



## COVERSHEET

<b>Minister</b>	Hon Louise Upston	<b>Portfolio</b>	Tourism and Hospitality
<b>Title of Cabinet paper</b>	Proposed Overseas Travel - Hon Louise Upston - September 2025	<b>Date to be published</b>	13 October 2025

### List of documents that have been proactively released

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>
September 2025	Proposed Overseas Travel - Hon Louise Upston - September 2025	Office of the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality
1 September 2025	Proposed Overseas Travel - Hon Louise Upston - September 2025 CB-25-MIN-0295 Minute	Cabinet Office

### Information redacted

**NO**

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

## **RESTRICTED**

Office of the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality

Chair, Cabinet

### **Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Louise Upston – September 2025**

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Shanghai, Guangzhou and Beijing, China from Monday, 22 September to Saturday, 27 September 2025 to lead an industry delegation on a tourism-focused trade mission.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle. I note that the House is not scheduled to sit during the period of travel.

### **Purpose of Travel**

- 3 I propose to travel to China with a trade mission of approximately 12 tourism industry delegates who make up a cross-section of the tourism industry. This includes representatives from sectors including aviation, accommodation and hospitality, cruise and visitor attractions, as well as tour operators. There is a high level of interest from industry representatives in hosting events and delivering product showcases. In this way, I expect to keep costs to agencies at a minimum.
- 4 The purpose of this mission will be to promote New Zealand's tourism sector, engage with local travel-trade businesses and organisations to build an in-depth understanding of the Chinese market, and strengthen our overall bilateral relationship with China. This mission will build on the momentum of the Prime Minister's mission in June, and seek to maintain the relationships that were strengthened with key trade partners.
- 5 I have heard from our tourism industry leaders that building and maintaining strong relationships at the highest levels is crucial to developing New Zealand's brand awareness in the Chinese outbound tourism market. There is also a strong appetite to build a detailed understanding of how to work with and leverage the insights of Chinese travel platforms in order to capitalise on emerging growth opportunities and cater to rapidly changing consumer preferences.
- 6 I intend to depart New Zealand on the evening of Monday, 22 September 2025 for Shanghai, where I will engage with key businesses such as Ctrip and China Eastern Airlines. Key events will include:
  - 6.1 a multi-airline, multi-airport showcase event highlighting New Zealand's tourism offerings, as well high-value freight exporters that are co-beneficiaries of increased flight connectivity

- 6.2 a roundtable discussion with Chinese travel trade partners followed by related business signings
- 6.3 a reception hosted by the New Zealand Business Roundtable in China to strengthen relationships with New Zealand companies operating in China, and discuss market prospects.
- 7 I will then travel to Guangzhou where I will visit China Southern Airlines, who have recently announced additional flights into Auckland over the summer peak period. Christchurch Airport is highly motivated to encourage China Southern to return to year-round services to Christchurch. They have indicated that a ministerial-level visit would be influential in achieving this. I also intend to engage with key travel trade partners such as Zuzuche (major car rental agency) and GZL Agency (one of China's largest travel agencies), and participate in promotional activities to reinforce New Zealand's brand in a competitive market. Tourism New Zealand will also hold a reception with approximately 15 Chinese trade partners to strengthen business relationships.
- 8 I will then travel to Beijing, where I will meet with my ministerial counterpart Sun Yeli, Minister of Culture and Tourism. The purpose of this meeting will be to re-affirm New Zealand's commitment to the 2019 New Zealand-China Tourism Cooperation Arrangement, and explore opportunities to rebuild two-way tourism flows through greater connectivity. Together with the airports and airlines in the delegation, I will visit Air China, who are an important customer for our airports.
- 9 Overall, I expect this visit to deliver strong commercial and strategic outcomes. It will support the advancement of several high-value agreements, strengthen aviation connectivity through direct airline engagement, and promote New Zealand's premium tourism offerings. Engagements with leading digital platforms will enhance market insights and support targeted promotion. The visit reinforces tourism's role in export growth and regional development, aligning with New Zealand's broader economic and diplomatic objectives.

### **Ministerial Party**

- 10 I propose that one member of my staff accompanies me at a cost to Vote: Internal Affairs.
- 11 Three officials from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), including one official from Immigration New Zealand (INZ), will accompany the delegation, as well as one official from Tourism New Zealand (TNZ). TNZ's in-market team will be providing additional support. All costs for agency staff will be covered from within the relevant agency baseline budget.

### **Travel Costs**

- 12 Total estimated costs reflect a travelling party of two (myself, and one member of staff from my office) and are comprised of:

Airfares (International and Domestic):	\$21,100.00
Accommodation:	\$3,000.00
Meal and incidentals	\$800.00
Gifts:	\$1,500.00
Contingency (5%)	\$1,300.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$27,700.00</b>

- 13 Costs associated with official hospitality and event delivery will be covered from Tourism New Zealand's baseline or underspend from the International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy for the 2024/2025 financial year.

### Acting Ministers

- 14 I note that the House is not sitting during my absence. If my travel is approved, I propose that the following colleagues act in my portfolios. This is subject to final confirmation.
- 14.1 Hon Penny Simmonds – Community and Voluntary Sector, Social Development and Employment, Child Poverty Reduction
- 14.2 Hon Matt Doocey – Disability Issues
- 14.3 Hon Tama Potaka – Tourism and Hospitality

### Proactive release

- 15 I intend to proactively release this paper on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment website subject to any necessary redactions, in a timely manner following consideration by Cabinet.

### Recommendations

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet:
- 1.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand from Monday, 22 September to Saturday, 27 September 2025 to lead an industry delegation on a tourism-focused trade mission to China;
- 1.2 agree that I be accompanied by one member of staff from my office;
- 1.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$27,700 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 MBIE and TNZ, whose costs will be met by their respective agencies;

- 1.5 note that I will be accompanied by approximately 12 industry delegates, whose costs will be met by their companies;
- 1.6 agree that in my absence:
  - 1.6.1 Hon Penny Simmonds will be Acting Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Social Development and Employment, and Child Poverty Reduction
  - 1.6.2 Hon Matt Doocey will be Acting Minister for Disability Issues
  - 1.6.3 Hon Tama Potaka will be Acting Minister for Tourism and Hospitality
- 1.7 note that the House is not sitting during my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Louise Upston

Minister for Tourism and Hospitality