

## Vote(s): Immigration

### Proposal: Refugee Status Branch – additional baseline funding

### Funding allocation: Other

---

#### Short Description:

Substantial injections of funding for refugee status determinations were made in the late 1990s and early 2000s. That funding ended in 2002/03, leaving the baseline funding for the Refugee Status Branch too low to meet current inflows. In the 2002 Budget Ministers agreed to a one-off injection, for 2002/03 only, on the basis that the Department of Labour and the Treasury would review the future funding needs for refugee status determinations before the 2003 Budget to establish what levels of ongoing funding might be required. Following that review, officials recommend an increase in baselines of \$3.530 million (GST inclusive) from 2003/04.

**Initiative Ranking: 3 of 5**

#### Impact on the Provisions]

\$m*	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
<b>Net operating impact</b> (GST incl)		3,530	3,530	3,530	3,530

#### Benefits / Contribution to Growth

The initiative will benefit genuine refugees and New Zealand.

- It will benefit genuine refugee status claimants through continuing to give them their decisions quickly, so they can gain the security of knowing they will not be returned to face persecution, and can begin their new life; and
- New Zealand through reducing the incentives for people to falsely claim refugee status. When claims are determined quickly, people who have made them in order to work cannot earn enough to make their trip to New Zealand worthwhile.

#### Collaboration in development and implementation

The review was carried out with the Treasury.

#### Costing Information

[to come from Finance]

#

## Risks

There is a possibility that, in a departure from recent years, no “shocks” occur and the Refugee Status Branch is resourced to undertake more work than is required. In that case at the next review funding would be returned to the Crown.

There is a risk that the rate of refugee status claiming rises sharply again (for example, if boats arrive) and that the funding is not sufficient to meet inflows. In that case backlogs may be permitted to build up again, and / or more funding may be sought from the Crown.

There are no legislative changes required.

## Evaluation

The average age of refugee status claims is reported on regularly as part of the NZIS's normal performance monitoring.

## Draft Recommendations to Economic Development Ministers

It is recommended that Ministers:

1. **approve** the following changes in provisions to achieve and maintain the timely determination of refugee claims

<b>Vote Immigration</b>	\$million – increase/(decrease)					<b>GST</b>
	<b>2002/03</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	
Departmental Output Class: Services to position New Zealand as an international citizen with immigration-related interests and obligations (funded by revenue Crown)	-	3.530	3.530	3.530	3.530	Incl