



ROB LAW CONSULTING GROUP

Immigration Hints

A desirable location

New Zealand has been seen as a desirable place to live for many years and has attracted a steady flow of migrants. Originally they came from the UK but in recent years have arrived from most countries in the world. Ethnic mix at the last census was about 68% European, 22% Maori and Polynesian and 10% 'Other'.

Our land area is greater than the United Kingdom – but holds only a little over 4.1 million people. If you want a mile of beach to yourself in summer, you can usually find it without travelling too far – but if you want people on your beach, that's fine, you'll find them clustered on beaches close to main centres.

The New Zealand climate is moderate in every respect, without the hot or cold extremes found in many areas of the world. In summer, only Hawkes Bay and Gisborne on the east coast of the North Island, and Canterbury and Central Otago in the South Island regularly reach beyond 30 deg Centigrade. In winter, only the cities of Christchurch and further south see snow – but only for a day or so. Those who actually want snow can enjoy it on ski fields in both North and South Island high country within a four hour drive of all main cities.

Usually there is an adequate supply of rainwater over most of the country, so grassland farming for meat, wool and dairy products featured highly in New Zealand's economy from early European settlement. In more recent years, timber products, horticulture and a high quality wine industry have taken over some of the previously grassed land.

In Wellington, the mean maximum temperature for January is 20.3C and the minimum mean temperature for July 6.2C. Mean Rainfall is 1249mm. If you are looking to visit New Zealand check out Tourism New Zealand website www.newzealand.com/travel

New Zealand History

The earliest known residents of New Zealand were the Moriori. The Maori are thought to have arrived from Polynesia around 700 years ago, populating New Zealand with tribal groups that were frequently at war with each other and with the Moriori who were driven out to a last outpost in the Chatham Islands. As neither race had a written language, history of pre European times is a mixture of myth and religion.

New Zealand was 'discovered' by Abel Tasman in 1642 but as he did not like the look of the natives he went away. Cook was the first European to land here in 1769 and produced early coastal maps of the country. The land was settled by Europeans in the early 1800's seeking whales, seals, then timber and finally gold in 1861. Sheep farming for wool was developed and the first shipment of frozen meat took place from Dunedin in 1882

In 1840 the Treaty of Waitangi was signed by Maori Chiefs and the Crown to give sovereignty to Britain, to halt tribal warfare and bring the rule of law to the country. Not everyone agreed and certainly there were dubious land deals carried out, resulting in the Maori Land Wars in the late 1840's and the 1860's.

In 1867, four Maori seats were allocated in Parliament

In 1893 New Zealand was the first country to give women the vote – and of course it didn't stop there, we now have a woman as Prime Minister, Chief Justice and the Chief Executive of the largest New Zealand public company, Telecom – and irrespective of politics, collectively they don't seem to be doing too bad a job!

In 1907 New Zealand became a Dominion, and in 1947 established separate sovereignty within the Commonwealth. Queen Elizabeth remains our Head of State through her representative, the Governor General. Opinion polls support the status quo.

Transport to New Zealand

New Zealand is served by a range of international airlines providing a variety of potential stopovers for flights from Europe via the East, or through America. Both Air New Zealand and QANTAS have modern fleets and an excellent reputation for service. If your long-haul tastes are more exotic, you can sample Singapore, Hong Kong, Thai, Malaysian, Brunei, Japanese, Taiwanese, Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, Emirates, Chilean, Argentinean and perhaps more – and that is before you reach the restaurant scene in Wellington!

Make the most of a stopover, both to ease the journey and to give the opportunity to see somewhere new. For those not used to long distance air travel, 24hrs or more strapped in a large aluminium can is fairly uncomfortable – and with DVT can be fatal. Avoid travel agents who offer you slightly cheaper fares attached to poor connecting flights unless you make it an overnight stop – 40 hours of continuous travel is far too much!

There is an excellent internal air service between the main cities within New Zealand run by both Air New Zealand and Qantas in competition. Smaller towns and cities are served by Air New Zealand Link using a variety of twin prop aircraft.

There are price advantages for early and on line booking. Check for low price options!
See www.airnz.co.nz www.qantas.co.nz

New Zealand Railways have a narrow 3ft 6ins gauge track and are not user-friendly for long distance passengers in the North Island. There is only one passenger train the Overlander that takes 12 hours from Auckland to Wellington using carriages any respectable railway would have scrapped thirty years ago. It is great scenery by rail, but quicker and more certain by road! The train runs daily in summer, but only Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the winter months.

See www.tranzscenic.co.nz

Local commuter rail services operate in the Auckland and Wellington regions.

Our highways generally are not European motorway standard and apart from the Auckland area are not European crowded either. We drive on the left and roads get you where you want to go in a reasonable manner. There is a 100 kph (we're metric) open road limit – and an active police force with hidden radar guns and cameras to take your money – and your licence if you infringe too often. In built-up areas the limit is 50kph or 70kph on the fringe. Ask for details about the 'give way to the right' rule when you pick up your car. It's different to most countries and may save you panel damage and another infringement!

There are good long distance coach services covering most cities in both islands.
See www.intercitycoach.co.nz

There are competing rail/road ferry services – The Interislander and Bluebridge– that run between the North and South Islands from Wellington to Picton. The ferry takes about three hours with marvellous views of the Marlborough Sounds. There are road and rail connections operated during the day from Picton to Christchurch, but the total journey from Wellington takes all day. In a hurry you fly in 45 minutes!

If you drive, you'll probably take an extra day and whale-watch at Kaikoura en route!
See www.interislandline.co.nz
www.bluebridge.co.nz

Social Services

In terms of social reform, New Zealand was at the forefront early last century in looking after those less fortunate. There are social security services available for unemployed residents, solo parents, unsupported children, invalids etc.

State pensions were introduced in 1898 and are now paid from age 65 to both men and women, with a married couple receiving a pension indexed to the equivalent of 60% of the national average wage. Any pension entitlement from an overseas government pension scheme has to be claimed and is deducted from the New Zealand Pension.

Hospital Care for NZ Residents is excellent and free – though there may be a long waiting list for elective surgery. Many take out medical insurance and use private hospitals to avoid waiting lists. People coming here on a visitor's visa are liable for all their own medical costs unless there is a country to country reciprocal agreement, such as Australia and the UK.

Primary Health Care, doctors, dentists and opticians are pay as you go. Most medicines are subsidised, but you pay \$15 per item on your prescription and the visit to a GP in the suburbs will cost you about \$55. A simple tooth-ache may cost you \$120 plus.

Visits to a GP are subsidised and cost less for the very young and those over 65. If you suffer an accident in New Zealand, partial costs of treatment, rehabilitation and compensation are covered by the Government Accident Compensation scheme (ACC). This is funded by levies on employment and motor vehicle registration. It means however that you are unlikely to be able to take the person or organisation causing an accident to court for damages.

Emigrating to New Zealand

As New Zealand is seen as a desirable place to live, it is necessary to choose migrants who are most likely to find work and contribute to the country's economy. Rules that control the flow of immigration change from time to time in order to bring about an orderly inflow of numbers that won't cause a crisis in our small population. The target represents a total inflow of a little over 1% of population each year covering all categories.

The 'rules' are published quite clearly on the internet at www.immigration.govt.nz
Do not ignore these rules. you must comply in every detail!

In addition to a 'points' system that determines your place in the queue, there are four prime requirements:

1. You must not be over age 55 when your fully documented residence application is received.
2. You must be able to demonstrate the good character of everyone covered in the application by producing police certificates for each country you have spent 12 months in over the last 10 years – including your country of citizenship.
3. You must demonstrate that you, your spouse and your children have no serious health problems that will be a cost to the NZ health system. A list of conditions that will not be accepted is published on the immigration web site.
4. You must show that you are proficient in the English language by having completed tertiary education in English, or achieving an IELTS score of 6.5

How to do it?

The method you employ depends upon the time available and your confidence in meeting requirements.

1. If time is not a problem and you have over 100 points, complete the expression of interest (EOI) and join the queue. Once you are invited to apply for residence, 140+ points will currently achieve your objective. Currently however many between 120 and 135 points are achieving residence each month. Usually 140 points will require a job offer – but 125 points may not, depending on circumstances.
2. If you are confident of meeting Immigration Dept requirements and your qualifications and skills are on the skills shortage list, you can come to New Zealand on a 3 month visitors visa. While here you can obtain a job offer for a fixed term employment and apply for a work permit for that term. It takes only a few days and then you can start work. You can then apply for residence at your leisure while working here.

Medical Certificates are required for a work permit that extends over 12 months from date of arrival. These can be obtained quicker and cheaper from a New Zealand GP. If you are coming from a country where TB is present, a TB certificate is required if you are to work for 6 months.

Police Certificates are required for a work permit that extends 24 months from date of arrival. Don't leave your request for police certificates too late – some countries may take 6 months to deliver!

Finding Employment

Except in the case of a very specific skill shortage, you are unlikely to gain a job offer by firing CVs at random, then sitting back and expecting something to happen. The computer age has made CV distribution too easy, so we get over 5000 CVs each year from around the world with only two or three each week raising any immediate commercial interest.

Employers are rarely going to take notice while you are still sitting at home waiting for something to happen. You still have to deal with documentation that may take six months, give your notice, sell the house and car, placate your mother in law, convince your wife that it is a good idea to leave your friends, say goodbye to the dog, and get on a plane, making sure you appease the kids by a stop at Disneyland on the way here.

There are many stories of recruits who stumble at each step – and some who finally arrive months later than expected.

Unless we have specifically advertised overseas, employers are unlikely to take interest in overseas residents unless they have done their homework and there is a definite commitment to coming here. This can be by submission of 'Expression of Interest' to the Department of Immigration, or simply by booking a flight and coming here as a visitor to look for work. Obviously an employer will take more interest if he can see what he is getting.

We travel to the UK each year to interview selected candidates who are recorded on video and presented to our employer clients.

If you are looking independently, then a visit is almost essential – but don't just sit in Auckland – your aeroplane may land there, it has about a third of the New Zealand population and a similar percentage of job opportunities – but not all careers are represented and there may be greater competition.

You need to identify potential locations for your career before you rent a house! There is no point in locating yourself in a desirable beach community on the east coast if you are a Petroleum Engineer with employment opportunities only in Taranaki or Whangerei. The major Dairy Industry is based on Hamilton and Hawera, but there are smaller plants in both North and South Islands. Timber and Paper Industries are centred on the Bay of Plenty, Northland, Gisborne, Napier and the South Island. Aluminium is produced near Invercargill and Steel south of Auckland at Otahuhu and Glenbrook. Coal is mined near Hamilton, near Westport and in Southland. Do your homework on your potential employers!

CV's

Your CV is your advertising brochure which has but one purpose – to sell your abilities to a potential employer so he gives perhaps \$200 worth of his time so you can convince him to employ you. The person reading the CV is busy and wants to find the basic information needed to make a decision as quickly as possible. The secret therefore is not too little and certainly not too much. Briefly

- Personal and contact details
- Tertiary qualifications and skill courses relevant to the job with dates and institutions
- List specific skills where specialist software is concerned
- List work experience and details relevant to the job with dates
- Provide a couple of past employer verbal referees

Usually two to five pages will cover all levels of experience.

Forget your aims and objectives and mission statements that you can copy from a text book, it isn't an ego trip and we get bored easily! Make sure the CV is up to date, includes your current employment and is well presented as a Word or PDF document.

Use your spell check – that is what it is there for! We are often amazed by the rubbish CVs supposedly well educated people dish out!

Dates are essential. Too many people falsify CVs – we will check and put to one side if we cannot confirm qualifications.

Refer to Rob Law Consulting Group tips and templates:

www.roblaw.co.nz/usefultools/

Salaries

Do not think you can take your home salary, multiply by the exchange rate, and expect to get that here! If you want a UK salary then you live in the UK and accept UK living costs and motorway gridlock! We believe a NZ\$ salary of about 1.8 times GBP is achievable and will give you an equivalent standard of living, considering our lower cost and tax structures.

Income Tax

New Zealand tax rates are:

0	- \$9500	15c per dollar
\$9500	- \$38,000	21 c per dollar
\$38,000	- \$60,000	33c per dollar
\$60,000	-	39c per dollar

GST is rated at 12.5%

Temporary Accommodation

Young single visitors find 'backpacker' accommodation readily available, clean and inexpensive during a short visit. Families should look at 'Motels' – excellent self catering accommodation usually costing around \$100/120 per night.

See www.jasons.com Hard copy available free at airports on your arrival.

If you can obtain AA Accommodation guides, they are even more comprehensive.

Housing

National property statistics are published by Quotable Value - see www.qv.co.nz

Median prices for past 12 months to April 07 (a 10% increase in the past year):

Auckland	\$462,000
Hamilton	\$338,000
New Plymouth	\$324,000
Palmerston North	\$279,000

Wellington	\$414,000
Christchurch	\$349,000
Dunedin	\$261,000
Invercargill	\$176,000

Median price throughout New Zealand \$363k.

Petrol

Currently around \$1.52 per litre for unleaded 91 octane in main centres. Up to 10 cents more in remote areas.

Banking

People coming to New Zealand are often concerned about opening a bank account. There are five major banks with branches throughout the country

- National Bank of New Zealand
- Bank of New Zealand
- WestpacTrust
- ANZ Banking Group
- ASB Bank (Auckland Savings Bank)

All are now Australian owned – the National Bank is owned by the ANZ, but has consistently polled higher in terms of customer satisfaction. The ASB is owned by Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Your own bank overseas will have a relationship with one or other of the above and will transfer funds and arrange for accounts to be opened for you before you arrive if you wish.

There are other banks:

- TSB (Taranaki Savings Bank) is big in the New Plymouth Area and runs 'no fees' and interest paying cheque accounts subject to minimum balances.
- KiwiBank is a fairly recent government sponsored bank run by NZ Post and based at Post Shops.

There are plenty of 'Money Machines' highly visible on the streets in all city centres, shopping malls and airports; most accept VISA and internationally recognised overseas ATM cards.

The New Zealand Education System

There have always been questions on 'How good is the NZ Education System' particularly in comparison with the UK and OECD countries. Every parent wants the best for their children.

In urban areas there is wide availability of Pre-school, Primary School from age 5, Intermediate School at age 11 and Secondary Schools from age 13. While education from age 5 is free, most schools have an 'Activities Charge' to cover costs over the standard curriculum. Schools in lower socio-economic areas are resourced at a higher level by central government and have lower 'Activity' charges.

In terms of secondary education, while we of the older generation complain of declining standards of both achievement and behaviour, we hear exactly the same complaints in both Australia and Britain and are probably talking about the lower quartile non-achievers. The fact remains that those who do achieve here can be compared favourably with those in any other country – and if they are going to live and work in New Zealand, all they have to be is among the best here, without worrying about overseas comparisons! The schooling system and regional school listings can be found on New Zealand Education Department website www.education.govt.nz and New Zealand school listings website www.tki.org.nz/e/schools

State School terms are:

2007

23 May to 29 June

16 July to 21 September

8 October to 14 December (S) or 20 December (P)

2008

29 January - 18 April

5 May - 4 July

21 July - 26 September

13 October - 19 December

Further details are on www.minedu.govt.nz

There are several private schools around the country that consistently perform at the top level internationally in terms of scholarship. They may have slightly different school terms.

Tertiary education is subsidised but otherwise available on the basis of 'User Pays'. Student loans are available to fund students through University or Polytech, but repayments start through the tax system once employment income passes a threshold level.

Universities are

- Auckland University
- Auckland University of Technology (AUT)
- Waikato University – Based in Hamilton
- Massey University – Centred in Palmerston North, but with a campus in both Albany, (North Auckland) and Wellington
- Victoria University – Wellington
- Canterbury University – Christchurch
- Lincoln University – Agricultural bias, south of Christchurch
- Otago University – Dunedin

Auckland and Canterbury are the main educators for 'pure' BE Engineers in Mechanical, Civil, Electrical, Process and Materials Engineering disciplines. Massey has been taking an increasing share of the student market with BTech and more recently BEng degrees in more focussed subjects – but their product is aimed at industry and not readily accepted by mainstream Engineering Consultants. Medical degrees are provided by Otago and Auckland, veterinary by Massey.

New Zealand degrees in Engineering, Medicine and Agricultural Sciences are recognised internationally to be of the highest standards.

Outside the universities, there are Polytechnics in most population centres to provide education at diploma and trade certificate level, but they tend to specialise. Many Polytechnics also offer a number of degree courses. All tertiary qualifications, curricula and standards are controlled by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

So long as students take a tertiary course 'because it looks interesting' and the academics consider that learning is a virtue in its own right, there will be a mis-match between the production of graduates and employer demand. All we can suggest is that if you are going to spend a large amount of money to gain a tertiary qualification, it should be based on potential return on expenditure like any other capital investment and should therefore be selected on the basis of career availability.

Useful Data

New Zealand Public Holidays

January 1st and 2nd	- Monday & Tuesday if the dates are a weekend
Waitangi Day	- 6th February
Easter	- Friday and Monday
Anzac Day	- 25th April
Queens Birthday	- 1st Monday in June
Labour Day	- 4th Monday in October
Christmas	- December 25th and 26th (Monday & Tuesday if the dates are a weekend)

There is one additional day 'Anniversary Day' which is specific to each province. In Wellington it is the nearest Monday to the 22nd January and in Auckland usually occurs one week later. This can catch out even New Zealand travellers!

Exchange Rates

As at April 16th 2007, to buy one New Zealand Dollar you need:

Australian	\$0.894
UK	£0.376
Euro	€0.553
USA	\$0.747
Canada	\$0.849
South Africa	R5.394

Travelling Distances

From Auckland		From Wellington
Whangarei	169km	
Hamilton	126km	532km
New Plymouth	357km	355km
Gisborne	499km	538km
Taupo	278km	380km
Napier	421km	323km
Wellington	658km	

From Christchurch

Picton	336km
Nelson	424km
Greymouth	258km
Dunedin	362km
Queenstown	486km
Invercargill	579km

From Picton

110km
352km
698km
822km
915km

Population Centres

Figures are approximate and sources vary depending upon where boundaries are set.

Auckland 1.3m spread over four adjacent cities and rural areas

www.aucklandnz.com

Hamilton	118k	www.hamiltoncity.co.nz
Tauranga	100k	www.tauranga.govt.nz
Rotorua	50k	www.rotoruanz.com
New Plymouth District	67k	www.newplymouthnz.com
Gisborne	45k	www.gisbornenz.com
Napier	54k	www.napierplanning.govt.nz
Hastings District	70k	www.hastingsdc.govt.nz
Palmerston North	76k	www.palmy.net.nz
Wellington	164k	www.wellington.co.nz
Nelson	44k	www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz
Blenheim	27k	www.marlborough.govt.nz
Greymouth	10k	www.greymouthnz.co.nz
Christchurch	316k	www.christchurchnz.net
Dunedin	120k	www.cityofdunedin.com
Invercargill	52k	www.invercargill.org.nz

Useful Websites

Food Prices	www.woolworths.co.nz
Hardware	www.mitre10.co.nz
Real Estate	www.realnz.co.nz

Disclaimer

The information and opinions given here are personal from one Engineer with degree who came to New Zealand from the UK over 30 years ago. The writer has worked for Rob Law Consulting Group for the past 15 years. There are no regrets regarding the move to New Zealand, it is the best place in the world to live!

The views are intended to assist would be migrants. We regret we are not in a position to enter long term detailed discussion, but will assist appropriate candidates with advice where we are able.

If you require further information:- USE YOUR MOUSE! www.yellowpages.co.nz