

NEW ZEALAND 2015 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New Zealand is a parliamentary democracy. Citizens choose their representatives in free and fair multiparty elections, most recently held in September 2014, when the National Party won 60 of 121 parliamentary seats and formed a coalition government led by John Key as prime minister with three other parties. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces.

Principal human rights problems included disproportionate societal problems for indigenous persons and some societal discrimination against ethnic minority individuals.

The government has effective mechanisms for prosecuting officials who commit human rights abuses, but there were no reports of such abuses during the year.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

There were no reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings.

b. Disappearance

There were no reports of politically motivated disappearances.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The law prohibits such practices, and there were no reports government officials employed them.

Prison and Detention Center Conditions

Prison and detention center conditions generally met international standards.

Physical Conditions: At the end of 2014, 51 percent of prisoners were of Maori descent; Maoris were roughly 15 percent of the general population.

Persons accused of a crime who are 17 years or older are tried as adults and, if convicted, sent to adult prisons. Authorities held male prisoners younger than 17 years in residential facilities operated by the national Child and Youth Welfare Agency. There is no separate facility for juvenile females because there were generally fewer than five throughout the country at any one time.

Transgender prisoners who had the gender on their birth certificates changed to reflect their preferred gender were generally housed in accordance with their preferred gender and may begin gender reassignment treatment/surgery while incarcerated.

Administration: Inmates could make uncensored complaints to statutory inspectors or the ombudsman. The Ombudsman's Office reports to Parliament annually on its findings. The law provides for specified rights of inspection, including by members of Parliament (MPs) and justices of the peace, and information was publicly available on complaints and investigations, subject to the provisions of privacy legislation.

Independent Monitoring: The government permitted monitoring visits by independent human rights observers.

d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention

The law prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention, and the government generally observed these prohibitions.

Role of the Police and Security Apparatus

The New Zealand Police are responsible for internal security, and the armed forces, under the Ministry of Defense, are responsible for external security. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces, and the government has effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. There were no reports of impunity involving the security forces during the year.

Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees

Police may arrest a suspect without a warrant if there is reasonable cause; otherwise a court-issued warrant is required. Police officers may enter premises

without a warrant to arrest a person if they reasonably suspect the person of committing a crime on the premises or have found the person committing an offense and are in pursuit. Police must inform arrested persons immediately of their legal rights and the grounds for their arrest.

After arresting and charging a suspect, police may release the person on bail until the first court appearance. Bail often does not require a deposit of money and is normally granted except for more serious offenses such as assault or burglary. Suspects have the right to appear promptly before a judge for a determination of the legality of the detention. Court bail is granted after the first court appearance unless there is a significant risk the suspect would flee, tamper with witnesses or evidence, or commit a crime while on bail. Authorities granted family members prompt access to detainees and allowed detainees prompt access to a lawyer of their choice and, if indigent, a lawyer provided by the government. The government did not detain suspects incommunicado. Home detention is accepted as an alternative to prison time for convicted nonviolent offenders. Arrested persons have additional legal protections, including the right to initiate habeas corpus proceedings to decide the lawfulness of their detention, to be charged and tried without “undue delay,” and to obtain compensation if unlawfully detained.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The law provides for an independent judiciary, and the government generally respected judicial independence.

Trial Procedures

The law provides for the right to a fair public trial by jury, and an independent judiciary generally enforced this right. Defendants enjoy a presumption of innocence and the right to counsel. By law, authorities must inform defendants promptly and in detail of the charges, with free interpretation as necessary, and provide adequate time and facilities to prepare a defense. Defendants cannot be compelled to testify or confess guilt. Defendants also have the right to present witnesses and evidence, confront witnesses against them, access government-held evidence, and appeal convictions. The government provides a lawyer at public expense if the defendant cannot afford counsel. The law extends these rights to all defendants.

Political Prisoners and Detainees

There were no reports of political prisoners or detainees.

Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies

Individuals and organizations may seek civil judicial remedies for human rights violations, including access to the Human Rights Review Tribunal. There are also administrative remedies for alleged wrongs through the Human Rights Commission (HRC) and the Office of Human Rights Proceedings.

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

The law prohibits such actions, and the government generally respected these prohibitions.

Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

The law provides for freedom of speech and press, and the government generally respected these rights. An independent press, an effective judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system combined to promote freedom of speech and press.

Internet Freedom

The government did not restrict or disrupt access to the internet or censor online content, and there were no credible reports the government monitored private online communications without appropriate legal authority. The internet was widely available and used.

Academic Freedom and Cultural Events

There were no government restrictions on academic freedom or cultural events.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

The law provides for freedom of assembly and association, and the government generally respected these rights.

c. Freedom of Religion

See the Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report* at www.state.gov/religiousfreedomreport/.

d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons

The law provides for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation and the government generally respected these rights. The government cooperated with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and other persons of concern.

Protection of Refugees

Access to Asylum: The law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status, and the government has established a system for providing protection to refugees.

Durable Solutions: The country's refugee policy has committed the government to resettling 750 refugees each year since the 1980s, and the government has since met or exceeded that number. In September the government announced it would offer 600 resettlement slots above the quota for Syrian refugees over the next two and a half years.

Temporary Protection: The government provides temporary protection to individuals outside its annual quota of 750 refugees accepted for resettlement, but information was not available on the number of such cases during the year.

Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process

The law provides citizens the ability to choose their government through free and fair periodic elections based on universal and equal suffrage, and citizens exercised that ability.

Elections and Political Participation

Recent Elections: In the most recent general elections, held in September 2014, the National Party won 60 of 121 parliamentary seats and formed a government in coalition with minority parties ACT, the Maori Party, and United Future. The

coalition re-elected John Key as prime minister. Three other parties were represented in Parliament: Labour, the Green Party, and New Zealand First.

Participation of Women and Minorities: Women participated fully in political life. There were 36 women among the 121 MPs and nine women on the executive council. The chief justice of the Supreme Court was a woman.

Seven seats in Parliament are reserved for persons of Maori ancestry. The number of Maori seats is adjusted every five years, based on the number of persons who register to vote on the Maori electoral roll. Persons of Maori ancestry can also become MPs by election or appointment to non-Maori seats. There were 21 members of Maori descent, seven members of Pacific Island ethnicities, and five members of Asian descent in Parliament. The cabinet included at least three members of Maori ancestry.

Overall turnout in the general election was 81 percent, while turnout in designated Maori electorates was lower and ranged from 60 percent to 69 percent. In South Auckland electorates with a high percentage of Pacific Island voters, turnout was 69 percent. The country's Maori and Pacific Island populations had a higher than average percentage of persons under age 30, with a median age of 23. Younger cohorts demonstrated consistently lower voter turnout across all ethnic groups.

Section 4. Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government

The law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, and the government generally implemented these laws effectively.

Financial Disclosure: The law requires MPs, including all ministers, to submit an annual report of financial interests, including income and assets, which is disclosed publicly. Career civil servants are not subject to this requirement but are subject to ethics standards established by the State Services Commission. The Office of the Registrar of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests of Members of Parliament is mandated with monitoring and verifying these disclosures. The registrar compiles and maintains the reports, provides advice and guidance to members in connection with their obligations under the law, and is responsible for reporting irregularities to the speaker of the house for further review and action.

Public Access to Information: The law provides for public access to government information, including access for noncitizens and foreign media, to be provided within 20 working days of a request, and the government generally adhered to the

law. Information must be made available unless a good reason, such as concern for national security, exists for not doing so. The government did not abuse this provision. The requester must be given an estimate of any fees before information is provided. If a request is refused, the relevant department must give a written reason for the refusal explaining the grounds for the decision. The department must also give the applicant information on how to complain to an ombudsman to seek an investigation and review of the refusal.

Section 5. Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

A number of domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restriction, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Government officials were cooperative and responsive to their views.

Government Human Rights Bodies: The Ministry of Justice funded the HRC, which operated as an independent agency without government interference. The HRC had adequate staff and resources to perform its mission. It continued to investigate two significant cases from 2012 relating to discrimination against persons with disabilities. The government responded to its recommendations, which led to several policy changes. The public considered the HRC effective and it enjoyed high public confidence.

The Office of the Ombudsman, responsible to Parliament but independent of the government, is charged with investigating complaints about administrative acts, decisions, recommendations, and omissions of national and local government agencies; inspecting prisons; and following up on prisoner complaints. The office enjoyed government cooperation, operated without government or party interference, had adequate resources, and was considered effective. The office produced a wide variety of reports for the government that were available on its website.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, age, language, or HIV or other communicable disease status, and the government actively enforced these prohibitions.

Women

Rape and Domestic Violence: According to a 2014 government report, one in four women experienced intimate partner or sexual violence in their lives. Violence against women affected all socioeconomic groups. The law criminalizes rape, including spousal rape. The maximum penalty is 20 years' imprisonment; however, indefinite detention may occur in cases where the parole board, during its annual review, believes the prisoner poses a continuing threat to society.

Domestic violence is a criminal offense, but police did not classify domestic violence separately from other types of assault.

The government's Task Force for Action on Violence Within Families continued to coordinate a variety of government initiatives to eliminate family violence, including its Te Rito program, a national strategy to address all forms and degrees of domestic violence. Police can issue Police Safety Orders, under which an alleged perpetrator can be removed from the family home for up to five days. Police were responsive when domestic violence was reported. The government partially funded women's shelters, psychosocial services, rape crisis centers, sexual abuse counseling, family-violence victim support networks, and violence prevention services.

Sexual Harassment: The law prohibits sexual harassment and provides civil penalties. Sexual contact induced by certain threats may also fall under the criminal code, with a maximum 14-year prison sentence. The HRC published fact sheets on sexual harassment and made sexual harassment prevention training available to schools, businesses, and government departments on a regular basis.

Reproductive Rights: The government recognized the right of couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing, and timing of their children, and manage their reproductive health, free from discrimination, coercion, or violence. The government did not limit access to male contraception, and contraception for women was available without parental consent to those aged 16 and older. Skilled health care for women was widely available, including skilled attendance at childbirth, prenatal care, and essential obstetric and postnatal care.

Discrimination: Women enjoy the same legal status and rights as men, and the law prohibits discrimination in employment and rates of pay for equal or similar work.

The Ministry for Women addresses problems of discrimination and gender equality, and there is a minister for women in the cabinet (also see section 7.d.).

Children

Birth Registration: Children born in the country attain citizenship if either parent is a citizen or legal permanent resident of the country. Children born outside the country attain citizenship if either parent is a citizen born in the country. The law requires notification of births by both parents as soon as “reasonably practicable,” deemed as generally being within two months of the birth, and most births were registered within this period.

Child Abuse: The number of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect decreased to 16,472 for the July 2014 to June 2015 fiscal year, from 19,623 the previous year. A disproportionately high number of reported cases of child abuse (more than 50 percent) involved Maori children.

The government promoted information sharing between the courts and health and child-protection agencies to identify children at risk of abuse. The Office of the Commissioner for Children played a key role in deterring child abuse, advocating for children’s interests, and monitoring violence and abuse against children.

Early and Forced Marriage: The legal minimum age for marriage is 20 for both men and women, but persons ages 16-19 may marry with parental permission. Marriages involving persons under age 18 were rare.

Sexual Exploitation of Children: The law provides that any person who has a sexual connection with a person younger than 16 years is liable to imprisonment for up to 10 years. Further, the law makes it an offense punishable by seven years’ imprisonment to assist a person under 18 in providing commercial sexual services; to receive earnings from commercial sexual services provided by a person younger than 18; or to contract for commercial sexual services from, or be a client of, a person under 18. The law also makes it an offense to deal in individuals younger than 18 for sexual exploitation or engagement in enforced labor.

The penalty for a person who enters into an arrangement or takes an action involving a person under 18 for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labor is 14 years’ imprisonment. Citizens who commit child sex offenses overseas may be prosecuted in the courts.

Commercial sexual exploitation of children remained a concern. No recent data was available on its prevalence, however. The government, in concert with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), operated programs to reintegrate children out of prostitution through vocational training and educational opportunities.

The law prohibits child pornography and provides for individual and corporate fines if a person produces, imports, supplies, distributes, possesses for supply, displays, or exhibits an objectionable publication. Penalties increase to up to 10 years' imprisonment or a substantially greater fine if such an act is committed with knowledge that the publication is objectionable. Simple possession of objectionable material is punishable by fines, while knowingly possessing objectionable material is punishable by up to five years' imprisonment and a larger fine. For sentencing purposes, it is an aggravating factor if the publication promotes or supports exploitation of youth for sexual purposes, deals with sexual conduct with or by children or young persons, or exploits nudity of children or young persons.

The Department of Internal Affairs Censorship Compliance Unit actively policed images of child sex abuse on the internet and prosecuted offenders.

See the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/.

International Child Abductions: The country is a party to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. For information see the Department of State's report on compliance at travel.state.gov/content/childabduction/en/legal/compliance.html and country-specific information at travel.state.gov/content/childabduction/english/country/new-zealand.html.

Anti-Semitism

The Jewish community numbered approximately seven thousand. Anti-Semitic incidents were rare.

Trafficking in Persons

See the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/.

Persons with Disabilities

The law prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment; education; access to places and facilities, including air travel and other transport; and the provision of goods, services, housing, and accommodation. The government is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disability, unless such discrimination can be “demonstrably justified.” There are laws and programs designed to provide access to communications and information for persons with disabilities. The government effectively enforced applicable laws. Most school-age children with disabilities attended school.

From July 2014 to June 2015, disability-related complaints decreased to 354 from the previous year’s total of 455. Disability-related complaints comprised 28 percent of the total complaints received by the HRC. The government’s Office for Disability Issues worked to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities. Additionally, both the HRC and the Mental Health Commission continued to address mental disabilities in their anti-discrimination efforts.

National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities

Pacific Islanders, who constituted 7 percent of the population, experienced some societal discrimination. Asians, who made up 12 percent of the population, also reported some societal discrimination.

The Ministries of Justice and Pacific Island Affairs had a program to identify gaps in delivery of government services to Pacific Islanders. The government’s race relations commissioner managed the Diversity Action Program, which was aimed at the Maori, Pacific Islander, and Asian communities and included an annual, widely attended Diversity Forum considered effective in helping to eliminate race-based discrimination.

The Office of Ethnic Affairs within the Department of Internal Affairs focused on improving dialogue and understanding about minority communities among the wider population.

Indigenous People

Approximately 15 percent of the population claim descent from the country’s indigenous Maori.

Between July 2014 and June 2015, legislation was enacted that settled eight claims by indigenous groups (“iwi”), relating to the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, the country’s founding document. An additional four groups signed deeds of settlement and were in various stages of the legislative process to make their deeds unconditional. The government continued active negotiations with almost all iwi in various stages of the claims process.

The law prohibits discrimination against the indigenous population, but there was a continuing pattern of disproportionate numbers of Maori on unemployment and welfare rolls, in prison, among school dropouts, in infant mortality statistics, and among single-parent households.

Maori constituted 51 percent of the prison population and 45 percent of persons serving community-based sentences. The government, along with community partners, continued to implement programs and services to reduce Maori recidivism and over-representation in the criminal justice system.

The Ministry of Maori Development, in cooperation with several Maori NGOs, sought to improve the status of indigenous persons.

Societal Abuses, Discrimination, and Acts of Violence Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults is not criminalized. The law prohibits abuse, discrimination, and acts of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and the government generally enforced the law. From July 2014 to June 2015, 2 percent of discrimination complaints received by the HRC related to gender identity or sexual orientation.

Section 7. Worker Rights

a. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining

The law provides for the right of workers to form and join unions of their choice without previous authorization or excessive requirements, to bargain collectively, and conduct legal strikes, with some restrictions. The law prohibits antiunion discrimination. While it does not require reinstatement of workers dismissed for union activity, the courts can order this at their discretion.

Police have the right to freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively, but sworn police officers (which includes all uniformed and plainclothes police but excludes clerical and support staff) do not have the right to strike or take any form of industrial action. Contractors cannot join unions, bargain collectively, or conduct strike action.

Workers may strike while negotiating the right to a collective bargaining agreement or over matters of health and safety. Strikes by providers of key services are subject to certain procedural requirements, including mandatory notice of three to 14 days, depending on the service involved. Key services include production, processing, and supply of petroleum products; production and supply of electricity, water, and sewer services; emergency fire brigade and police services; ambulance and hospital services; manufacturing of certain pharmaceuticals and dialysis solutions; operation of residential welfare or penal institutions; airport and seaport operations; dairy production operations; and animal slaughtering, processing, and related inspection services. The inclusion of some of these sectors was broader than international standards on the definition of “essential services.”

To bargain collectively, unions must be registered, independent, governed by democratic rules, and have at least 15 members. Unions may not bargain collectively on social or political issues.

The government respected these rights and effectively enforced applicable laws without lengthy delays. Penalties for violations of freedom of association or collective bargaining protections are administered under the Employment Relations Act 2000 and include fines sufficient to deter violations. Cases were occasionally referred to the Civil Employment Court.

Unions conducted their activities without government or employer interference. Nearly all unionized workers were members of unions affiliated with the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU), an independent federation that included unions representing various trades and locations. A few small, nonaffiliated unions also existed. There were no cases of antiunion discrimination reported during the year.

b. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The law prohibits forced or compulsory labor obtained by means of debt, law, custom, or agreement that prohibits a person from leaving employment. The law

criminalizes forced labor, imposing penalties of up to NZ\$250,000 (\$198,000) and 20 years' imprisonment for fraudulent employment and recruiting practices. Such penalties were sufficiently stringent to deter violations. Fines can be imposed for labor violations such as underpayment of wages and excessively long working hours. The government generally enforced these provisions effectively.

Migrant workers, including in agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, construction, hospitality, and as domestic workers were vulnerable to forced labor. Some foreign workers were charged excessive and escalating recruitment fees, experienced unjustified salary deductions, non- or underpayment of wages, excessively long working hours, and restrictions on their movement. Some have had their passports confiscated and contracts altered. Recruitment agencies based within the country that recruit workers from abroad must have a licensed immigration adviser. The government expanded partnerships with foreign governments to better monitor and regulate recruitment of foreign workers by foreign companies outside the country, even if the employer was foreign owned and operated. For example, in September the government signed a bilateral arrangement with the Philippines on the recruitment and treatment of Filipino migrant workers. The arrangement was intended to reduce the vulnerability and potential for exploitation of workers by improving the transparency of recruitment processes and ensuring compliance with both countries' employment and immigration requirements.

There were fewer than 10 substantiated reports of forced labor during the year; these led to court cases.

Also see the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/.

c. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment

By law children under age 16 may not work between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. The law also states children enrolled in school may not be employed, even outside school hours, if such employment would interfere with their education. The law bans the employment of children under age 15 in hazardous industries such as manufacturing, mining, and forestry.

Inspectors from WorkSafe New Zealand, an independent crown agent with its own governance board created to reform the workplace health and safety system, effectively enforced these laws.

Children between 16 and 18 years of age worked in some hazardous industries and occupations. Concerns remained about the commercial sexual exploitation of children (see section 6, Children).

Also see the Department of Labor's *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* at www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/child-labor/findings/ for information on the self-governing territories of New Zealand--Cook Islands and Niue--as well as the dependent territory, Tokelau.

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, age, language, HIV positive status or other communicable diseases.

The government effectively enforced these prohibitions. There are financial penalties for not complying with employment laws, of up to NZ\$10,000 (\$6,500) for individuals and NZ\$20,000 (\$13,000) for companies. Such penalties were sufficiently stringent to deter violations. The HRC has an equal opportunity employment team that focused on workplace gender-related problems. This team regularly surveyed pay scales, conducted a census of women in leadership roles, and engaged public and private employers to promote compensation equality. The Office of Ethnic Affairs continued to take measures during the year to promote ethnic diversity in occupation and employment.

According to the NZCTU, Maori and Pacific Island people remained disadvantaged relative to the general population in terms of unemployment and wages.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

The minimum hourly wage was NZ\$14.75 (\$9.85). The “training minimum wage” for those age 20 or over, and the “starting-out” wage for 16- to 19-year-old workers, is NZ\$11.80 (\$7.88) for nonsupervisory workers with fewer than three months or 200 hours of employment. There was no official poverty-level income figure, but researchers frequently used 60 percent of the median household income, (NZ\$26,300 (\$17,556)), as the unofficial poverty-level marker.

The law provides work hours should be set in collective or individual agreements between employers and employees. Although a 40-hour workweek is traditional, employer and employee parties may contractually agree to a workweek of more than 40 hours. There are no legal provisions regarding overtime pay rates, but they may be negotiated between the employer and employee. In the absence of a negotiated agreement on overtime, employers may request, but may not require employees to work overtime hours.

The law does not provide specifically for a 24-hour rest period weekly; however, management and labor have accepted the practice, and it was the norm for most industries. The law provides for 11 paid public holidays and a minimum four-week annual paid vacation. Employees who work on a paid holiday are entitled to time and a half for that day and a day off with pay on another date. The armed forces are excepted from this benefit.

Extensive laws and regulations govern health and safety issues. Employers are obliged to provide a safe and healthy work environment, and employees are responsible for their own safety and health, as well as ensuring that their actions do not harm others. The government mandates employers to provide health insurance for their seasonal workers. The law allows workers to refuse to perform work likely to cause serious harm and permits legal recourse if they believed they were penalized as a result.

The government proactively investigated labor conditions and in cases of noncompliance with labor law levied fines, required restitution of wages to workers, and pulled licenses from offenders.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment is responsible for enforcing laws governing working conditions, including wages and hours, and occupational health and safety, the latter of which is handled by WorkSafe New Zealand. The department's inspectors effectively enforced safety and health rules, and they have the power to shut down equipment if necessary. The department normally investigated reports of unsafe or unhealthy working conditions within 24 hours of notification. Convictions for violations of occupational health and safety and wages and hours laws carry penalties of up to NZ\$500,000 (\$400,000) or imprisonment of up to two years. On May 6, the government enacted the Immigration Amendment Act 2015, which introduced stricter penalties for employers who exploit migrant workers, including a jail term of up to seven years, a fine up to NZ\$100,000 (US\$65,000), and deportation for non-citizen residents.

As of October WorkSafe New Zealand employed 153 assessment, investigations, and response inspectors, including four chief inspectors, and 16 inspectors in the High Hazards Unit. WorkSafe New Zealand reported that 77 percent of surveyed employers had changed their workplace practices following its inspections. From 2013 to December 2015, WorkSafe New Zealand initiated 110 prosecutions following those inspections.

Workers ages 15-24 years and 65 years and over had the highest claim rates for work related injuries across all age groups. The fishing and forestry industries had the highest number of entitlement (i.e., more serious) claims as a proportion of all claims within the industry, both with 18 percent of claims involving entitlement payments.