

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 24 June 2025

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters, Hon Dr Shane Reti, Hon Simon Watts and Hon Nicole McKee – April 2025</i>	CAB-25-MIN-0154
<i>Report on 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; and
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis.



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.

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters, Hon Dr Shane Reti, Hon Simon Watts and Hon Nicole McKee - April 2025

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 12 May 2025, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-25-SUB-0154 on his travel, together with Hon Dr Shane Reti, Hon Simon Watts and Hon Nicole McKee, from 10 to 17 April 2025, to Tonga, Honolulu (United States), Fiji, and Vanuatu to undertake bilateral visits.

Diana Hawker
for Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Restricted

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters – 10 to 17 April 2025

This paper recommends that Cabinet note this report on travel to Tonga, Honolulu (United States), Fiji, and Vanuatu from Thursday 10 April to Thursday 17 April 2025.

Report

- 1 The Pacific Tour was the largest cross-party political delegation that New Zealand has sent to the region during this Parliamentary term. Consistent with New Zealand's approach over successive governments, the broad Parliamentary delegation demonstrated the commitment of our political system to our Pacific relationships.
- 2 The purpose of the travel was to:
 - 2.1 Build and deepen relationships with the new political leadership in Tonga and Vanuatu, with whom we had not yet had the opportunity to meet in person;
 - 2.2 In Tonga, highlight the importance of regionalism s6(a) in light of their position as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum;
 - 2.3 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 to engage with senior Hawaiian politicians on how they are addressing priority issues for the Pacific region s6(a)
 - 2.4 Reinforce links with Fiji as a key partner who we work closely with s6(a)
 - 2.5 In Vanuatu, s6(a)

and highlight New Zealand's contributions to Vanuatu's earthquake recovery.
- 3 The visit aligned with New Zealand's announcement of improvements to immigration settings for Pacific visitors, which are a tangible step to increase the connection between New Zealand and the Pacific. The announcement was welcomed by partners.

- 4 The New Zealand delegation included:
- 4.1 Dr Shane Reti, Minister for Pacific Peoples;
 - 4.2 Simon Watts, Minister of Climate Change;
 - 4.3 Nicole McKee, Minister for Courts;
 - 4.4 Carmel Sepuloni, Deputy Leader of the Opposition;
 - 4.5 Tim van de Molen, Chair of the Foreign, Defence and Trade Select Committee;
 - 4.6 Jenny Salesa, Leader of the Labour Pacific Caucus;
 - 4.7 Teanau Tuiono, Green Foreign Affairs Spokesperson; and
 - 4.8 Andy Foster, NZ First Member of Parliament.
 - 4.9 Six spouses of the cross-party delegation participated in the visit to take part in the hospitality offered to the delegation by host governments.

Tonga

- 5 Our visit to Tonga marked the first high-level foreign visit hosted by Prime Minister Eke's new administration. The visit focused on deepening New Zealand's partnership with Tonga and building relationships with the new government.
- 6 All Tongan Cabinet ministers met with the delegation, highlighting the breadth of engagement, and allowing for discussions on key topics including economic development, labour mobility, combatting illicit drugs, tertiary education, climate resilience, and defence cooperation. Tonga expressed strong appreciation for New Zealand's long-standing support s6(a), s6(b)(i)

The delegation also experienced a virtual tour of Tonga's future Parliament design and met with aspiring future parliamentarians.

- 7 While this was our third visit to Tonga in just over a year, it was our first engagement with Eke's government, s6(a)

- 8 s6(a)

Honolulu (United States)

9 The visit to Honolulu – the largest ever New Zealand parliamentary delegation to Hawai'i – presented a range of symbolic and practical opportunities to profile New Zealand's commitment to both the United States (US) partnership and long-term Pacific resilience. Laying a wreath at *USS Arizona* (where 1,177 sailors and marines perished during the attack on Pearl Harbour) and visiting the *USS Missouri* (where the Instrument of Surrender was signed at the end of WWII) sent powerful signals s6(a)

10 s6(a)

11 s6(a)

12 The Admirals leading Indo-Pacific Command (Paparo) and Pacific Fleet (Koehler) both spoke appreciatively of New Zealand's contributions to security in the Indo-Pacific over the last 18 months and acknowledged the recent announcement of the Defence Capability Plan (DCP).

Fiji

13 Fiji Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Sitiveni Rabuka hosted Deputy Prime Minister Peters for a private one-on-one dinner during the delegation's stopover in Nadi. The conversation mainly focused on global issues s6(a) and regional issues
s6(b)(i)

14 New Zealand Ministers were farewelled on 16 April over a meeting with Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Biman Prasad, s6(a)

Vanuatu

- 15 The visit broadened relationships with Vanuatu's new political leadership
s6(a)
- 16 The visit demonstrated the value of New Zealand's development programme and its alignment with Vanuatu's priorities. The programme highlighted our contributions to Vanuatu's economic development and post-earthquake recovery, including completion of the South Paray Wharf, announcement of New Zealand's NZ\$10 million earthquake recovery package, and our commitment to lead the 'Renewable Energy Solar and Storage on Efate and Tanna' (RESSET) project.
- 17 The bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Napat and key members of Vanuatu's Council of Ministers (Cabinet) gave the delegation insights into the new Government's priorities, particularly following the December earthquake.
s6(a)

Proactive release

- 18 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.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs