

Media Statement
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New Skilled Residency Pathway Welcome but Urgency Needed

Infrastructure New Zealand says the Government's new Skilled Work Experience and Trades and Technician residence pathways are a positive step to help infrastructure providers retain critical staff, but the organisation is calling for a more urgent start date.

"The new residency pathways will provide the industry greater confidence to invest in the training and upskilling of their people knowing that they are far more likely to stay in New Zealand," Chief Executive Nick Leggett says.

"While these pathways will eventually help employers retain experienced migrant workers in key trades, the concern is that we have to wait another year before the new settings take effect."

"The Government has signalled more than \$6 billion of projects due to start by the end of this year. If we're serious about delivering infrastructure efficiently, we must ensure we have the skilled people ready to do the work now."

A survey by Infrastructure New Zealand in February indicated that 56% of the industry thought the risk of staff attrition would increase over the next 12 months and 45% had experienced significant staff attrition to overseas opportunities over the previous year.

"We urge the Government to look at interim measures to accelerate residency for proven workers already here," Leggett says. "Without timely access to skills, projects risk delays, higher costs, and we are in danger of missing opportunities to build the infrastructure New Zealanders rely on."

"This is a welcome and sensible reform, but speed matters. We must align immigration and workforce policy with the pipeline of work in front of us."

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Infrastructure New Zealand is the nation's leading infrastructure member association. Our core purpose is to advance best practice development of world-class transport, energy, water, telecommunications, and social infrastructure for all New Zealanders. We do this through research, advocacy, and public and private sector collaboration. Our membership is comprised

of over 150 organisations, including central and local government agencies, consultants, contractors, financiers, utilities, and academics – collectively employing approximately 150,000 people in infrastructure-related roles. Together, we are committed to creating a better New Zealand through outstanding infrastructure.

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