

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 19/08/2024

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister of Climate Change

Title	Reference
Minute of Decision: Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts – July 2024	CAB-24-MIN-0257
Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts – Wuhan and Shanghai, China - Saturday 20 July - Wednesday 24 July 2024	

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
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.



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 Simon Watts – July 2024

Portfolio Climate Change

On 8 July 2024, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Simon Watts from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 20 July to 24 July 2024 to travel to Wuhan and Shanghai, China to attend the 8th Ministerial meeting on Climate Action, and to host an event at the New Zealand Consulate with New Zealand and Chinese business leaders;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one staff member;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$22,140 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 also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Ministry for the Environment, whose travel costs will be met by their respective agencies;
- 5 **agreed** that in his absence Hon Nicola Willis act as Minister of Climate Change and Minister of Revenue;
- 6 **noted** that leave from Parliament has been sought.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

~~[Restricted]~~

Office of the Minister of Climate Change

Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts – Wuhan and Shanghai, China - Saturday 20 July- Wednesday 24 July 2024

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Wuhan and Shanghai, in China from Saturday 20 July to Wednesday 24 July 2024.
- 2 The main purpose of this travel is to attend the 8th Ministerial meeting on Climate Action (MoCA) in Wuhan. In addition to attending MoCA, I intend to utilise my stopover in Shanghai to host an event at the New Zealand Consulate with Chinese and New Zealand business leaders relevant to my portfolio.
- 3 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle, and House leave has been sought from the Party Whip.

Purpose of Travel

- 4 The Ministerial on Climate Action is an annual Ministerial-level meeting on international climate direction, traditionally co-hosted by Canada, China, and the European Union. It serves as a major meeting in the lead up to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP) meetings each year. This iteration is hosted by China in Wuhan with the support of the troika of COP Presidencies (United Arab Emirates COP28, Azerbaijan COP29, and Brazil COP30).
- 5 The meeting will serve as an important opportunity for me to advocate for New Zealand's climate priorities, as developed and developing countries work toward a landing zone on key issues ahead of the COP meeting this year. I will have the opportunity to engage with likeminded countries and with the COP29 and COP30 Presidencies on their priorities.

6 s6(a)

- 7 The 8th session of the MoCA is well timed ahead of several bilateral climate engagements. ^{s9(2)(f)(iv)}

s9(2)(f)(iv)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

In addition to this, MoCA will take place ahead of the 2+2 Climate-Finance Dialogue with Australia on 30 July.

- 8 My attendance at this meeting will ensure New Zealand can influence the global agenda in line with our Government's climate priorities and that I can continue to build relationships with my counterparts ahead of COP29 negotiations in November. It will also offer the opportunity to progress bilateral engagement with priority partners in the margins of the MoCA meetings.
- 9 During my attendance at the 8th MoCA, I will undertake the following engagements:
 - 9.1 Represent New Zealand at the 8th Ministerial on Climate Action;
 - 9.2 Subject to scheduling, hold bilateral meetings with priority partners, including with: Lefau Harry Schuster, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Samoa (Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States); Grace Fu, Minister for Sustainability and the Environment of Singapore; and Chris Bowen, Minister for Climate Change and Energy of Australia;
 - 9.3 Attend a banquet hosted by Huang Runqiu, Chinese Minister of Ecology and Environment.
- 10 At the conclusion of MoCA, I intend to utilise my flight stopover in Shanghai to host an event at the New Zealand Consulate with New Zealand and Chinese business leaders relevant to my portfolio

Ministerial Party

- 11 If my travel is approved, I propose to be accompanied by one private secretary from my office. Travel costs will be a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel.
- 12 I will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ministry for the Environment. Officials' travel expenses will be covered by their agency.

Travel Costs

- 13 List the estimated costs of the travel:

Airmiles:	\$15,787
Facilitation	\$1,270
Accommodation:	\$740
Meals:	\$750
Reception:	\$1,580
Contingency (10%)	\$2,013
Total:	\$ 22,140

Acting Ministers

- 14 If travel is approved, Hon Nicola Willis will cover my Climate Change and Revenue portfolios in my absence.

Proactive release

- 15 This Cabinet 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

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet:
- 1.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 20 July to 24 July to travel to Wuhan, China to attend the 8th Ministerial meeting on Climate Action, and to host an event at the New Zealand Consulate in Shanghai with New Zealand and Chinese business leaders;
 - 1.2 agree that I be accompanied by one member of staff;
 - 1.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$22,140 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs – Members of the Executive – Travel;
 - 1.4 note that I will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Ministry for the Environment, whose travel costs will be met by their respective agencies;
 - 1.5 agree that in my absence:
 - 1.5.1 Hon Nicola Willis will cover my climate change and revenue portfolios.
 - 1.6 note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Climate Change