



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

### Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor

**Portfolio**                      **Trade and Export Growth**

On 16 May 2022, Cabinet:

- 1        **authorised** the absence of Hon Damien O'Connor from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 20 to 31 May 2022, to travel to:
  - 1.1      Bangkok, Thailand to attend the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade meeting;
  - 1.2      the United States to join the Prime Minister's trade mission;
- 2        **agreed** that he be accompanied by one member of staff;
- 3        **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$89,412 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4        **noted** that he will be accompanied by:
  - 4.1      officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) during the APEC meeting; and
  - 4.2      officials from MFAT, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Tourism New Zealand, and New Zealand Story for the trade mission to the United States, all of whose travel costs will be met by their departments;
- 5        **agreed** that in his absence:
  - 5.1      Hon Dr David Clark act as Minister for Land Information and Minister for Trade and Export Growth;
  - 5.2      Hon Meka Whaitiri act as Minister of Agriculture, Minister for Biosecurity and Minister for Rural Communities;
- 6        **noted** that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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Office of the Minister for Trade and Export Growth

Chair, Cabinet

**Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor**

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Thailand and the United States from 20 - 31 May 2022.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle.

**Purpose of Travel**

- 3 I will first travel to Thailand from 20 - 22 May, where the primary purpose of the visit is to attend the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade meeting in Bangkok, and to advance trade recovery strategy objectives of diversification and trade architecture with Thailand – New Zealand's 9th largest two-way trade partner.
- 4 The APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) meeting is the first ministerial meeting in APEC's annual calendar and the first in person meeting of APEC Trade Ministers since 2019. Building off New Zealand's APEC host year, the meeting is a timely opportunity to reinforce the value of multilateralism and the rules-based order, encourage a regional response to the COVID-19 economic recovery, and advance bilateral business with key partners in the margins. I will be taking advantage of APEC's convening power to seek bilateral meetings with key counterparts, including from the United States, Korea, Chile, Peru, Mexico, Indonesia, Brunei and Canada.
- 5 The MRT meeting will also be one of the first regional Minister-level engagements to be held in a forum involving Russia. s6(a)

I will use the opportunity to publicly re-state New Zealand's strong condemnation of Russia's actions in Ukraine, with a particular focus on their impact on regional peace and stability, trade and economic growth.

- 6 New Zealand and Thailand share common trade architecture including a bilateral free trade agreement, the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand FTA and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. This visit will serve as an opportunity to reinvigorate the trade and economic relationship with Thailand as both countries re-open following COVID-19 and to further our trade recovery strategy objectives around enhancing diversification and trade architecture. In Thailand, I will meet with the Minister of Commerce and Industry, engage with New Zealand businesses active in Thailand and also launch in Thailand NZTE's "Made with Care" campaign.

- 7 Following my engagements in Thailand, I will travel to the United States to join the Prime Minister's trade mission from 22 - 28 May (landing back in New Zealand on 31 May). The objectives of the visit to the United States are to:
- Support New Zealand's Trade Recovery Strategy by demonstrably reconnecting with US businesses and people, and profile New Zealand as an innovative, open and valuable partner and destination;
  - Reaffirm the close political relationship with our most consequential and powerful international partner at a time of increasing global uncertainty, and highlight our contribution to addressing mutual security, trade and sustainability challenges;
  - Highlight and support the contribution of the US relationship to NZ's economic recovery, security and ability to respond to climate change; and
  - Promote the progressive reopening of New Zealand's border to tourists.
- 8 The Prime Minister and I will be accompanied by a targeted business delegation of senior delegates, representing a range of New Zealand companies from across the tourism, film, sustainable business and technology, with a focus on high-value, high-tech innovation, sustainability and addressing climate change. In the United States, we will travel to Los Angeles, New York, Boston, San Francisco and Seattle.
- 9 In each city, New Zealand will be hosting a range of events targeted at sectors of interest for the business delegation as well as promoting New Zealand's brand and highlighting New Zealand's strengths as a place to visit and a country to do business with. There will also be opportunities to build connections with senior US business leaders, such as from Microsoft, who are planning significant investments in New Zealand. Further details on the United States visit are in the Prime Minister's Cabinet paper.
- 10 I acknowledge the changing global situation with respect to COVID-19, and will continue to monitor developments in each host country. I will adapt my travel plans if necessary, including through contingency budgeting.

### **Ministerial Party**

- 11 I will be accompanied by one staff member as part of the Ministerial Delegation. Six officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) will also be attending the APEC MRT meeting with me. A number of officials from MFAT, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Tourism New Zealand, and New Zealand Story will be joining the trade mission to the United States with the Prime Minister and me. The travel costs of officials will be covered by their departmental budgets.

### **Travel Costs**

12 The estimated costs of my travel are:

	<b>Minister</b>	<b>Staff</b>
<b>Flights</b>	23800	23800
<b>Ground transport</b>	2356	2356
<b>Accommodation</b>	6100	6980
<b>Per Diems</b>	1679	1679
<b>Representation</b>	3100	
<b>PCR Tests</b>	1175	1175
<b>Gifts</b>	310	
<b>Subtotal</b>	38520	35990
<b>Contingency 20%</b>	7704	7198
<b>TOTAL</b>	46224	43188
<b><u>TOTAL \$89,412</u></b>		

### **Acting Ministers**

13 In my absence, Acting Ministers in my portfolios will be:

Land Information: Hon Dr David Clark

Agriculture; Biosecurity; Rural Communities: Hon Meka Whaitiri

Trade and Export Growth: Hon Dr David Clark

### **Proactive release**

14 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO (18) 4, on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. Proactive release is subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

### **Recommendations**

15 I recommend that Cabinet:

- 15.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 20 - 31 May to travel to Thailand and the United States;
- 15.2 agree that I be accompanied by one staff member;
- 15.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$89.412 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];
- 15.4 note that six officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) will also be attending the APEC MRT meeting with me, and officials from MFAT, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Tourism New Zealand, and New Zealand Story will be joining the trade mission to the United States, and officials' travel costs will be met by the departments;
- 15.5 agree that Hon Dr David Clark (Land Information, Trade and Export Growth); and Hon Meka Whaitiri (Agriculture, Biosecurity and Rural Communities) will be Acting Ministers in my absence; and
- 15.6 note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Damien O'Connor

Minister for Trade and Export Growth