

## **HON JUDITH COLLINS KC, MINISTER OF DEFENCE**

### **MINISTERIAL OVERSEAS TRAVEL (1 JULY - 3 JULY 2024)**

**December 2024**

This publication provides the Cabinet proposal and report back on Hon Judith Collins KC overseas travel to Tonga to attend the opening of the Pacific Leader Development Centre at His Majesty's Armed Forces Masefield Naval Base, Nuku'alofa.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- the June 2024 Cabinet paper and associated minute *Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Judith Collins KC – July 2024* [CAB-24-SUB-0210 and CAB-24-MIN-0210]
- the August 2024 Cabinet paper and associated minute *Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Judith Collins KC – July 2024* [CAB-24-SUB-0317 and CAB-24-MIN-0317]

This pack has been released on the Ministry of Defence website, available at: [www.defence.govt.nz/publications/ministerial-overseas-travel-01-07-2024-to-03-07-2024](http://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/ministerial-overseas-travel-01-07-2024-to-03-07-2024)

It has been necessary to withhold certain information in accordance with the following provisions of the Official Information Act 1982. Where information is withheld, the relevant sections of the Act are indicated in the body of the document. Where information has been withheld in accordance with section 9(2) of the Act, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Information is withheld where making it available would be likely to prejudice:

- the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand [section 6(a)] and
- the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on the basis of confidence by the Government of any other country [section 6(b)(i)]

In addition, certain information has been withheld in order to:

- maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions [section 9(2)(g)(i)].



# 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 Judith Collins KC – July 2024

**Portfolio**                      **Defence**

On 10 June 2024, Cabinet:

- 1        **authorised** the absence of Hon Judith Collins KC from New Zealand, from 1 to 3 July 2024, to travel to Nuku'alofa, the Kingdom of Tonga, to attend the opening of the Pacific Leader Development Centre at His Majesty's Armed Forces Masefield Naval Base;
- 2        **agreed** that she be accompanied by two staff members, one of whose costs will be met by the New Zealand Defence Force;
- 3        **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$7,205 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4        **noted** that she will also be accompanied by a delegation from the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force, whose costs will be met by their respective agencies;
- 5        **agreed** that in her absence:
  - 5.1      Hon Paul Goldsmith act as Attorney General, Minister Responsible for the GCSB and Minister Responsible for the NZSIS;
  - 5.2      Hon Chris Penk act as Minister of Defence and Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into the Terrorist Attack on the Christchurch Mosques;
  - 5.3      Hon Simon Watts act as Minister for Digitising Government;
  - 5.4      Hon Simon Watts act as Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology and Minister for Space;
- 6        **noted** that the House is not sitting during her absence.

Rachel Hayward  
Secretary of the Cabinet

Office of the Minister of Defence

Chair, Cabinet

**Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Judith Collins KC MP – July 2024**

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to the Kingdom of Tonga over 1 – 3 July in my capacity as Minister of Defence.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle. The House is not sitting during my proposed travel period.

**Purpose of Travel**

3 The purpose of my travel is to attend the opening of Tonga’s Pacific Leader Development Centre (Leadership Centre) at His Majesty’s Armed Forces (HMAF) Masefield Naval Base, Nuku’alofa. The Leadership Centre is funded by a joint New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), in partnership with His Majesty’s Armed Forces (HMAF) and will provide a location for HMAF leadership training, meetings and talanoa (conversation). s6(a)

4 Since 2019, New Zealand has been supporting leadership training at all levels in the defence/ paramilitary forces in Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu through the Pacific Leadership Development Programme (PLDP). The programme supports Pacific forces to take the NZDF Leadership Framework and revise it against their own cultures and organisational needs.

5 The PLDP expands NZDF’s strong person-to-person links in the region and provides a tangible and ongoing area of collaboration between New Zealand and Pacific Island defence forces. The Leadership Centre itself will be the building in which the wider PLDP training will be based in Tonga and is an important symbol of New Zealand Defence’s commitment to work alongside Tonga on capacity development.

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

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

The Pacific is crucial to New Zealand’s own security and our identity and Tonga, one of three defence forces in the Pacific Islands countries, is a crucial relationship. This will also be a useful opportunity to meet before the South Pacific Defence Ministers’ Meeting which I will be hosting in Auckland later this year.

7 Pending Cabinet approval, I plan to depart New Zealand for Nuku'alofa on Monday 1 of July 2024 and arrive in New Zealand from Nuku'alofa on Wednesday the 3 July 2024.

### Ministerial Party

8 I propose to travel with two staff members from my office, whose travel will be funded by Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel) and the New Zealand Defence Force.

9 A delegation from the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force would also accompany me at departmental cost.

### Travel Costs

10 Indicative travel costs for my travel are:

Airfares:	\$3,400
Accommodation, meals, domestic transport:	\$3,150
Contingency (10%):	\$655
<b>Total: \$ (rounded up to nearest \$):</b>	<b>\$7,205</b>

### Acting Ministers

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

**Attorney-General:** Hon Paul Goldsmith

**Defence:** Hon Chris Penk

**Digitising Government:** Hon Andrew Bayly

**GCSB:** Hon Paul Goldsmith

**NZSIS:** Hon Paul Goldsmith

**Science, Innovation and Technology:** Hon Simon Watts

**Space:** Hon Simon Watts

**Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into the Terrorist Attack on the Christchurch Mosques:** Hon Chris Penk

### Proactive release

12 I propose to proactively release this Cabinet paper on the Ministry of Defence website. Proactive release is subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

## Recommendations

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet:
  - 1.1 **authorise** my absence from New Zealand from Monday 1 July 2024 to Saturday 3 July 2024 to travel the Kingdom of Tonga to attend the opening of the Pacific Leader Development Centre (Leadership Centre) at His Majesty's Armed Forces (HMAF) Masefield Naval Base, Nuku'alofa.
  - 1.2 **agree** that I be accompanied by two members of staff, one of whom will be funded from Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel] and the other funded from the New Zealand Defence Force.
  - 1.3 **approve** the estimated expenditure of \$7,205 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];
  - 1.4 **agree** that in my absence:
    - 1.4.1 Hon Paul Goldsmith will be Acting Attorney General
    - 1.4.2 Hon Chris Penk will be Acting Minister of Defence
    - 1.4.3 Hon Andrew Bayly will be Acting Minister for Digitising Government
    - 1.4.4 Hon Paul Goldsmith will be Acting Minister Responsible for the GCSB
    - 1.4.5 Hon Paul Goldsmith will be Acting Minister Responsible for the NZSIS
    - 1.4.6 Hon Simon Watts will be Acting Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology
    - 1.4.7 Hon Simon Watts will be Acting Minister for Space
    - 1.4.8 Hon Chris Penk will be Acting Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into the Terrorist Attack on the Christchurch Mosques
  - 1.5 **note** that the House is not sitting during my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Judith Collins KC MP

Minister of Defence



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Judith Collins KC – July 2024

**Portfolio**                      **Defence**

On 26 August 2024, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Judith Collins KC under CAB-24-SUB-0317 on her travel, from 1 to 3 July 2024, to Nuku'alofa, the Kingdom of Tonga to attend the opening of the Pacific Leader Development Centre at His Majesty's Armed Forces Masefield Naval Base.

Rachel Hayward  
Secretary of the Cabinet

Released by the Minister of Defence

Office of the Minister of Defence

Chair, Cabinet

## Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Judith Collins KC MP – July 2024

I recommend that the Cabinet note this report on my travel to the Kingdom of Tonga from 1 to 3 July 2024.

### Report

- 1 I travelled to the Kingdom of Tonga from 1 to 3 July as Minister of Defence to attend the opening of Tonga's Pacific Leader Development Centre (Leadership Centre) at His Majesty's Armed Forces (HMAF) Masefield Naval Base, Nuku'alofa.
- 2 The Leadership Centre is funded by a joint New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) in partnership with His Majesty's Armed Forces (HMAF) and will provide a location for HMAF leadership training. s6(a)

### *Opening of the His Majesty's Armed Forces Leadership Centre*

- 3 The Centre, at Touliki Base Masefield, was officially commissioned by His Majesty King Tupou VI. The Chief of the New Zealand Defence Force and I were guests of honour at the opening event. Other attendees included Tonga's Crown Prince, His Royal Highness Prince Tupouto'a Ulukalala (who, as Colonel in Chief of the HMAF, also spoke at the event), other members of Tonga's royal family, Tongan nobles, ministers, diplomatic corps, military veterans and defence representatives from other nations were present.

### *Meetings marking the occasion*

- 4 Over a private lunch later that day, I was honoured to present the Crown Prince, Tupouto'a Ulukalala, with a book on Pacific military history. The book tells the story of the Tongan Commandos during the Second World War, who were led by New Zealand Officer LT Ben Masefield, namesake of the Touliki Base Masefield in Nuku'alofa. s6(b)(i)
- 5 Brigadier Lord Fielakepa, Chief of Defence Staff of His Majesty's Armed Forces, hosted an evening reception to celebrate the official opening of the Leadership Centre. At this event, New Zealand unveiled a mere pounamu made for the centre (and unveiled by the Director of the Leadership

Development programme, Phil Gibbons). This mere pounamu is cut from the same stone as mere for other participants of the PLDP programme, illustrating the connection between these Pacific centres.

*Bilateral meeting programme*

6 While in Tonga, I met with Prime Minister Hon Hu'akavameiliku. Our conversation traversed several important topics, including our shared history, new leadership appointments in the NZDF, and the upcoming South Pacific Defence Ministers meeting here in Auckland in October. s6(b)(i)

[Redacted]

7 Following the meeting, I met with the Minister of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change, and Communications (MEIDECC) Hon Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamau. s9(2)(g)(i)

[Redacted]

8 Of particular interest was the detailed presentation on the Tongan Disaster Coordination Centre. This presentation walked me through the systems and processes that are utilised when Tonga faces the challenges of coordinating a large-scale response to an event. s6(b)(i)

[Redacted]

*Visit to Taliai Military Camp*

9 My visit to Taliai Military Camp was an opportunity to view first-hand His Majesty's Armed Force's s6(a)

[Redacted]

*Overview*

10 My time in Tonga, particularly attending the opening of the His Majesty's Armed Forces Leadership Centre, demonstrated our commitment to Tonga's ongoing leadership development. This was further magnified through being officially opened in the same week that saw both the King's Birthday Celebrations and Naval Fleet Review, both of which drew many international delegations.

11 s9(2)(g)(i)

[Redacted]



**Proactive release**

- 12 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO(18)4 on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's website. The paper will be subject to redaction as appropriate on the grounds set out under the Official Information Act 1982.

**Recommendation**

I recommend that the Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Judith Collins KC

Minister of Defence

Released by the Minister of Defence