

VISA PAK ISSUE 556 — 22 SEPTEMBER 2023

CLARIFICATION OF THE APPROACH TO CREW CHANGES FOR THE FOREIGN FISHING CREW APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE (AIP)

Clarifies our approach for managing crew changes under WJ instructions.

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) and MBIE Immigration Policy recently clarified the approach to the notification of crew changes under [WJ2.3\(a\)](#) for the foreign crew of fishing vessels work visa category. This advice is to notify staff of the approach when assessing an Approval in Principle (AIP) and subsequent work visas.

Instructions at [WJ2.3\(a\)](#) require employers to specify the breakdown between base allocation and crew changes on their AIP requests.

[WJ2.3](#) Cap for foreign fishing crew approvals in principle

1. Employers may submit approval in principle (AIP) applications for their allocated numbers, as per [WJ1.7](#), and each AIP must specify the breakdown between the number of crew members applied for as part of:
 1. their base allocation; and
 2. whether a crew change is required within the period, and confirmation of when the crew will change.

This advice clarifies that this instruction allows employers to signal multiple crew changes in their AIP request and not be required to notify specific dates for the change to occur. General guidance about the timing of crew changes is acceptable, such as 'in the first half of the season' or 'sometime in October or November'. Employers will need to specify a base allocation on the AIP request and a total number of work visas required, taking into account their crew changes.

The number of foreign fishing crew onboard the vessel at any one time must not exceed the employers' base allocation.

The AIP request form and approval letter have been updated to provide clarity for employers.



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AIP employers can use [WJ6\(d\)](#) for unexpected, permanent departures when the employer can provide evidence that the worker has departed the vessel.