



REVIEW OF IMMIGRATION POLICIES FOR TEMPORARY WORKERS IN THE ENTERTAINMENT, MUSIC, FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRIES

FEEDBACK FORM

PURPOSE

Please use this form to provide feedback on the consultation document 'Review of immigration policies for temporary workers in the entertainment, music, film and television industries'.

DUE DATE

Your responses are due by 5.00 pm on Sunday 17 July 2011. Please email your responses to: entertainersreview@dol.govt.nz.

SUBMITTER'S DETAILS

Please provide your details below.

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QUESTIONS

Please use as much space as you need to provide your feedback. Wherever possible, please provide evidence or examples to support your views.

General questions

1. Should policies for overseas entertainment workers be 'one size fits all' (status quo), or is there a need for a new policy to differentiate applications. If so, how should applications be differentiated (for example, by type, and/or time spent in New Zealand)?

SPADA has consulted with some key members, who have experience of applying for temporary work visas. Feedback on the consultation document '*Review of immigration policies for temporary workers in the entertainment, music, film and television industries*' is based on that feedback.

As outlined in the consultation document, differentiation by time spent in New Zealand is the most efficient and easily identifiable differentiation option. Differentiation by 'type' would be as easy to identify as some Immigration staff may be unsure of the different "types"/genres of productions being outlined in application forms; and therefore might inadvertently apply incorrect criteria.

2. What impact do you think these proposals would have on employment opportunities for New Zealanders? In particular, what, if any, impact would this have on recruitment planning and decisions?

A policy change would not result in a negative impact on employment opportunities for New Zealand; it will result in surety around the screen production industry immigration protocols and therefore incentivise offshore productions coming to New Zealand. The proposal is also appropriate for the different types of screen production in that the short stay for provisions would apply to TVCs. This is appropriate for a number of reasons one of them being TVCs are fully commercially funded and often are from offshore sources.

3. Do you think these proposals would have any impact on the attractiveness of New Zealand for overseas investment in the entertainment industries? If so, what sort/size of impact

As mentioned in Q.2, certainty around New Zealand's temporary workers in the entertainment, music, film and television industries should have a positive impact on the attractiveness of New Zealand for overseas investment in the entertainment industries. It is too early to talk "size" of the impact; as it could take a few years for the system to be embedded and for international companies to become confident in the new system. It is also difficult to respond to this question, due to the fact that the previous system's impact on decision-making (e.g. to come to New Zealand) was unknown.

In the short term, domestic companies would have the opportunity to start engaging with international companies and start making them aware of the change to the policy, which if New Zealand was a potential location for a shoot or other screen production activity.

Proposal 1: A streamlined work visa process for applicants who intend only a short stay in New Zealand, and also for those working on official film co-productions

4. What are your views on this proposal? Can you identify any specific advantages or disadvantages?

This option will suit a number of TVC companies, although feedback has indicated that 28 days would be more useful than the suggested (up to) 14.

The inclusion of official film co-productions in this streamlined work visa process is a positive. It is essential with the ever-growing number of official co-productions that the immigration policy aligns with the other benefits afforded under the co-production agreements. Given that co-productions are based on Government to Government treaties which expressly spell out the facilitation of personnel required under the terms of those agreements it is only right that this should be acknowledged under Immigration policy.

5. Is 14 days or less in New Zealand the appropriate period of time for applicants to be subject to the streamlined process? Is there a more appropriate period of time?

As mentioned above, for the TVC companies canvassed a slightly longer period of time is desirable (28 days was suggested by one company).

Proposal 2: Visitor visas for approved arts and music festivals

6. What are your views on this proposal? Can you identify any specific advantages or disadvantages?

No comment.

Proposal 3: Accreditation and approval in principle process

7. What are your views on this proposal? Can you identify any specific advantages or disadvantages?

There is strong support the Accreditation option from production companies; and in principal and in principle this will be very advantageous during the pre-production stages of large budget screen productions; as well as providing a certain level of certainty around production in New Zealand by international companies looking to work here.

The Accreditation option is also based on the premise that companies know what is best for their own productions. There is no incentive to bring in offshore personnel unnecessarily given the relevant cost to doing so given the additional cost considerations when factoring in travel, accommodation, etc.

New Zealand producers, line producers and production companies in general are completely supportive of their local screen production industry. The very health and sustainability of the local screen production industry is based on employing locally – and once again, in general offshore personnel are only engaged when strictly necessary and or required by offshore financiers.

Proposal 4: Process for individual applications not covered by other proposals

8. What are your views on this proposal? Can you identify any specific advantages or disadvantages?

Unsure whether there is a need for this process. Perhaps to provide an element of certainty that international productions shooting in New Zealand are bona fide; and adhere to the domestic guidelines in place (Blue Book, Pink Book, Health and Safety guidelines) as well as current immigration policy, perhaps application only come from one of the new two-tiered system; so that established, credible New Zealand based production companies and line producers are being used and being consulted by overseas companies.

The key to the success in this change of policy will be in the update of the new policy by producers and line-producers; and by safe-guarding the exploitation of any loop-holes outside of the new two-tiered approach being proposed.

9. Do you have any other feedback or comments?

SPADA's budget, together with the other Guilds that were involved in processing the Letters of Non-Objection (Screen Directors Guild, the Techo's Guild, NZ Actors Equity), has been negatively affected by the change of policy around the processing of LONOs. However, SPADA hopes these changes will result in long term benefits for the domestic screen production industry as a whole.