Meeting with Chair and members of the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee
- 3.50pm Depart Wellington