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MEDIA RELEASE

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MAINFREIGHT – RESPONSE TO MBIE PUBLISHED STAND DOWN LIST

Immigration Minister Michael Woodhouse revealed yesterday that 53 employers have been stood down from recruiting migrant workers. Mainfreight is included on that list.

Mainfreight's name appears as a result of a compliance audit by MBIE last year which identified that three of the company's employees did not have written employment agreements on file. The company has since taken steps to manage this process better.

The three Mainfreight team members who did not have signed employment contracts all still work for Mainfreight, in different parts of the business in Dunedin and Auckland. All three of them are, and always have been, New Zealand citizens without any visa complexity or elements to their employment. They hold meaningful roles and are solid contributors in their branches.

Mainfreight draws its employees from a wide pool, and provided that candidates have the necessary skills and attributes, the company is happy to employ people with valid work visas. The impact of the six-month temporary stand-down period imposed by MBIE has been the removal of Mainfreight's ability to support or sponsor an individual's application for an extension of their work visa or residency application. In the main, this has meant that Mainfreight has had to suspend their exchange programme of bringing overseas team members to New Zealand for developmental purposes. A strange outcome given the nature of the transgression.

Mainfreight has paid a high price in bad publicity for what is basically an administrative error. The increasing reach of bureaucracy continues to amaze.

Bruce Plested
Chairman
Mainfreight

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