



Proactive Release

The following document has been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), on behalf of Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, Prime Minister:

Proposed Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Simon Watts - April 2024

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: Proposed Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Simon Watts - April 2024 (CAB-24-SUB-0117 refers)

Title of minute: Proposed Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Simon Watts - April 2024 (CAB-24-MIN-0117 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 section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction code:

- section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials

~~In Confidence~~

Office of the Prime Minister
Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, 14 – 20 April 2024

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines from 14 April – 20 April to engage with priority partners in South East Asia. Together with Minister Watts and MP Garcia, I will also be accompanied by a business delegation.

Purpose of travel

- 2 The Government is prioritising engagement with South East Asia, given the region is critical to building and maintaining New Zealand's security and prosperity. This region lies at the fulcrum of Indo-Pacific tensions and also has enormous potential as the fastest growing region in the world. Notwithstanding its importance, we are starting behind where we should be. For example, I will be the first New Zealand Prime Minister to make bilateral visits to both Thailand and the Philippines since 2013. With some urgency, we need to build our presence and visibility, including by increasing political engagement. We are looking to reinforce our security links and to double the value of our exports.
- 3 In order to diversify our trade into new sectors, I will be accompanied by a 25-strong business delegation with the overarching theme of Innovation and Green Economy. The New Zealand companies joining are active and expanding their business in South East Asia. I will also be accompanied by Minister for Climate Change, Hon Simon Watts, and Member of Parliament, Paulo Garcia. There will also be a media delegation. Given the size of the delegation, the Royal New Zealand Air Force will provide transportation using the B-757.
- 4 The objectives of my trip are:
 - To seek agreement from the leaders of Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines to invest in a "step change" in our respective bilateral relationships;
 - To engage at leader-level on key strategic challenges with priority partners, and to underline New Zealand is a reliable security partner in the region;
 - To promote New Zealand as a sustainable tech innovator, as a source of safe and high-quality food, and as an attractive destination for tourism, study and investment; and
 - To support New Zealand exporters in Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines.
- 5 In Singapore, I will meet with the Singaporean Prime Minister, President and Deputy Prime Minister. I will be seeking upgrades to our Enhanced Partnership with Singapore and I will be announcing the launch of negotiations on a supply chains agreement and areas of green economy cooperation. I will join the business delegation in trade promotion activities, including an event showcasing New Zealand tech innovation, and the launch of Massey University's joint venture with Singapore's PSB Academy. I will also host a gala dinner with Singaporean political leaders and business partners to showcase New Zealand hospitality, culture and create opportunities for our bilateral and business partnerships.

- 6 In Thailand I will meet with the Thai Prime Minister and announce our intent to establish a Strategic Partnership by 2026. I will join the business delegation to carry out trade promotion activities, including MOU signings by Hiranga Energy and NZ Skydive with Thai businesses. I will also host a reception with Thai political leaders and business partners.
- 7 In the Philippines I will meet with the Philippines President and announce our deepening defence cooperation and our intent to establish a Strategic Partnership by 2026. I will join the business delegation in engagements with Philippines counterparts to explore growing opportunities there. I will also attend a reception hosted by Philippines First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, attended by the business delegation and Philippine political and business leaders.

Prime Ministerial party

- 8 I will be accompanied by three staff from my office (policy, media, and communications). The Minister for Climate Change will be accompanied by his Private Secretary. Officials joining the mission will come from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Tourism New Zealand, Education New Zealand, and New Zealand Story. Providing operational support will be New Zealand Defence Force personnel and New Zealand Police Protection Services officers.

Estimated costs

9 s9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]

Flights	\$
s9(2)(f)(iv)	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
Transport	\$ -
s9(2)(f)(iv)	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]

10 s9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]

11

s9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]

Flights	\$ -
s9(2)(f)(iv)	[Redacted]
Hospitality and Events	\$ -
s9(2)(f)(iv)	[Redacted]
Gifts	\$ -
Transport	\$ -
Contingency Flights	\$ -
s9(2)(f)(iv)	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]

Acting Ministers

12 If my travel is approved, I propose that Rt Hon Winston Peters act as Acting Prime Minister and Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services, and that Hon Judith Collins act as Minister for National Security and Intelligence. Acting in Minister Watt’s portfolios will be Hon Penny Simmonds as Minister for Climate Change, and Hon Andrew Bayly as Minister for Revenue.

Proactive release

13 Once the proposed travel has occurred, I will proactively release this paper in part, withholding any sections that are sensitive for either budgetary reasons, or that could have an impact on New Zealand’s bilateral relationships.

Recommendations

1 I recommend that Cabinet:

1.1 **Authorise** my absence from New Zealand from 14 – 20 April 2024 to travel to Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines;

1.2 **Authorise** the absence of the Minister for Climate Change from New Zealand from 14 – 20 April 2024 to travel to Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines;

1.3 **Agree** that I will be accompanied by three staff from my office; and that the Minister of Climate Change be accompanied by his Private Secretary;

1.4 s9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]

1.5 **Note** that the costs of officials, including DPMC, MFAT, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Education New Zealand, Tourism New Zealand,

New Zealand Story and the New Zealand Police Protection Services officers will be a charged to their respective votes;

- 1.6 **Agree** that in my absence Rt Hon Winston Peters act as Acting Prime Minister and Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services, and Hon Judith Collins act as Minister for National Security and Intelligence; and
- 1.7 **Agree** that, in the absence of Hon Simon Watts, Hon Penny Simmonds act as Minister for Climate Change, and Hon Andrew Bayly as Minister for Revenue.

Authorised for lodgement
Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister

Proactively Released



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: Prime Minister and Hon Simon Watts - April 2024

Portfolio Prime Minister / Climate Change

On 8 April 2024, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Prime Minister, and that of Hon Simon Watts, from New Zealand, from 14 to 20 April 2024 to travel to Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines for a bilateral visit and to meet with business leaders;
- 2 **agreed** that the Prime Minister be accompanied by three members of staff and Mr Watts be accompanied by one member of staff;
- 3 s9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]
- 4 **noted** that they will also be accompanied by officials from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Education New Zealand, Tourism New Zealand, New Zealand Story, New Zealand Defence Force, and New Zealand Police Protection Services, whose costs will be met by their respective agencies;
- 5 **agreed** that in the absence of the Prime Minister:
 - 5.1 Rt Hon Winston Peters act as Prime Minister and Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services;
 - 5.2 Hon Judith Collins act as Minister for National Security and Intelligence;
- 6 **agreed** that, in the absence of Hon Simon Watts:
 - 6.1 Hon Penny Simmonds act as Minister of Climate Change;
 - 6.2 Hon Andrew Bayly as Minister of Revenue;
- 7 **noted** that the House is not sitting during their absence.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet