

Proactive Release

Date: 5 August 2019

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

Proposed Overseas Travel: Cooks Islands [includes Tabuteau]:

(CAB-19-MIN-219 refers)

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters: Cook Is: 23-25 May 2019

(CAB-19-MIN-308 refers)

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 Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act 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 redaction codes:

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

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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

Portfolio Foreign Affairs

On 13 May 2019, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 23 to 26 May 2019, to travel to the Cook Islands for bilateral discussions;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by:
 - 2.1 one member of staff from his office;
 - 2.2 Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fletcher Tabuteau, MP;
 - 2.3 Hon Stuart Nash and one member of staff from his office;
- 3 **approved** the expenditure of up to \$29,300 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **agreed** that in his absence:
 - 4.1 Hon Shane Jones act as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, and Minister for Racing;
 - 4.2 Hon Dr David Clark act as Minister for State Owned Enterprises;
- 5 **agreed** that in the absence of Hon Stuart Nash:
 - 5.1 Hon Grant Robertson act as Minister of Revenue;
 - 5.2 Hon Damien O'Connor act as Minister of Fisheries;
 - 5.3 Hon Andrew Little act as Minister of Police;
 - 5.4 Hon Kris Faafoi act as Minister for Small Business.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution: (see over)

Hard-copy distribution:

Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hon Stuart Nash
Fletcher Tabuteau, MP

Proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair
Cabinet

PROPOSED OVERSEAS TRAVEL: COOK ISLANDS

I seek Cabinet approval to travel to the Cook Islands from 23 – 26 May 2019 with Minister Nash and Under Secretary Tabuteau. The Prime Minister's approval has been given in principle for our travel.

Travel Objectives

Cook Islands

2 The Cook Islands is expected to graduate to high income status on 1 January 2020. It is timely therefore to travel to the Cook Islands for annual government-to-government talks. Objectives for the talks include:

- Discuss the nature of the ongoing constitutional relationship between the Cook Islands and New Zealand;
- Discuss with the Cook Islands the type and extent of ongoing technical and financial support they require from New Zealand;
- Reinforce the New Zealand – Cook Islands relationship in the context of increasing geo-strategic competition.

3 It is expected that the full Cook Islands Cabinet (6 Ministers) will attend the talks.

4 While in the Cook Islands, we will also call on opposition Members of Parliament, met with the business sector, and visit New Zealand development projects.

5 The visit will be timely as officials work to operationalise the Realm policy approved by Cabinet late last year, including the building of a coherent approach across the New Zealand Government public sector with respect to engaging with Realm countries such as the Cook Islands.

Travel

6 Minister Nash, Under Secretary Tabuteau and I propose to depart New Zealand on the morning of Thursday 23 May 2019 and return to New Zealand on the evening of Sunday 26 May 2019.

7 Minister Nash and I would not miss any Cabinet meetings during this time.

Ministerial Party

8 As noted, I propose that Minister Nash and Under Secretary Tabuteau join me in the Cook Islands. Minister Nash would be accompanied by a staff member from his office, while the Under Secretary and I would be accompanied by a foreign affairs private secretary. Travel costs for the delegation will be a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel.

9 The presence of Minister Nash (in his capacity of Minister of Police and Minister of Fisheries) is important given that fisheries and police assistance will be focus areas during the talks. In addition, having Under Secretary Tabuteau engaged in the talks will support him to build up his relationship with senior members of the Cook Islands Government. The Under Secretary has a particular focus on the Realm, including supporting implementation of the Realm policy agreed by Cabinet last year.

10 Overall, the composition of the New Zealand delegation is intended to demonstrate to the Cook Islands Government that New Zealand takes the bilateral relationship seriously.

Acting Ministers

11 If my travel is approved, I propose that Hon Shane Jones act in my Foreign Affairs, Disarmament and Racing portfolios, and that Hon Dr David Clark act in my State Owned Enterprises portfolio, between 8:45am on Thursday 23 May and 6:30pm on Sunday 26 May 2019. Under Secretary Tabuteau's Foreign Affairs, Disarmament and Regional Economic Development portfolio responsibilities would be covered by Hon Shane Jones.

12 If Minister Nash's travel is approved, I propose that the following Ministers cover his portfolio responsibilities between 8:45am on Thursday 23 May and 6:30pm on Sunday 26 May 2019:

- Police – Hon Andrew Little
- Revenue – Hon Robertson
- Fisheries – Hon Henare (Thursday 23 May until 3pm) then Hon O'Connor (Thursday 3pm to 6:30pm Sunday 26 May)
- Small Business – Hon Faafoi

Costs of Travel

13 The projected costs of the proposed travel (including accompanying staff member) are:

Minister Peters, Under Secretary Tabuteau and Private Secretary

Airfares	\$7,600
Accommodation:	\$6,000
Hospitality and gifts:	\$800
Meals and incidentals	\$1,500
Contingency	\$1,000

Minister Nash and Private Secretary

Airfares	\$5,100
Accommodation:	\$3,500
Hospitality and gifts:	\$800
Meals and incidentals	\$2,000
Contingency	\$1,000
Estimated Total	\$29,300

Proactive Release

14 I plan to release this paper in part within 30 business days. All redactions will be made in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

15 I recommend that Cabinet:

- a) **approve** my proposed travel to the Cook Islands from 23 to 26 May 2019;
- b) **approve** travel by Minister Nash and Under Secretary Tabuteau to the Cook Islands from 23 to 26 May 2019;
- c) **note** that Under Secretary Tabuteau and I will be accompanied by a foreign affairs private secretary from my office;
- d) **note** that Minister Nash will be accompanied by one staff member from his office;
- e) **approve** expenditure of up to \$29,300 for travel expenses for the official delegation as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel;

- f) **agree** that Hon Shane Jones act in my Foreign Affairs, Disarmament and Racing portfolios, and that Hon Dr David Clark act in my State Owned Enterprises portfolio, from 23 to 26 May 2019;
- g) **agree** that Hon Shane Jones cover Under Secretary Tabuteau's Foreign Affairs, Disarmament and Regional Economic Development responsibilities, from 23 to 26 May 2019;
- h) **agree** that for Minister Nash, Hon Little act in his Police portfolio, Hon Robertson act in his Revenue portfolio and Hon Faafoi act in his Small Business portfolio, from 23 to 26 May 2019;
- i) **agree** that for Minister Nash on 23 May 2019 until 3pm, Hon Henare act in his Fisheries portfolio, followed by Hon O'Connor from 3pm 23 May to 26 May 2019.

Approved for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 24 June 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-19-SUB-0308 on his travel from 23 to 26 May 2019 to the Cook Islands, accompanied by Hon Stuart Nash and Fletcher Tabuteau MP, for bilateral discussions.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:
Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair

Cabinet

REPORT ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL: RT HON WINSTON PETERS: COOK ISLANDS: 23 – 25 MAY 2019

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on travel to the Cook Islands for the seventh Joint Ministerial Forum. Although submitted under my name, this report also covers Minister Nash and Under Secretary Tabuteau who accompanied me in the Cook Islands.

Report

2 The seventh Joint Ministerial Forum (JMF) was held in Aitutaki on 24 May 2019, with Prime Minister Puna and Deputy Prime Minister Brown leading the Cook Islands delegation. The forum once again highlighted the close and increasingly interlinked nature of the relationship between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. The progress since last years' JMF, in which actions centred on increasing NZ Inc. cooperation in Cook Islands, was acknowledged by both sides. Below is a brief summary of the key issues that were discussed.

Climate Change

3 Prime Minister Puna commented favourably on New Zealand's efforts to address climate change including the recent Zero Carbon Act and the Just Transition Summit (which he attended). Prime Minister Puna remarked that "New Zealand has made an important and symbolic step in joining Pacific in the vaka of tackling climate change." In responding, we emphasised the importance of action to address climate change in the region.

Security

4 s6(a)

s6(a)

5 s6(a)

Fisheries

6 Fisheries featured strongly in the discussion - with an agreement that New Zealand and Cook Islands continue to work together to boost the Cook Islands' technical capacity in fisheries management. s6(a)

Pacific Islands Forum

7 The Pacific Resilience Fund was discussed. Cook Islands noted that interest in the fund came from the difficulty Pacific countries have found in accessing the Green Climate Fund (GCF) s6(a)

Deputy Prime Minister Brown noted that the Pacific is looking for modest levels of funding for resilience in the global sense, but that this was significant for the region given the small size of national budgets. s6(a)

Infrastructure

8 Discussions on infrastructure featured heavily at the 2019 JMF. Deputy Prime Minister Mark Brown noted that “none of our major projects over the past 8 years would have happened without NZ support and investment.” Deputy Prime Minister Brown also noted Cook Islands’ need for consistent and reliable infrastructure funding. Infrastructure is a current priority for Cook Islands who are looking to update their National Infrastructure Investment Plan and set up a fund. Cook Islands want to ensure infrastructure projects contribute to Cook Islands’ overall resilience and “pay for themselves in the long term”. Cook Islands provided updates on the progress towards completing the Manatua Cable and Te Mato Vai. The Manatua Cable was also covered during an informal breakfast preceding the JMF, with Deputy Prime Minister Brown noting the potential of the cable to be a game changer – including in areas such as banking and finance.

Meeting with Opposition

9 s6(a)

s6(a)

Proactive Release

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Recommendation

11 I recommend that Cabinet **note** this report.

Approved for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs