

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **PACIFIC COMMUNITY CAUTIONED ABOUT IMMIGRATION SCAMS**

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Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs have expressed concern about various immigration scams targeting Pacific people.

“We are deeply concerned about scams floating around in Pacific communities, in which some Pacific people are paying a substantial amount for a service that is illegal and cannot deliver”, says Acting Head of Immigration New Zealand Ms Lesley Haines.

“We advise anyone who thinks they may be a victim of these scams to contact the New Zealand Police immediately”.

“Pacific people should contact any of our immigration branches to discuss their own circumstances and determine what the best option is for them”.

“We urge Pacific people to be cautious of misinformation and to be wary of offers by organisations and individuals who are using Immigration New Zealand’s name for personal gain; please make sure you are dealing with a licensed immigration adviser”.

Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs Chief Executive, Dr Colin Tukuitonga supports this view.

“Any changes to immigration policy should come from Immigration New Zealand and we, as a Ministry, will help to disseminate this information to our Pacific communities”.

“There are a number of stories circulating in our Pacific communities and we work closely with Immigration New Zealand to make sure that our communities are protected from immigration fraudsters”, adds Dr Tukuitonga.

It is an offence to provide immigration advice in New Zealand without a licence, unless you belong to one of the exempt categories specified by the Immigration Advisers Licensing Act. All licensed immigration advisers are listed on the Immigration Advisers Authority website [www.iaa.govt.nz](http://www.iaa.govt.nz). Offenders could face a fine of up to \$100,000 and/or up to seven years imprisonment.

If in doubt, contact any Immigration New Zealand branch or the Immigration Call Centre 0508 55 88 55.

ENDS.

For further information contact the DoL media line on 0274 422 141 or e-mail [media@dol.govt.nz](mailto:media@dol.govt.nz) or Frances Ross, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs on 0217 672 3501 or e-mail [frances.ross@mpia.govt.nz](mailto:frances.ross@mpia.govt.nz)