

VISA PAK ISSUE 449 — 25 SEPTEMBER 2020

## SPECIAL DIRECTION – VISA EXTENSION FOR FOREIGN FISHING CREW AND RELIGIOUS WORKERS

On 10 July the Minister of Immigration signed a Special Direction extending the expiry date of employer-assisted work visas by six months. Information on that extension and what it covered is here: [Visapak 441](#) and [Visapak 442](#).

On 17 August the Minister signed a subsequent Special Direction extending the expiry date of partners or dependents of individuals who were extended under the 10 July extension. These secondary applicants were not extended for a set duration, but were extended in line with the principal applicant. Information on that extension can be found here: [Visapak 447](#)

### E Fishing Crew and Religious Workers

Two categories of employer-assisted work visas have subsequently been extended by special direction:

- Crew of foreign fishing vessels
- Religious workers

On 11 September 2020 the Minister signed a Special Direction extending these two categories for a period of six months. Partners or dependents of religious workers eligible for the extension were also extended in line with the principal applicant (as per the 17 August extension). Foreign fishing crew are unable to support temporary visas of their family members and so an extension was not applied to partners or dependents of foreign fishing crew.

<b>Fishing crew</b>	Everyone holding a valid foreign crew of fishing vessel employer-assisted work visa; <i>and</i>  with an expiry between 11 September and 31 December 2020.  <i>*Please note, due to some crew being offshore, or in the EEZ at the time of the Special Direction there is no requirement for this cohort to have been onshore on 11 September 2020, the extension applies to all visa holders of this type with an expiry between 11 September and 31 December 2020.</i>	6 months
<b>Religious worker (and partners and dependents)</b>	Every one onshore on <b>11 September 2020</b> ; <i>and</i>  with a valid religious worker employer assisted work visa; <i>or</i>  a valid partner or dependent visa linked to a religious worker primary applicant; <i>and</i>  with an expiry date between 11 September and 31 December 2020.	For the PA: 6 months  <i>or</i>  For partners and dependents: in line with the PA's visa or a six months extension (whichever is less)

Once implemented, the Expiry Date Stay will be updated and will be displayed on both the Visa Summary section and Visa Detail Section (both are under Visa Tab in AMS).



INZ will email the affected visa holders to confirm their visas have been extended. It is expected that some visa holders will not receive the communication, as in some cases the address supplied may no longer be current or valid, or might have been of a third party.

Anyone captured in the Special Direction cohorts is lawful from the date the Special Directions came into effect regardless of whether the new expiry date appears in AMS.

*Visa extensions mailbox*

If you receive an enquiry from an eligible visa holder whose visa has not been extended on AMS, please check if they meet the eligibility requirements. If you think the visa holder should have been extended please forward their details to the [\[internal email\]](#) mailbox (internal only – do not distribute).

If their visa expires/has already expired and they appear unlawful in AMS, their visa will be extended and immigration history amended to delete the unlawful record once AMS is updated.

*Use of label-less replace*

If it is appropriate to consider the use of a label-less replace function on AMS go through normal sign out processes.