

**E-MAILED**  
29/5/2020



**Hon Dr Nick Smith**  
Member of Parliament for Nelson

The Associate Minister of Immigration  
Hon Poto Williams  
Parliament  
WELLINGTON

Dear Minister

Client Number 46730665

I write on behalf of Nelson Marine Engineering company Aimex regarding the decline by Immigration New Zealand for an exceptions request to enable a tuna fishing boat, Captain Vincent Gann from American Samoa to enter New Zealand to enable the vessel to be repaired here in Nelson. I have copied this letter to the Minister of Immigration, Minister of Customs and Minister of Employment because I am concerned that the issue is being pushed between public agencies without anyone taking responsibility for the consequences of this situation.

Marine engineering is a major industry in Nelson employing hundreds of skilled staff in the construction, maintenance and repairs of vessels. The closure of the borders is having a major impact, losing millions in contracts resulting in ongoing job losses.

The specific case at hand involves a tuna vessel from American Samoa that needs urgent repairs. The vessel has previously been maintained in New Zealand in 2019 and we have the specialist skills to address the engineering problem.

It is not reasonable to exclude this vessel and its crew from New Zealand when it poses no risk from Covid-19. The vessel has been at sea for the quarantine period of more than 14 days. It has come from American Samoa where there have been no Covid-19 cases and whose borders have been closed since 23 March. The crew are quite prepared to be quarantined on board or at suitable accommodation in Nelson if necessary.

I seek your urgent reconsideration of this case out of the concerns that jobs will be lost unnecessarily if we do not find a practical way of allowing our marine industry to continue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Smith', written over a white background.

Nick Smith  
Nelson MP

Copy to:

Minister of Customs Hon Jenny Salesa  
Minister of Employment Hon Willie Jackson  
Minister of Immigration Hon Lees-Galloway