

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 22 May 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, Hon Dr Shane Reti, Hon Simon Watts and Hon Nicole McKee - April 2025</i>	CAB-25-MIN-0104
<i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters – 10 to 17 April 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, Hon Dr Shane Reti, Hon Simon Watts and Hon Nicole McKee - April 2025

Portfolio Foreign Affairs

On 7 April 2025, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters, Hon Dr Shane Reti, Hon Simon Watts and Hon Nicole McKee from New Zealand from 10 to 17 April 2025, to travel to Tonga, Honolulu (United States), Fiji, and Vanuatu to undertake bilateral visits;
- 2 **agreed** that the delegation also include Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Tim van de Molen, Hon Jenny Salesa, Teanau Tuiono, and Andy Foster;
- 3 **agreed** that the delegation be accompanied by two staff members from the office of Rt Hon Winston Peters and one staff member from the office of Hon Dr Shane Reti;
- 4 **noted** that the delegation will also be accompanied by six spouses;
- 5 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up \$116,105 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 6 **noted** that the delegation will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, whose travel costs will be met by their respective agencies;
- 7 **noted** that the delegation will also be accompanied by a media delegation, who will cover their own costs;
- 8 **noted** that an NZDF Boeing 757 will be used for the above travel;
- 9 **agreed** that in the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters:
 - 9.1 Hon Shane Jones act as Minister of Foreign Affairs on 10 April 2025;
 - 9.2 Hon Todd McClay act as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 11 to 17 April 2025;
 - 9.3 Hon Mark Patterson act as Minister for Racing;
 - 9.4 Hon Chris Bishop act as Minister for Rail;

- 10 **agreed** that in the absence of Hon Dr Shane Reti:
- 10.1 Hon Tama Potaka act as Minister for Pacific Peoples;
 - 10.2 Hon Chris Penk act as Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology;
 - 10.3 Hon Nicola Grigg as Minister of Statistics;
 - 10.4 Hon Erica Stanford act as Minister for Universities;
- 11 **agreed** that in the absence of Hon Simon Watts:
- 11.1 Hon Scott Simpson act as Minister of Climate Change and Minister of Revenue;
 - 11.2 Hon Chris Bishop act as Minister for Energy from 10 April to 6am on 12 April 2025;
 - 11.3 Hon Judith Collins act as Minister for Energy from 6am on 12 April to 17 April 2025;
 - 11.4 Hon Chris Bishop act as Minister of Local Government;
- 12 **agreed** that in the absence of Hon Nicole McKee:
- 12.1 Hon Karen Chhour act as Minister for Courts;
- 13 **noted** that the House is not sitting during their 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 – 10 to 17 April 2025

Proposal

- 1 Cabinet approval is sought to travel to Tonga, Honolulu (United States), Fiji, and Vanuatu with a cross-party delegation from Thursday 10 April to Thursday 17 April 2025 (inclusive).
- 2 The Prime Minister's Office has approved the travel in-principle.

Purpose of travel

- 3 This Pacific Tour would be the largest political delegation that New Zealand sends to the region during this Parliamentary term. It is consistent with New Zealand's approach over successive governments/decades to undertake once-in-a-term Pacific Mission with broad Parliamentary delegations to demonstrate the commitment of our political system to our Pacific relationships.
- 4 The purpose of the travel is to:
 - 4.1 Build and deepen relationships with the new political leadership in Tonga and Vanuatu, with whom we have not yet had the opportunity to meet in person;
 - 4.2 In Tonga, highlight the importance of regionalism tos6(a) in light of their position as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum;
 - 4.3 In Honolulu, reinforce links with the United States as a Pacific country, discuss regional security issues with the United States Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), and engage with senior Hawaiian politicians (both at the state and federal level) on how they are addressing priority issues for the Pacific region s6(a)
 - 4.4 In Fiji, reinforce links with key partners who we work closely with s6(a)
 - 4.5 In Vanuatu, s6(a)

s6(a) and highlight New Zealand's contributions to Vanuatu's earthquake recovery.

Outline of proposed visit

5 We intend to undertake the following key engagements:

6 Tonga

- Meet with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and His Majesty's Armed Forces (Crown Prince), and Cabinet;
- Profile New Zealand's partnerships in Tonga;
- Launch a Pacific Maritime Safety Programme supported by New Zealand; and
- Attend an evening reception with Tongan Ministers, parliamentarians, and senior stakeholders.

7 Honolulu (US)

- Meet Hawai'i's Governor and representatives from the North Pacific;
- Meet with the Host a reception with members of Honolulu's civil society, senior military leaders, senior academics, and consular corps;
- Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM);
- Meet with the Commander United States Pacific Fleet and the Deputy Commander of United States Army Pacific.

8 Fiji

- Host a dinner with senior parliamentarians and officials.

9 Vanuatu

- Meet with the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- Formally announce New Zealand's earthquake recovery support for Vanuatu and the completion of the South Paray Wharf; and
- Host a reception with senior Ni-Vanuatu Ministers, parliamentarians, and officials.

10 If travel is approved, the delegation will depart for Tonga on Thursday 10 April and return to New Zealand on Thursday 17 April.

Ministerial party

11 This paper proposes that a cross-party delegation travel together, consistent with previous travel this term, with the aim of demonstrating New Zealand's

seriousness of purpose in the region and of building broad knowledge of our Pacific diplomatic and development work through our Parliament.

12 The delegation would include:

12.1 Dr Shane Reti, Minister for Pacific Peoples;

12.2 Simon Watts, Minister for Climate Change;

12.3 Nicole McKee, Minister for Courts;

12.4 Carmel Sepuloni, Deputy Leader of the Opposition;

12.5 Tim van de Molen, Chair of the Foreign, Defence and Trade select committee;

12.6 Jenny Salesa, Leader of the Labour Pacific Caucus;

12.7 Teanau Tuiono, Green Foreign Affairs Spokesperson; and

12.8 Andy Foster, NZ First Member of Parliament.

13 Minister Peters' Specialist Ministerial Adviser and Senior Private Secretary, and Minister Reti's Press Secretary, are proposed to join the delegation. Travel costs for the delegation (i.e. nine Members of Parliament and three ministerial staffers) would be a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel.

14 This paper proposes that officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples travel in support of the visit. The costs would be covered by their respective agencies. In addition, we would invite members of the New Zealand media to accompany the visit. Accompanying media would cover their own costs.

15 Six spouses of the cross-party delegation would also participate in the visit to take part in the hospitality offered to the delegation by host governments. The spouses would stay with the Members of Parliament.

16 The delegation would be transported on an NZDF aircraft. It would depart for Tonga on Thursday 10 April via NZDF Boeing 757. We would then travel to Honolulu (US), Fiji, and Vanuatu (in that order), returning to New Zealand on Thursday 17 April via the same asset.

Travel costs

17 The estimated cost for the political delegation (i.e. myself, eight accompanying MPs, three Ministerial staffers, and six spouses) is:

ITEM	COST (NZD)
Flights	\$0 (NZDF asset)

Visa application costs	\$355
Accommodation Based on 12 rooms (9 MPs + 3 Ministerial staff) <i>Tanoa Nuku'alofa, \$450/night x 2 nights</i> <i>Renaissance Honolulu, \$430/night x 3 nights</i> <i>Crown Plaza Nadi, \$430/night x 1 night</i> <i>Ramada Hotel Port Vila, \$366/night x 1 nights</i>	\$35,832 \$10,800 \$15,480 \$5160 \$4392
Ground Transportation <i>Tonga</i> <i>Honolulu</i> <i>Fiji</i> <i>Vanuatu</i>	\$27,416 \$8,400 \$12,678 \$1652 \$4,686
Hospitality (50% share of cost) <i>Tonga</i> <i>Honolulu</i> <i>Fiji</i> <i>Vanuatu</i>	\$17,273 \$6,130 \$4,643 \$3000 \$3,500
Gifts <i>Tonga</i> <i>Honolulu</i> <i>Vanuatu</i>	\$7,000 \$2,000 \$2,000 \$2,000
Meals (\$150 per person per day, for 18 people x 6 days (excludes travel days at start/end of trip))	\$16,200
Clothing 3 sets of 3 Pacific outfits x 15 people	\$5,000

<i>i.e. MPs and spouses (i.e. one for each destination except Fiji: shirts for men, puleyasi for women)</i>	
Koha <i>As appropriate, for cultural venues visited</i>	\$2,500
Subtotal	\$110,576
Contingency 5%	\$5,529
GRAND TOTAL	\$116,105

Acting Ministers

18 If travel is approved, acting Minister arrangements would be as follows

- 18.1 For Minister Peters: Minister Jones and Minister McClay would cover the foreign affairs portfolio (10 April and 11-17 April respectively), Minister Patterson would cover the racing portfolio, and Minister Bishop would cover the rail portfolio.
- 18.2 For Minister Reti: Minister Stanford would cover the universities portfolio, Minister Potaka would cover the Pacific peoples portfolio, Minister Penk would cover the science, innovation, and technology portfolio, and Minister Grigg would cover the statistics portfolio.
- 18.3 For Minister Watts: Minister Simpson would cover the climate change and revenue portfolio, Minister Bishop would cover the local government portfolio, and Ministers Bishop and Collins would cover the Energy portfolio (10 April - 6am 12 April and 6am 12 April – 17 April respectively).
- 18.4 For Minister McKee: Minister Chhour would cover the Courts portfolio, and Minister Goldsmith would cover the Associate Justice portfolio.

Proactive release

19 This Cabinet paper would 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 This paper recommends that Cabinet:
 - 1.1 authorise our absence from New Zealand, from 10 to 17 April 2025 to travel to Tonga, Honolulu (US), Fiji, and Vanuatu;

- 1.2 agree that the delegation will include nine members of Parliament: Winston Peters, Shane Reti, Simon Watts, Nicole McKee, Carmel Sepuloni, Tim van de Molen, Jenny Salesa, Teanau Tuiono, and Andy Foster; and three members of staff.
- 1.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$116,105 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];
- 1.4 note that we would be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, whose travel costs would be met by their respective agencies;
- 1.5 note that we would be accompanied by a media delegation, who would cover their own costs;
- 1.6 agree that in the absence of Minister Peters, Minister Reti, Minister Watts, and Minister McKee:
 - 1.6.1 Ministers Jones and McClay would act as Minister for Foreign Affairs;
 - 1.6.2 Minister Patterson would act as Minister of Racing;
 - 1.6.3 Minister Bishop would act as Minister for Rail;
 - 1.6.4 Minister Stanford would act as Minister for Universities;
 - 1.6.5 Minister Potaka would act as Minister for Pacific Peoples;
 - 1.6.6 Minister Penk would act as Minister for Science, Innovation, and Technology;
 - 1.6.7 Minister Grigg would act as Minister for Statistics;
 - 1.6.8 Minister Simpson would act as Minister for Climate Change and Revenue;
 - 1.6.9 Minister Bishop would act as Minister for Local Government; and
 - 1.6.10 Minister Chhour would act as Minister for Courts
 - 1.6.11 Ministers Bishop and Collins would act as Minister for Energy.
- 1.7 Note that the House is not sitting during my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs