



Response to the Commerce  
Commission on the Retail Payment  
System Act 2022

Draft guidance on the Initial Pricing  
Standard

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## Country Manager Letter

13 October 2022

Matthew Lewer  
Manager, Retail Payments System  
Commerce Commission  
Level 9, 44 The Terrace  
Wellington 6140 NEW ZEALAND

Via email: [market.regulation@comcom.govt.nz](mailto:market.regulation@comcom.govt.nz)

Dear Matthew,

### **Visa's submission to the Commerce Commission on the Retail Payment System Act 2022 – Draft guidance on the Initial Pricing Standard**

Visa welcomes the opportunity to share its perspectives on the Retail Payment System Act 2022 (the Act) - Initial Pricing Standard (IPS) with the Commerce Commission (the Commission).

Visa shares New Zealand's objective of ensuring that the country has a modern and fair retail payments system that benefits consumers and businesses. We believe that payments regulation should be principles-based and technology neutral. In addition, it should focus on providing consumer choice as well as fostering continuous security and innovation, and balanced economics – all in the context of a level playing field.

In responding to the Commission, this submission focuses on several key topics, including compliance with the IPS, the total interchange fee caps under the IPS, and the information required to ensure compliance.

If any additional details are required regarding Visa's submission, I will be happy to assist the Commission.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Anthony Watson  
Country Manager, New Zealand and South Pacific  
Visa Worldwide (New Zealand) Ltd

## Overview

Visa supports the objective of the Retail Payment System Act 2022, which is to promote competition and efficiency in the retail payments system for the long-term benefit of all New Zealanders.<sup>1</sup> In our view, the ongoing development of a secure, efficient, competitive and innovative retail payments ecosystem is essential to the growth and development of New Zealand's economy and society.

Payments networks such as Visa contribute to the economic growth, development and financial inclusion of New Zealand's consumers and merchants, particularly small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted many of the country's SMBs and Visa is committed to supporting their recovery. This includes enabling safe and secure digital payment experiences, such as e-commerce and contactless payments, that are helping small businesses across the country respond to rapidly-changing consumer expectations. Importantly, digital payments have enabled New Zealand businesses to continue selling their goods and services amid the pandemic and associated lockdowns. For example, our Back to Business Locator Tool (through an online directory powered by VisaNet) helped to promote New Zealand businesses that were open and trading.<sup>2</sup>

For the continued growth and development of New Zealand's economy, and a healthy and sustainable commerce ecosystem, Visa welcomes the goals and objectives of the Retail Payment System Act 2022. In this regard, we actively participated in reviews with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and then the New Zealand Parliament's Economic Development, Science and Innovation Committee regarding Merchant Service Fees<sup>3</sup> and the Retail Payment System Act<sup>4</sup>.

Visa appreciates the opportunity to continue contributing as the Commerce Commission (the Commission) implements the Act and seeks stakeholder input on the draft guidance on the IPS. This includes responding to the questions and scenarios in the draft guidance, such as how interchange is determined as well as net compensation, and related information requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> Retail Payment System Act 2022, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2022/0021/latest/whole.html>

<sup>2</sup> Visa (2020), Visa launches Business Locator Tool and e-commerce support packages for New Zealand small businesses, <https://www.visa.co.nz/about-visa/newsroom/press-releases/visa-launches-business-locator-tool-and-e-commerce-support-packages-for-new-zealand-small-businesses.html> and Visa shines spotlight on New Zealand small businesses in new campaign reminding Kiwis that 'where you shop matters', <https://www.visa.co.nz/about-visa/newsroom/press-releases/visa-shines-spotlight-on-new-zealand-small-businesses-in-new-campaign-reminding-kiwis-that-where-you-shop-matters.html>

<sup>3</sup> Visa (2021), Submission to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) on Regulating to reduce merchant service fees, <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/14435-visa-submission-redacted-regulating-to-reduce-merchant-service-fees-pdf>

<sup>4</sup> See Visa's November 2021 submission to the Economic Development, Science and Innovation Committee (the Committee) on the Retail Payment System Bill, [https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/53SCED\\_EVI\\_116198\\_ED1928/250bc8aa48616dedfc5d03a402b42eddc6a71a57](https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/53SCED_EVI_116198_ED1928/250bc8aa48616dedfc5d03a402b42eddc6a71a57) and February 2022 supplementary submission to the Committee, [https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/53SCED\\_EVI\\_116198\\_ED8700/2aae5a9bda9f19e267af6c71372b72ad8a938b0c](https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/53SCED_EVI_116198_ED8700/2aae5a9bda9f19e267af6c71372b72ad8a938b0c)

Additionally, we agree with the Commission's thoughtful approach in excluding prepaid and commercial products, as well as foreign-issued cards, from the Act and the draft guidance on the IPS.

One of the key components of the draft guidance is the concept of net compensation and its relationship with interchange. To ensure robust oversight and governance, enable fair competition and drive innovation for the benefit of merchants and consumer alike, Visa favours a model that does not permit net compensation, and accordingly removes the ability of retail payment networks to compensate issuers for the effects of IPS.

However, given that the Act permits net compensation, it is our view that all incentive types concerning regulated transactions that can be linked to the underlying transaction are included for consideration, whether or not they seek to compensate for the effects of IPS. Specifically:

- The compensation must be able to be linked to enabling the transaction, or derived as a result of the transaction taking place.
- The transactions must occur within the time period for which the compensation applies or is intended to apply.
- Fees related to chargebacks, and fees associated with penalties, to facilitate the health and growth of the ecosystem, should be excluded from consideration.

Visa's specific responses to the information sought in the Commission's draft guidance on the IPS are provided below.

## Chapter 5. Participants required to ensure compliance with the IPS

**Question 5A: Are you aware of any issuer setting or bilaterally agreeing an interchange fee which is below the maximum rates since 31 March 2021? If so, please provide details of the arrangement.**

Visa is aware of one instance where an issuer has set its interchange rate below the interchange rate Visa set:

- ANZ New Zealand has set its interchange rates for all charity transactions at zero percent (credit and debit), below the maximum interchange rates<sup>5</sup>.

**Question 5B: Have we accurately described how interchange fees are set, assigned and charged in practice? If not, please provide an explanation.**

Enhancements could be made to the Commission's description in the draft guidance regarding how interchange fees are set, assigned and charged in practice.

Schemes set a schedule of maximum, or default, interchange rates based on a variety of factors such as the type of card product (e.g., Infinite, Signature, Platinum, Gold, and Commercial), type of payment channel (e.g., Card Not Present/Card Present), funding source (e.g., Debit, Credit, Prepaid), merchant segment, and certain technology or processing factors, such as if the transaction was tokenised. In addition, schemes may grant certain merchants Strategic Merchant Rates. Issuers will then, through an issuer opt-in process, either attest to receive the maximum rates set by schemes or opt-in for rates lower than the maximum rates set by the scheme. Following this process, issuers then typically adopt the maximum rates schemes set, but under certain circumstances, such as those listed in response to Question 5A, a lower rate may be assigned.

The acquirer or merchant's switch operator sends certain information about the transaction to the scheme (such as payment amount, merchant jurisdiction, merchant category code, and indicators unique to the nature of merchant). Based on the card number, the scheme and acquirer will then derive the card type of the transaction. The scheme then allocates the relevant interchange value for the particular transaction by matching the transaction and card information submitted by the acquirer with the interchange schedule of the scheme.

**Question 5C: We are seeking your views on the following:**

**i. Do you agree with our analysis of scenario one? Why/why not?**

Scenario one correctly captures a case of a breach of the IPS by the issuer and the scheme. The scheme had set a maximum interchange rate for contactless debit at a rate above the IPS cap,

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<sup>5</sup> For ANZ's interchange rates, see: <https://www.anz.co.nz/rates-fees-agreements/business/>

while the issuer set and charged and received that same rate. Therefore, both the scheme and issuer are in breach of the IPS. Acquirers populate transaction data when sending transaction messages to the scheme, as outlined in our response to Question 5B. Acquirers, however, do not populate interchange rates in this message flow and it is the scheme which assigns interchange rates upon receipt of the acquirer's transaction message. Therefore, the acquirer is not in breach of the IPS.

**ii. Do you agree with our analysis of scenario two? Why/why not?**

There is insufficient information describing scenario two to assess if it is indeed a breach. In order to determine whether provisioning of net compensation has taken place, the compensation must meet the criteria outlined in Section 6.14 of the draft guidance on the IPS and clause 7(4) of Schedule 1. In addition, the compensation must be able to be linked to enabling the transaction or derived as a result of the transaction taking place. Similarly, the transactions must occur within the time period for which the compensation applies or is intended to apply. Lastly, it must be determined that the payment does not cover chargebacks or fees associated with fines or penalties designed to support the health and growth of the ecosystem.

**iii. Are there any additional high-level scenarios you see benefit in us considering at this stage? If so, please provide a description of those scenarios.**

Visa proposes that the Commission consider the following scenario which may address some of the nuances of the calculations: The scheme was paying incentives to an issuer at an effective rate of 0.02bps before Royal Assent and continued to pay the same incentives after. As there is no change to this incentive arrangement, the 0.02bps is not considered to be net compensation.

## **Chapter 6. Total interchange fee caps under the IPS**

**Question 6A: We welcome your views on the following questions:**

**i. Do you agree with our interpretation of the interchange fees which are considered to be the 1 April 2021 fees? Why/why not?**

Yes, the interpretation of "the interchange fees per transaction as at 1 April 2021" is appropriate and clear for the purposes of the IPS.

**ii. Do you agree with our proposed approach for determining those 1 April 2021 fees for each issuer? Why/why not?**

Broadly, the approach for determining the "the interchange fees per transaction as at 1 April 2021" - relying on issuers and schemes populating an information request - is appropriate for the

purposes of the IPS. This approach was applied when setting the new interchange rates to be effective from 13 November 2022.

Accurately determining the benchmark interchange rates to apply requires splitting “transaction type” into several categories aligned with the scheme’s interchange schedule. Key fields include: funding source (I.e., Credit, Debit, Prepaid), card type (e.g., Platinum, Gold, Classic, commercial), transaction type (e.g., CNP/CP, tokenisation), priority rate types (e.g., segment rates, and Strategic Merchant), and fee form (e.g., ad valorem or fixed).

**iii. What information could issuers (or other participants, such as the schemes) reasonably provide us to verify the applicable 1 April 2021 fees for each issuer?**

The minimum information the Commission likely requires for an accurate assessment of “the interchange fees per transaction as at 1 April 2021” and to support the implementation of the IPS is a matrix of the fields listed under the response above to Question 6A(ii). This information would be required at the issuer-level for each scheme as at 1 April 2021 and then for any subsequent comparison reporting period thereafter.

**Question 6B:**

**i. What other forms of monetary or non-monetary compensation should be included in our consideration of net compensation, if any?**

To ensure fair competition that supports the growth and sustainability of the payments ecosystem, Visa supports the proposed criteria for defining net compensation. The most important component is whether a monetary or non-monetary exchange of value between a scheme and an issuer seeks to compensate an issuer for the effects of IPS. To avoid loopholes and unfair competition, it is our view that all incentive types concerning regulated transactions that can be linked to the underlying transaction are included for consideration, whether or not they seek to compensate for the effects of IPS. Specifically:

- The compensation must be able to be linked to enabling the transaction or derived as a result of the transaction taking place
- The transactions must occur within the time period for which the compensation applies or is intended to apply
- Fees related to chargebacks, and fees associated with penalties in place to support the health and growth of the ecosystem, should be excluded from consideration.

**ii. How is the value of non-monetary compensation (a) determined between the provider and the recipient; and (b) accounted for in the recipient’s accounts?**

Non-monetary compensation that ties directly to regulated transactions would be quantified to determine the fair value of what is being provided.

**Question 6C: We welcome your views on:**

**i. Whether compensation has to be linked to a specific transaction in order to be reasonably attributed to it? If so, why?**

Yes, incentives concerning regulated transactions that can be linked to the underlying transaction should be assessed against the criteria outlined in Section 6.14. of the guidance. Fees concerning chargebacks and fees associated with penalties designed to promote the health and growth of the ecosystem should be excluded.

**ii. What principles or other matters do you consider to be relevant for the purposes of attributing compensation to specific transactions?**

The relevant principles for attributing compensation to specific transactions include:

- a. The compensation must be able to be linked to enabling the transaction or derived as a result of the transaction taking place
- b. The transactions must occur within the time period for which the compensation applies or is intended to apply

**Question 6D: We welcome your views on our approach to determining the purpose of compensation. In particular:**

**i. What do you consider the effect of the IPS to be?**

Interchange plays an important role in balancing the interests of all participants in the digital payments ecosystem and ensuring its sustainability. This is in line with Visa's longstanding management of interchange in New Zealand. We have set interchange at appropriate levels that encourage acceptance and usage and balance the interests of all participants across the digital payments value chain. With the introduction of IPS, Visa's understanding is that it mandates that issuers should not be compensated in any manner for interchange revenue lost due to the introductions of the IPS's interchange caps.

**ii. What other principles (if any) are relevant to determining the purpose of compensation?**

Other principles relevant to determining the purpose of compensation are:

- a. When the compensation was introduced and when it became effective (e.g., was the compensation introduced or changed after Royal Assent).
- b. Whether there is clear evidence that one of the purposes of the compensation was to compensate an issuer for the effects of IPS.
- c. Whether the compensation is designed to match any interchange lost due to the IPS.

**iii. What information could parties reasonably provide to enable us to assess the purpose of compensation?**

Information parties could reasonably provide to enable the Commission to assess the purpose of compensation:

- a. Clear rationale and linkage to behavioural drivers, and/or technology/infrastructure upgrades or other investments which the compensation is designed to support.

**Question 6E:**

- i. What mechanisms do issuers have in place, and how do those mechanisms operate, to:
  - a. Ensure that a cardholder understands and agrees that a commercial credit payment product (CCPP) is to be used wholly for purposes other than personal, domestic or household purposes;
  - b. Determine whether a cardholder is using a CCPP for a prohibited purpose (ie, for a personal, domestic or household purpose);
  - c. Remedy the use of a CCPP for a prohibited purpose? For example, by blocking the use of that product; and
  - d. Ensure that a CCPP is being charged directly to the account of the business?
- ii. How can we best get assurance from participants that credit products are correctly being categorised and treated as CCPPs?

Card issuers may each have their own assessment capability to determine product suitability - whether at point of origination or during the product lifecycle. With the business banking relationship, the owner has accountability for ensuring each product issued is fit for purpose.

Additionally, Visa has very clear rules relating to the issuance of commercial products, ensuring such products are designed to provide a means of payment for business-related goods and services. Visa assesses the product requirements issuers provide to ensure each product meets the intended use.

**Question 6F: Should ATM transactions be subject to the fee caps under the IPS?**

ATM transactions should not be subject to the current fee caps under the IPS. The ecosystem value of ATM transactions is significantly different from the value of typical point-of-sale (POS) purchase transactions. ATM acquirers deploy ATM machines to provide additional consumer touchpoints on behalf of card issuers to withdraw cash and check account balances. The Cash Disbursement Fee (CDF, terminology for ATM interchange) is currently set as a rate to be paid by the card issuer to the ATM acquirer. The CDF is set in a direction to enable ATM acquirers to deploy and innovate ATM technologies.

**Question 6G: We are seeking your views on the following:**

- i. What mechanisms do participants currently have in place, and how do those mechanisms work, to:
  - a. Identify whether an erroneous interchange fee has been charged; and
  - b. Address a situation where an erroneous interchange fee has been charged?

ii. How are parties made good after an erroneous interchange fee has been detected? In particular, how are merchants made good where the effect of any erroneous interchange fee has flowed directly through to them via the interchange plus pricing model?

The Visa Rules describe how issuers and acquirers may rectify situations, within the Visa system, when an inappropriate interchange rate is applied, whether the issuer has miscoded a product, an acquirer has sent an incorrect processing code, or there was a systems incident.

Visa reviews all rate implementations and revisions to ensure that systems changes are implemented properly. Furthermore, Visa performs ad hoc reporting to ensure that rates continue to be processed and applied as designed. If Visa finds an error during either of these processes, we ensure the issue is resolved and perform remediation.

In cases where Visa performs remediation between clients, they may ask us to provide detailed reporting at the merchant level in order to help support proper garnering or redistributing of interchange funds from/to merchants by the acquirer.

Acquirers are responsible for the process to rectify the effect of any erroneous interchange fees that have flowed directly through to merchants.

## Chapter 7. Information required to assess compliance

**Question 7A: We are interested in your views on the scope of the information we consider is required to assess compliance with the obligations under the IPS, including:**

i. **Do you agree that the information we have identified is the right information to enable us to assess compliance with the obligations under the IPS? Why/why not?**

The information listed in Section 7.8 should be adequate for the Commission to assess compliance with respect to the interchange fee caps:

- Total interchange fees paid - divided by the value of transactions at the issuer and interchange category level - will provide the effective rate levied for interchange categories where interchange is levied as a percentage of value.
- Total interchange fees paid - divided by the number of transactions at the issuer and interchange category level - will provide the effective rate levied for interchange categories where interchange is levied as a per-transaction fee.

In addition, given that some fees are levied on a per-transaction basis and some are levied as a percentage of value, it may help to include an indicator alongside each fee category to ensure the fee type is clearly calculated.

## Additional comments

### Frequency of reporting and baseline period

In terms of the frequency of reporting to the Commission on net compensation and based on Visa's experience in other markets, we recommend annualised reporting to simplify the operational management.

We also wish to clarify why the baseline period is set from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Given Royal Assent was granted on 13 May 2022, should the baseline period cover the 12 months preceding the Royal Assent date?

### Remediation approach

Visa recommends that a scheme or issuer be permitted six months to adjust interchange or compensation to ensure compliance, should a scheme or issuer identify any net compensation.

### Merchant surcharging

Visa maintains a global policy of opposing merchant surcharging, which, in our experience, can discourage growth of the digital payments ecosystem and cardholder usage. We recognise, however, that the practice is permitted under the Act<sup>6</sup>. Given this context, we support the Commission's responsibility to monitor, investigate and enforce action against merchants who engage in excessive surcharging<sup>7</sup>. Visa also welcomes Section 31<sup>8</sup> in the Act, given that it outlines the process the Commission must undertake prior to issuing a merchant surcharging standard. This includes making the proposed standard public, sharing a copy of the proposed standard with the representatives of affected persons, and considering submissions in response to the proposed standard.

While the intent in allowing surcharging may be to reflect the cost of acceptance, in Visa's global experience surcharging may often lead to excessive charges – above the cost of acceptance – being passed on to consumers. Therefore, in our view, increasing consumer awareness that excessive surcharging is not permitted is essential. Likewise, it is important to raise awareness among merchants that there are numerous built-in costs associated with accepting cash – which may not always seem apparent – and that digital payments can be a more cost-effective way to accept payments<sup>9</sup>. In jurisdictions where surcharging has been permitted, Visa notes that it can

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<sup>6</sup> New Zealand Government, Retail Payment System Act 2022, Part 3 Merchant surcharging, monitoring and enforcement, and miscellaneous provisions, Subpart 1 - Merchant surcharging standards, <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2022/0021/latest/whole.html#LMS532513>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. In this case, excessive surcharging refers to, as described in the Act, payment surcharges for payment services being more than the cost to the merchant of the payment services used for accepting retail payments.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, s31.

<sup>9</sup> For further details, see the Visa-commissioned report (2017), Cashless Cities: Realising the benefits of digital

be difficult for regulators to control surcharging and, as a result, consumers may pay excessive charges. In these instances, regulators have sought to ensure merchants are not imposing – and consumers are not paying – excessive surcharges for use of digital payments.

## Conclusion

Visa welcomes the opportunity to engage with the Commission on the implementation of the Retail Payment System Act 2022. We do so against the backdrop of contributing to New Zealand’s economic growth and development and financial inclusion as well as sharing the Government’s support for a modern and fair retail payments ecosystem. Open and effective competition are critical in ensuring a healthy and growing payments ecosystem supported by digital payments to the benefit of merchants and consumers alike.

Visa appreciates the Commission’s advice in the draft guidance that it will continue engaging “up to, and following, the IPS coming into force to understand the processes participants are following to ensure compliance with the IPS and any issues” encountered<sup>10</sup>. We would welcome maintaining our engagement with the Commission in that regard.

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payments. The report notes that “Accepting cash and checks costs businesses about 7 cents of every dollar received compared to 5 cents of every dollar collected from digital sources”, p4 <https://usa.visa.com/dam/VCOM/global/visa-everywhere/documents/visa-cashless-cities-report.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Commerce Commission (2022), *Retail Payment System Act 2022: Draft guidance on the initial pricing standard*, [Retail-Payment-System-Draft-guidance-on-the-initial-pricing-standard-7-September-2022.pdf](https://www.comcom.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Retail-Payment-System-Draft-guidance-on-the-initial-pricing-standard-7-September-2022.pdf) (comcom.govt.nz), p3.

## About Visa

Visa is one of the world's leaders in digital payments. Our mission is to connect the world through the most secure, reliable and innovative payments network – enabling individuals, businesses and economies to thrive. Visa has been innovating payments for over 60 years and today the company facilitates payments across more than 200 countries and territories. In so doing, it connects more than 3.9 billion cards and 80 million merchant locations through a global network of over 14,900 financial institutions.<sup>11</sup> As a global payments network, Visa facilitates payment transactions among financial institutions, merchants and consumers. We also provide transaction-processing services (primarily authorisation, clearing and settlement) to our financial institution clients through VisaNet, our global processing platform. We are not a financial institution and do not issue cards, extend credit or set rates and fees for consumers.

We work with the broader payments ecosystem to ensure security is at the forefront of our technology and capabilities, including tokenisation, AI-powered fraud prevention, biometrics and digital identity solutions. Visa's sophisticated AI security has helped financial institutions prevent nearly \$88 million in fraud from impacting New Zealand businesses in the year to April 2021.<sup>12</sup> Globally, we have invested approximately USD9 billion over five years to enhance security.<sup>13</sup> Our cyber defences are among the most sophisticated in the world. We continue to offer Zero Liability for consumers on fraud, and merchants that accept a Visa payment receive guarantees of payment from Visa. As commerce moves rapidly online, Visa recently released its updated [New Zealand 2022-23 Security Roadmap](#) in response to the increasing risk of cybercrime and scams facing businesses and consumers. The roadmap highlights the steps that Visa, together with industry, are taking to continue to secure digital payments in New Zealand. Alongside of our focus on security, Visa's relentless attention to innovation is a catalyst for the rapid growth of digital commerce on any device for everyone, everywhere.

In New Zealand, Visa has a physical presence in Auckland. Together with our New Zealand financial institution, fintech and merchant partners, as well as our technology partners, we are committed to building a future of commerce that fosters the country's economic growth and innovation. Visa also operates Auckland-based Spend Clarity for Enterprise, a leading software-as-a-service technology company providing payments and transaction management solutions for financial institutions and their corporate customers. Spend Clarity for Enterprise supports more than 170,000 organisations in 178 countries. Additionally, Visa is a member of Digital Identity NZ and Fintech NZ and contributes to these industry groupings, especially through our global experience and perspectives. We also have a close relationship with Payments New

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<sup>11</sup> Visa Fact Sheet (2022), <https://usa.visa.com/dam/VCOM/global/about-visa/documents/aboutvisafactsheet.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> VisaNet transactions, May 2020-April 2021. For further details, see the Visa media release (2021), Visa's artificial intelligence prevents nearly \$88 million in fraud from impacting New Zealand businesses, <https://www.visa.co.nz/about-visa/newsroom/press-releases/visas-artificial-intelligence-prevents-nearly-88-million-in-fraud-from-impacting-new-zealand-businesses.html>

<sup>13</sup> Visa internal data on global technology and operations investments, FY15-FY19. For further detail, see <https://usa.visa.com/visa-everywhere/blog/bdp/2019/12/24/investing-in-the-1577207091483.html>

Zealand, Retail New Zealand and the New Zealand Bankers Association, and we regularly consult with them on matters relating to the national payments ecosystem.

Enabling New Zealand consumers and businesses to thrive is at the heart of Visa's mission. As the trend towards digital continues, Visa is committed to enabling New Zealand businesses to adapt and grow through payments innovation. In 2022, Visa joined Digital Boost Alliance, a New Zealand Government initiative that accelerates the use and knowledge of digital technology, particularly among small businesses. Prior to this, we launched Where You Shop Matters, a 2020 initiative encouraging New Zealanders to support local businesses, and we provided e-commerce support packages to help small businesses adapt to the new retail environment. Globally, Visa announced in 2021 that it had helped digitally-enable an estimated 16 million SMBs worldwide, or just over 30 per cent of the multi-year goal it set in 2020 to digitise 50 million SMBs.<sup>14</sup>

As a payments network business built on partnerships, Visa continues to enable new payment flows and expand acceptance, ensuring that every New Zealander can pay, and be paid, in secure and convenient ways. We are realising this is through Visa Fintech Partner Connect and the Visa Accelerator Program. The program provides New Zealand fintechs with access to Visa's technologies, networks and solutions, enabling businesses to scale for the benefit of consumers, businesses and the economy. As an active member of New Zealand's technology community, Visa has also supported the prestigious Hi-Tech Awards in the category of Best Hi-Tech Solution for the Public Good.

To learn more, visit [www.visa.co.nz](http://www.visa.co.nz)