



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Shane Jones	Portfolio	Associate Energy
Title of Cabinet paper	Temporary Alignment with Australian Fuel Specifications	Date to be published	6 May 2026

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
March 2026	Temporary Alignment with Australian Fuel Specifications	Office of Associate Minister for Energy
23 March 2026	Temporary Alignment with Australian Fuel Specifications CAB-26-MIN-0085 Minute	Cabinet Office

Information redacted

NO

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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Temporary Alignment with Australian Fuel Specifications

Portfolio **Associate Energy (Hon Shane Jones)**

On 23 March 2026, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** that on 16 March 2026, Cabinet invited the Associate Minister for Energy to present regulatory options to Cabinet on diversifying New Zealand’s fuel supply, including analysis of the associated benefits [CAB-26-MIN-0081];
- 2 **agreed** to automatically allow fuel that meets the standards to be lawfully supplied in Australia to enter the New Zealand market for 12 months, with the following exceptions:
 - 2.1 New Zealand’s fuel specifications for sulphur will prevail;
 - 2.2 further exceptions as determined by the Associate Minister for Energy and notified in the New Zealand Gazette;
- 3 **agreed** that fuel sold in New Zealand must still be ‘fit for common purpose’, meaning fuel must be suitable for the climate where it is sold;
- 4 **agreed** that transitional provisions will be included to account for practical issues, such as time for fuel to fully cycle out of bulk storage tanks, and that these provisions will be designed in consultation with fuel importers;
- 5 **agreed** that the Associate Minister for Energy, with the Minister of Finance and Associate Ministers of Finance will make any further decisions on sulphur levels or other changes to fuel specifications, taking into account:
 - 5.1 the expected improvement in fuel supply to New Zealand;
 - 5.2 implications for the environment, health, and New Zealand’s vehicle fleet;
- 6 **authorised** the Associate Minister for Energy, the Minister of Finance and Associate Ministers of Finance to give effect to paragraphs 2 to 5 above, to approve the drafting of amendments to regulations to adjust New Zealand fuel specifications and to submit these amendments to the Executive Council;
- 7 **agreed** to a waiver the 28-day rule for any amendments submitted under paragraph 6 above given the need to respond urgently to keep specifications aligned to ensure fuel supply;

- 8 **invited** the Associate Minister for Energy and the Minister of Finance to notify Cabinet of any amendments made under the authority in paragraph 6 above.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet