

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 23 April 2025

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters - March 2025</i>	CAB-25-MIN-0057
<i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters: United States of America (US): 13 – 21 March 2025</i>	

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the OIA that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to OIA redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government.



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: Rt Hon Winston Peters - March 2025

Portfolio Foreign Affairs

On 10 March 2025, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters from New Zealand from 13 to 21 March 2025, to travel to New York and Washington, the United States of America for bilateral visits;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by two members of staff;
- 3 **authorised** the estimated expenditure of up to \$81,313 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 officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by their agency;
- 5 **agreed** that during his absence:
 - 5.1 Hon Judith Collins KC act as Minister of Foreign Affairs;
 - 5.2 Hon Mark Patterson act as Minister for Racing;
 - 5.3 Hon Chris Bishop act as Minister for Rail;
- 6 **noted** that the House is not sitting during his absence.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Restricted

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs
Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters: United States of America (US): 13 – 21 March 2025

- 1 Cabinet approval is sought to undertake official travel to the US, departing Thursday 13 March and returning Friday 21 March 2025.
- 2 The Prime Minister's Office has approved the travel in-principle.

Purpose of Travel

- 3 The US remains an essential partner for New Zealand. s6(a)

This visit will be the first by a New Zealand Minister to Washington DC since President Trump started his second term and will be important in setting the tone (with the US, other partners, and in public) of the New Zealand-US relationship during this new era.

- 4 US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has offered a time on 18 March for a bilateral meeting. This would be the first in-person meeting with the new Secretary, following an introductory phone call shortly after Secretary Rubio's confirmation.
- 5 The visit to Washington DC would be preceded by a visit to New York to speak with senior officials and Permanent Representatives to the United Nations (UN).
- 6 s6(a)

Outline of Proposed Visit

- 7 In addition to the call on Secretary Rubio, we will be seeking the following engagements during the visit:

- Meetings with s6(a) National Security Adviser Michael Waltz, s6(a)

- s6(a)

- s6(a)

- Engagement with prominent US foreign policy commentators; and
- Meetings with senior UN officials, s6(a)

as well as Permanent Representatives of key partners such as Canada.

- 8 If travel is approved, we will depart for New York on the evening of Thursday 13 March and return to New Zealand on Friday 21 March 2025.
- 9 Several New Zealand media organisations have indicated that they intend to cover the visit in person.

Ministerial Party

- 10 If travel is approved, my Specialist Ministerial Adviser and Senior Press Secretary would accompany. Our costs will be charged to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel. My Senior Foreign Affairs Adviser and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade would also accompany. Their costs would be covered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Acting Ministers

- 11 If travel is approved, Hon Judith Collins KC will cover my foreign affairs portfolio, Hon Mark Patterson will cover my racing portfolio, and Hon Chris Bishop will cover my rail portfolio.

Travel Costs

- 12 The estimated cost for this travel is:

Item	NZ\$
Flights	48,666
New York	
Accommodation	
Based on US\$470 per room, per night	7,537

Transportation	
<i>Train from New York to Washington DC, for three people</i>	2,108
<i>Minivan hire @ US\$588/day (4 calendar days Thursday-Sunday)</i>	4,190
<i>Minivan driver @ US\$40/hour</i>	2,280
Hospitality	0.00
Gifts	0.00
Other expenses, including incidentals	2,250
<i>1 day (meals and other sundry expenses of \$250/person/day)</i>	
<i>Airport facilitation</i>	No Cost
New York total	18,365
Washington DC	
Accommodation	
<i>Per person, per night (US\$420)</i>	6,660
Hospitality	0.00
<i>The Minister will be hosting a small number of small group meals for US guests but the costs of these will be absorbed by our Posts' representational Budgets.</i>	
Gifts	1,500
<i>Gifts will only be given to US political figures whom the Minister has not previously met.</i>	
Other expenses, including incidentals	2,250
<i>1 day (meals and other sundry expenses, \$250/person/day)</i>	
<i>Airport facilitation</i>	No Cost
Washington DC total	10,410
Contingency 5%	3,872
Total	81,313

Proactive release

- 13 This Cabinet 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

- 1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- 1.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand from Thursday 13 March till Thursday 20 March 2025 to travel to the United States of America (US);
 - 1.2 approve the estimated expenditure of NZD\$81,313 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs - Members of the Executive – Travel;
 - 1.3 agree that my Specialist Ministerial Adviser and Senior Press Secretary accompany, a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs – Members of the Executive - Travel;
 - 1.4 note that my Senior Foreign Affairs Adviser and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade would accompany, whose travel costs would be met by the Ministry;
 - 1.5 agree that in my absence:
 - 1.5.1 Hon Judith Collins KC cover the foreign affairs portfolio;
 - 1.5.2 Hon Mark Patterson cover the racing portfolio;
 - 1.5.3 Hon Chris Bishop cover the rail portfolio;
 - 1.6 note that the House is not sitting during my absence but that we would miss the Cabinet meeting of Monday 17 March 2025 if it goes ahead.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Minister of Foreign Affairs