

# Proactive Release

Date: 20 July 2021

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released by the Minister for Trade and Export Growth:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor	CAB-21-SUB-0213
	CAB-21-MIN-0213

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



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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*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.*

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### Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor

**Portfolio**                      **Trade and Export Growth**

On 8 June 2021, Cabinet:

- 1        **authorised** the absence of Hon Damien O'Connor from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 13 to 25 June 2021, to travel to Singapore, France, the United Kingdom, and Belgium for bilateral discussions;
- 2        **agreed** that he be accompanied by one member of staff from his office;
- 3        **approved** the expenditure of up to \$74,085 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 one senior official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by their department;
- 5        **agreed** that in his absence:
  - 5.1      Hon David Parker act as Minister for Land Information;
  - 5.2      Hon Meka Whaitiri act as Minister of Agriculture, Minister for Biosecurity, and Minister for Rural Communities;
  - 5.3      Hon Phil Twyford act as Minister for Trade and Export Growth;
- 6        **noted** that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet



# Cabinet

## Summary

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### Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor

**Portfolio**                      **Trade and Export Growth**

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#### **The Hon Damien O'Connor recommends that Cabinet:**

- 1        authorise his absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 13 to 25 June 2021, to travel to Singapore, France, the United Kingdom, and Belgium for bilateral discussions;
- 2        agree that he be accompanied by one member of staff from his office;
- 3        approve the expenditure of up to \$74,085 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4        note that he will be accompanied by one senior official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by their department;
- 5        agree that in his absence:
  - 5.1      Hon David Parker act as Minister for Land Information;
  - 5.2      Hon Meka Whaitiri act as Minister of Agriculture, Minister for Biosecurity, and Minister for Rural Communities;
  - 5.3      Hon Phil Twyford act as Minister for Trade and Export Growth;
- 6        note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Janine Harvey  
for Secretary of the Cabinet

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**Hard-copy distribution:**  
The Cabinet

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Office of the Minister for Trade and Export Growth

Chair, Cabinet

### **Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor**

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Singapore, France, the United Kingdom and Belgium from 13 June – 25 June 2021.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle.

### **Purpose of Travel**

- 3 My overseas travel, if approved, would be the first by New Zealand Minister since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. I acknowledge the significance of this travel during this time, and I consider that my in-person interactions will be important in order to advance the Government's Trade Recovery Strategy. I note that my delegation and I will stay in Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) for two weeks upon our return to New Zealand.
- 4 I propose to travel to Singapore to reaffirm New Zealand's strategic value to Singapore and to strengthen relationships with Singaporean counterparts in support of the export-led recovery from COVID-19, APEC 2021 and the agri-food relationship. I intend to share priorities with Singaporean Ministers regarding New Zealand's trade recovery, and to understand the opportunities and challenges COVID-19 has created for Singapore.
- 5 My travel to the United Kingdom will be critical to advance New Zealand's free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with the UK at the political level, following agreement with my counterpart, Secretary Elizabeth Truss, to accelerate the pace of negotiations. My visit to the United Kingdom will also demonstrate to New Zealand businesses and other stakeholders that the Government is committed to reinvigorating international connections as part of the broader COVID-19 recovery, of which a high-quality, comprehensive and inclusive FTA is a key cornerstone.
- 6 I also intend to build wider awareness for New Zealand's value as a strategic partner for the United Kingdom's "Global Britain" trade agenda, including with respect to the United Kingdom's interest in accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). I will also reinforce New Zealand's desire to broaden and deepen the agriculture relationship with the United Kingdom,<sup>s6(a)</sup>
- 7 I intend to reinforce the value the New Zealand Government places upon our relationship with the European Union during my visits to Belgium and France. Through substantive, in-person interactions, I will continue to work with my Trade and Agriculture counterparts, Vice-President Dombrovskis and

Commissioner Wojciechowski, to resolve key outstanding issues in our FTA negotiations with the European Union. I will also seek to establish relationships with significant business representatives in Europe, with a view to strengthening the constituency of business support for the New Zealand-European Union FTA. Demonstrating New Zealand's value proposition as a like-minded partner, increasing global ambition on agricultural greenhouse gas emissions reduction, sustainable approaches to agricultural production and animal welfare, will also be a priority during my visit to Europe.

- 8 My programme would involve meetings with my counterparts in each country, as well as engagement with key stakeholders in support of New Zealand's free trade agreement negotiations.
- 9 I acknowledge the changing global situation with respect to COVID-19, and will continue to monitor developments in each host country. I will adapt my travel plans if necessary, including through contingency budgeting.

### Ministerial Party

- 10 I will be accompanied by one staff member as part of the Ministerial Delegation. One senior official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will also accompany me; their travel costs will be covered by the departmental budget.

### Travel Costs

- 11 The estimated costs of my travel are:

	Minister	Staff
<b>Flights</b>	14,900	14,900
<b>Trains</b>	1222	1222
<b>Accommodation</b>	6241	4453
<b>Per Diems</b>	1975	1975
<b>Facilitation</b>	1268	1268
<b>Representation</b>	5248	0
<b>PCR Tests</b>	1525	1525
<b>Gifts</b>	500	0
<b>MIQ</b>	3100	3100
<b>Subtotal</b>	35,979	28,443

<b>Contingency 15%</b>	5397	4266	
<b>TOTAL</b>	41,376	32,709	<b>\$74,085 NZD</b>

### Acting Ministers

12 In my absence, Acting Ministers in my portfolios will be:

Land Information: Hon David Parker

Agriculture; Biosecurity; Rural Communities: Hon Meka Whaitiri

Trade and Export Growth: Hon Phil Twyford

### Proactive release

13 This paper will 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

14 I recommend that Cabinet:

14.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 13 June – 25 June to travel to Singapore, France, the United Kingdom and Belgium;

14.2 agree that I be accompanied by one staff member;

14.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$74,085 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];

14.4 note that I will be accompanied by a one senior official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by the department;

15 agree that Hon David Parker (Land Information); Hon Meka Whaitiri (Agriculture, Biosecurity and Rural Communities) and Hon Phil Twyford (Trade and Export Growth) will be Acting Ministers in my absence;

16 note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Damien O'Connor

Minister for Trade and Export Growth