

## New immigration law comes into force in New Zealand

A new Immigration Act, which includes the use of biometrics and a single independent appeals tribunal, became a law in New Zealand Friday, a minister said.

The new act includes the ability to use biometrics, a new refugee and protection system, a single independent appeals tribunal and a universal visa system.

Immigration Minister Jonathan Coleman Friday said that the new act will enhance border security and improve the efficiency of the immigration services.

'The previous legislation is now completely out of date. The new Immigration Act will modernise and future-proof New Zealand's immigration legislation,' he said.

'The government's aim is to create a world class immigration system. It is vital we have immigration legislation which allows us to protect the security of New Zealand's border and the integrity of our immigration system. At the same time, we must manage immigration in a fair and balanced way. This Act allows us to do all of those things,' he added.

He stated that the review of the current Immigration Act began in 2004.

'It is expected that much of the legislation will come into effect in the next 12 to 18 months. This will give us time to talk to those who might be affected, and work out how the new law can work better for everyone,' Coleman added.

Last year, 45,000 immigrants got permanent residency in New Zealand.

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