

Proactive Release

Published on: 23 September 2025

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister for Trade and Investment

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Todd McClay – August 2025</i>	25 0273
<i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Todd McClay – August 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.



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 Todd McClay - August 2025

Portfolio Trade and Investment

On 11 August 2025, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Todd McClay from New Zealand, from 17 to 23 August 2025, to travel to Saudi Arabia and the United States of America for bilateral meetings;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one member of staff;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$43,260 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 in his absence:
 - 5.1 Hon Nicola Grigg act as Minister of Agriculture and Minister for Trade and Investment;
 - 5.2 Hon Tama Potaka act as Minister of Forestry;
- 6 **noted** that leave from Parliament has been approved.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Restricted

Office of the Minister for Trade and Investment

Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Todd McClay – August 2025

- 1 I seek approval to travel to Saudi Arabia and United States (US) from 17-23 August 2025 in my capacity as Minister for Trade and Investment.
- 2 The Chief of Staff has approved the travel in-principle, and leave has been approved by the Party Whip.

Purpose of Travel

- 3 My travel to Saudi Arabia will strengthen bilateral relationships and encourage momentum towards the signing of the New Zealand–Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Agreement (NZ GCC FTA), concluded in October last year. Once entered into force, the NZ GCC FTA will contribute to New Zealand's goal of doubling exports within ten years.
- 4 In Saudi Arabia I will meet with my counterpart the Minister of Commerce to progress the signature of the NZ GCC FTA, as well as discuss other bilateral trade opportunities to take forward during a trade mission with New Zealand businesses planned for mid-September.
- 5 I will meet with the Minister of Agriculture to follow up on actions arising from the Saudi Arabia-New Zealand Joint Ministerial Commission held in Auckland in April. I am also seeking calls on the Minister of Investment to discuss investment opportunities and the establishment of Invest NZ.
- 6 My travel to the US is to engage with the US administration on US trade policy and in particular, the increased tariff on New Zealand exports announced on 1 August; to seek greater certainty for New Zealand exporters. New Zealand faces an increased tariff on exports to the US; from 10 per cent announced on 2 April, to 15 per cent announced on 1 August. That additional 5 percent tariff, on top of the 10 percent additional tariff which New Zealand exports have been subject to since April, will raise tariff costs by a further NZ\$400 million per annum to NZ\$1.39 billion per annum in total. Critically, it also places New Zealand at a competitive disadvantage against countries whose tariff has remained at 10 per cent.
- 7 I will hold meetings with US counterparts including United States Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer, who invited me to visit during my phone conversation with him on 2 August.

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RESTRICTED

Ministerial Party

- 8 I will be accompanied by one staff member from my office, and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). All costs for MFAT staff will be covered from within the Ministry's baseline budget.

Travel Costs

- 9 Indicative costs for my Ministerial travel are:

Airfares and surface travel	\$ 33,200
Accommodation and meals	\$ 6,000
Gifts	\$ 2,000
Contingency (5%)	\$ 2,060

Total: \$ 43,260

Acting Ministers

- 10 If my travel is approved, I propose the following Acting Ministers for my portfolios whilst I am out of the country:

10.1 Hon Nicola Grigg – Agriculture

10.2 Hon Tama Potaka – Forestry

- 11 Hon Nicola Grigg – Trade and Investment

Recommendations

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet:

1.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand from 17 August to New Zealand 23 August for travel to Saudi Arabia and the United States;

1.2 note I will be accompanied by one member of staff;

1.3 note that I will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by within the Ministry's baseline budget;

1.4 agree that in my absence:

1.4.1 Minister Grigg will be Acting Minister of Agriculture

1.4.2 Minister Potaka will be Acting Minister of Forestry

1.4.3 Minister Grigg will be Acting Minister for Trade and Investment;

- 1.5 approve the estimated expenditure of \$43,260 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs - Members of the Executive – Travel;
- 1.6 note that leave from Parliament has been approved by the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Todd McClay

Minister for Trade and Investment

Proactively Released by
The Minister for Trade and Investment