

26 February 2025

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Personal details removed for proactive release

OIA 29879

Thank you for your email of 4 January 2025 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*"I'm getting in touch under the Official Information Act to please request all plans, documents, and communication from those in leadership roles at MFAT regarding Donald Trump's presidency, and his election win - from the entirety of 2024. Please also include all plans on how the Government and the agency plans to work with the incoming administration."*

On 28 January 2025, you agreed to refine the scope of your request to be for:

*"Formal briefings prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs primarily relating to the Trump Administration between 5 November 2024 to 21 January 2025"*

#### **Response to your request**

In scope of your request is a briefing titled "US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities" dated 17 December 2024. Some information is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy;
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

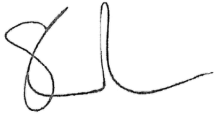
Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your

personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website:  
[www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/)

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at:  
[DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz). You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the  
Ombudsman of this decision by contacting [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone  
0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade



16 December 2024

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

18 December 2024

## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

BRIEFING Overview Submission

PURPOSE To outline <sup>s6(a)</sup> propose how we intend to engage.

### Recommended referrals

Prime Minister	For information by	17 December 2024
Minister for Trade	For information by	17 December 2024
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs	For information by	17 December 2024
Minister of Defence	For information by	17 December 2024
Minister of Finance	For information by	17 December 2024

### Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Mark Sinclair	Acting Deputy Secretary	Americas and Asia Group	s9(2)(a)
James Waite	Divisional Manager	Americas Division	

### Minister's Office to complete

- |  |   |                                    |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved            | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted                | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment     | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined             | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes |                                    |

Comments

## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

### Key points

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- s6(a)

- s6(a)

areas s6(a) The Pacific is s6(a)  
It is a region of fundamental significance to New Zealand across a range of

s6(a)

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s6(a)

Mark Sinclair  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

## Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- |   |   |                 |
|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 | <b>Approve</b> the priority areas for early engagement with the Trump Administration <sup>s6(a)</sup>   | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 2 | s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)   | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 3 | s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)   | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 4 | s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)   | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 5 | <b>Note</b> separate advice for Ministers is being prepared to address the potential trade risks for New Zealand exporters.   | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 6 | <b>Refer</b> a copy of this submission to the Prime Minister, Minister for Trade, Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister for Defence, and Minister of Finance. | <b>Yes / No</b> |

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date:     /     /

## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

### Report

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1. This submission outlines how New Zealand can best position itself to engage with the incoming Trump Administration. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

Annex A lists the recent contact our Embassy in Washington has had with Republicans. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

2. We are closely monitoring the development of President Trump's policy proposals as he transitions into governing. His Cabinet choices so far suggest the Administration is gearing up to follow through on Trump's campaign pledges, <sup>s6(a)</sup>. Clarity around the details of key decisions on trade and foreign policy may not come until after inauguration on 20 January 2025.

3. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

Priority areas for engagement

<sup>s6(a)</sup>

US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

s6(a)

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13. President-elect Trump's focus on tariffs as a tool of trade and foreign policy has the potential to significantly affect New Zealand goods exporters. President-elect Trump has variously mooted a global tariff and additional high tariffs on China, Canada and Mexico.



## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

s6(a)

The scope of the tariffs may not become clear until after President-elect Trump is inaugurated.

s6(a)

16. Additional advice is being provided to Ministers on tariffs and trade.

17. s6(a)

### Planned and Proposed Engagements

18. Achieving New Zealand's interests in the US will require an engagement plan that includes clear objectives, convincing messages, and a coordinated implementation programme. This work is already under way – Annex A details contacts and engagements to date and planned.

19. s6(a)

20. The New Zealand Embassy in Washington DC is well-positioned to engage with the incoming Administration. s6(a)

## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

s6(a)

### **Ministerial engagement opportunities**

s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

s6(a)

### **Working-level engagement opportunities**

26. Officials are working to ensure continuity in our bilateral architecture, which has been strengthened over the last year. s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

These dialogues are important mechanisms for maintaining and promoting awareness of New Zealand within the US system and for developing solutions to bilateral issues. s6(a)

## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

### Risks and Mitigations

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

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s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

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## US Election: Trump Administration Engagement Plan and Priorities

### Resourcing

39. There is no expectation of additional resourcing being required to meet these proposals, as they can be met within the baselines of existing financial and personnel resources. This proposal will set the prioritisation of ongoing workstreams, providing clarity for those working on these areas.

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The following nine (9) pages are withheld under section 6(a), 9(2)(f)(iv) and 9(2)(g)(i)