

9. Arrival Procedure

9.1 Introduction

Missions and posts are required to notify MFAT's Protocol Division of the appointment of all members of the staff of the mission, family members and Private Domestic Staff, as per Article 10 of the VCDR and Article 24 of the VCCR. Such notification should be provided to Protocol Division at least one month before an officer's proposed arrival date into New Zealand.

9.2 Visas/Immigration Entry Requirements

All accredited staff of missions and posts, and their officially recognised family members must hold a valid diplomatic, consular or official visa before travelling to New Zealand (refer Immigration Act 2009).

Visas require the approval of the Protocol Division and are issued by Immigration New Zealand on instruction from Protocol Division. Requests for visas should be made at least one month prior to travel. Officers should not enter New Zealand to take up assignments under visitor or visa waiver arrangements/New Zealand electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA).

When foreign officials are appointed to missions/posts based in New Zealand, the local diplomatic mission or consular post should email to Protocol Division a request for a visa including the below information via a Third Person Note:

- officer's full name;
- status and designation of the officer;
- the name of the officer being replaced;
- duration of the assignment;
- details of all nationalities held;
- proposed date of arrival in New Zealand;
- officially-recognised accompanying family members' full names and relationship to the principal officer;
- a scanned copy of the officer's passport biodata page, and accompanying family members' passport bio data pages.

Protocol Division will arrange for the visa to be issued and forward it by email to the local diplomatic mission or consular post.

Protocol Division must be advised of any application for entry by an accompanying Private Domestic Staff. Requirements for the entry of Private Domestic Staff are set out in Chapter 5.

9.3 Notification of Arrivals

To assist missions and posts to fulfil arrival requirements and for the purposes of the issuance of Identity Cards as appropriate, MFAT asks missions and posts to complete the following forms:

- MFA 600 Notification of Arrival of a Staff Member (refer Chapter 3);
- MFA 601 Notification of Arrival of Dependant Family Member (refer Chapter 3);

- MFA 602 Notification of Arrival of Private Domestic Staff (refer Chapter 5);
- MFA 613 Notification of Commencement of Duties as an Honorary Consular Officer in New Zealand (refer Chapter 8).

Completed forms should be sent to Protocol Division within 10 working days of the arrival of an officer and any family members. A covering Third Person Note is not required to be sent with these forms unless additional relevant advice is provided or sought.

9.4 Customs and Biosecurity Regulations

New Zealand places a high degree of importance on biosecurity to protect our unique environment, public health and economic prosperity. New Zealand law prohibits or restricts the importation of a wide range of animal and plant products, including live animals, meats, skins, feathers, bone, wool, eggs, cultures, shells, coral, hair and bee products, plants, fruit, vegetables, flowers, seeds, raw nuts, bulbs, straw, bamboo, wood and other plant products. Missions, posts and their staff are required to comply with these controls at all times. Where such items are brought into New Zealand, they must be declared to biosecurity officials at the point of entry. Some items may be disinfected, placed in quarantine or, if they represent an immediate danger to New Zealand's biosecurity, disposed of.

Many of New Zealand's animal, bird and plant species are rare; some are in danger of becoming extinct. To protect them, their export is strictly controlled and in some cases it is illegal. Similarly, there are controls on the export of some items deemed important to New Zealand's cultural heritage.

All members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps and their family members are expected to comply with regulations in force in New Zealand relating to the importation and export of prohibited and restricted items, as required by Article 41 of the VCDR and Article 55 of the VCCR.

On arrival in New Zealand all members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps, and their family members, must declare all risk goods including foodstuffs, plant and animal products, and any used equipment they have in their possession. All food brought into New Zealand, in suitcases or hand luggage, must be declared. A substantial instant fine may be imposed for breaches of these regulations. New Zealand expects that all members of the diplomatic and consular corps and their family members will pay such infringement notices in line with their responsibilities under Article 41 of the VCDR and Article 55 of the VCCR.

New Zealand is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) and CITES-related material must be declared.

Further information is available on the Ministry for Primary Industries website www.mpi.govt.nz or New Zealand Customs Service website: www.customs.govt.nz.

9.4.1 Tobacco

As at 1 July 2020, tobacco products, tobacco leaf and refuse became prohibited imports and a permit is required to import these products, issued by the New Zealand Customs Service. Tobacco products, tobacco leaf and refuse products must be imported using a freight forwarder, the fast-freight courier system or as bulk sea or air cargo. That means importers cannot send any tobacco products, or tobacco leaf or refuse through the International Mail Service operated by New Zealand Post – it is still possible to use New Zealand Post's international courier service.

Any missions, diplomatic or consular staff wishing to import tobacco and tobacco products will need to complete and return an application form. Please email tobacopermits@customs.govt.nz to request an application form. For more information on this and the definition of tobacco products, tobacco leaf and refuse, please see the Customs website <https://www.customs.govt.nz/tobacco>.

9.5 Baggage Searches

Under Article 36 of the VCDR and Article 50 of the VCCR, the personal baggage of members of the Corps shall be exempt from inspection, unless there are serious grounds for presuming that the baggage contains articles prohibited by law from import or subject to quarantine regulations of the receiving state. Officers of the Ministry for Primary Industries or New Zealand Customs Service may carry out these searches if necessary. When personal baggage triggers a response from pre-inspection measures such as x-raying or detector dogs, this is likely to give rise to serious grounds for presuming that the baggage contains prohibited items.

In circumstances where it is determined that an examination of personal baggage is necessary, it will be carried out as quickly and discreetly as possible. Members of the Corps are asked to cooperate with any requests to inspect baggage. New Zealand also acknowledges the inviolability of the archives and documents of the mission. If diplomats wish to do so, they are able to remove any documents or archives (including electronic 'archives') from the bag before an inspection.

A diplomatic or career consular officer is entitled to refuse permission for airline security personnel to search their personal baggage prior to departure but, as would be the case for any other travellers, the airline would be under no obligation to carry a person refusing a search and may refuse to allow that person to board the aircraft. MFAT understands that it is the practice of airlines to refuse to carry any passenger who will not give permission for searches.

The only exception is the official diplomatic bag which is sealed and clearly marked as such (refer Chapter 26). All other materials are subject to inspection.

9.6 Fiscal Privileges

The following is a summary of individual fiscal privilege entitlements available to staff members upon arrival in New Zealand, depending on their status. For further information on diplomatic/consular privileges, refer to Chapter 17.

9.6.1 Diplomatic and Consular Officers

Upon arrival in New Zealand, diplomatic and consular officers are exempt from Customs duties and GST on their personal effects and goods intended for their personal use when entering New Zealand on first arrival, and at any time during the course of their assignment.

9.6.2 Administrative and Technical Staff and Consular Employees

Upon arrival in New Zealand, Administrative and Technical Staff and Consular Employees are exempt from Customs duties and GST on their personal effects only when imported into New Zealand within 12 months of the staff member's arrival in New Zealand.

9.7 Importation/Exportation of Motor Vehicles

For information on the procedures, requirements and special conditions relating to purchase, including the importation of motor vehicles, registration, licensing, resale or export and other relevant matters, refer to Chapter 12.

9.8 Identity Cards

Information on eligibility for an identity card is set out in Chapter 11.

9.9 Diplomatic and Consular List on the Ministry's Website

The Diplomatic and Consular list on MFAT's website www.mfat.govt.nz includes the name and designation of all diplomatic, consular and administrative and technical staff resident in New Zealand along with respective spouse/partner names. A mission or post should ensure that Protocol Division is promptly advised of all arrivals and departures of accredited staff to ensure the information on the website is accurate. (Refer to Chapter 7.)

9.10 Post-Arrival Checklist

- Complete appropriate MFA forms (as set out in para 9.3 above) and email to Protocol Division within 10 working days of arrival;
- To obtain a New Zealand driver's licence - apply for a New Zealand driver's licence (at Automobile Association) as soon as possible after arrival, but no later than 18 months after arrival (refer to Chapter 12);
- To import a car - complete form MFA 610, 'Application to Import a DC/DCC, CC/CCC or FC/FCC Licensed Motor Vehicle'.
- To obtain diplomatic/consular licence plates - complete form MFA 609, 'Application for DC/DCC, CC/CCC or FC/FCC Licence Plates'. This form should be used for new and used vehicles purchased in New Zealand – refer Chapter 12. This form is not required if you have used the MFA 610 form.
- To obtain Domestic Student Status - complete form MFA 605, 'Application for Domestic Student Status', if appropriate. (Refer to Chapter 13.)
- To become a Certifying Officer at the mission/post - complete form MFA 608, 'Authorisation for Diplomatic and Consular Certifying Officer', if appropriate.



10. Departure Procedure

10.1 Introduction

Final departure/cessation of duties of all members of the staff of the mission, family members, and Private Domestic Staff should be notified to Protocol Division within one week of departure (if not earlier). Officers and family members must depart New Zealand within one month of the date the officer's duties cease. Visas issued in relation to the posting that extend beyond the final departure by one month will be cancelled after this time.

10.2 Pre-Departure Checklist

- Complete form MFA 611, 'Application to Sell or Export a DC/DCC, CC/CCC or FC/FCC Licensed Motor Vehicle', and send it to Protocol Division. Note: a vehicle that is being exported must first be de-registered. (Refer Chapter 10); once the MFA form has been approved by Protocol Division and returned to the Mission, motor vehicle registration plates should be taken to the appropriate Centre (as advised on form MFA 611);
- Complete form MFA 604 'Notification of Departure' and send to Protocol Division before departure date;
- Return identity card to Protocol Division.

