



## BRIEFING

### Fuel response plan: assessment meeting advice

<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2026	<b>Priority:</b>	Urgent
<b>Security classification:</b>	Restricted	<b>Tracking number:</b>	0030188

	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Nicola Willis <b>Minister of Finance</b>	<b>Recommends</b> that on Monday 30 March 2026, as part of your oral item, you seek delegated authority as chair of the Ministerial Economic Security and Supply Chains Group to determine whether, when and how to hold future assessment meetings.	1 April 2026

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Paul O'Connell	<b>Fuel Response Plan Lead</b>	Privacy of natural persons	✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
The Department of the Prime Minister of Cabinet has been informed of this briefing and has included reference to the delegated authority in its briefing to you ahead of Cabinet.

- Minister's office to complete:
- |  |   |                                    |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noted               | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved             | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change         | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |

### Comments



# BRIEFING

## Fuel response plan: assessment meeting advice

<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2026	<b>Priority:</b>	Urgent
<b>Security classification:</b>	Restricted	<b>Tracking number:</b>	0030188

### Purpose

---

This paper advises you on next steps following two criteria in the Fuel Plan Response having recently been met.


### Recommended actions

---

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a **Note** that two criteria under the Fuel Response Plan 2026 have been met, but that MBIE does not consider an assessment meeting is urgently required in this instance
- Note*
- b **Note** that there is no Cabinet-mandated deadline for an assessment meeting to be held following these criteria being met
- Note*
- c **Agree** that on Monday 30 March 2026, as part of your oral item at Cabinet, you seek delegated authority as chair of the Ministerial Economic Security and Supply Chains Group to determine whether, when and how to hold assessment meetings in future, based on advice from officials
- Agree*
- d **Agree** that this advice is published on MBIE's website should you obtain authority to make this decision, subject to Official Information Act requirements
- Agree*

Privacy of natural persons



Hon Nicola Willis  
**Minister of Finance**

Paul O'Connell  
**Fuel Response Plan Lead**  
MBIE

..... / ..... / .....

29 March 2026

## Background

---

1. On 25 March 2026 the Ministerial Economic Security and Supply Chains Group agreed to a Fuel Response Plan 2026. We are currently at Phase 1.
2. Ministers agreed to the following six criteria that would lead to Ministers convening to assess a shift in phases:
  1. **Export restrictions:** If any of our source refineries introduce or relax export restrictions
  2. **Fuel stock levels:** (+/- three days since the last published update)
  3. **Future orders:** a fuel company informs the government that they are unlikely to fill future orders
  4. **Minimum storage obligations:** a breach, or a notification of an imminent breach, of the minimum storage obligations
  5. **Overseas policy changes:** any significant policy changes in Australia or the International Energy Agency
  6. **Regional distribution:** a significant disruption to regional distribution.

## Two criteria have recently been met, but a meeting is not urgently required

---

3. Criteria Two (fuel stock levels) and Criteria Five (significant change in Australian fuel policy) have been met:
  - a. Since the last update, total New Zealand fuel stocks have changed as follows:

<i>Fuel</i>	<i>Change</i>
<i>Petrol</i>	<i>+10.6 days</i>
<i>Diesel</i>	<i>+8.1 days</i>
<i>Jet Fuel</i>	<i>-3 days</i>

- b. The Australian Government announced it will underwrite the delivery of additional fuel cargoes to help shore up supply. Petrol companies will still buy fuel, but the government will take on the financial risk of shipments that might otherwise be too expensive. Legislation will be introduced on Monday 30 March into the Australian Parliament to give effect to this change.

*However, we consider neither warrants an urgent meeting*

4. The changes in fuel stocks represent a normal fluctuation in supply (and in the case of petrol and diesel, are an improvement in stocks), so an urgent discussion is not needed.
5. MBIE is currently preparing advice on similar options to what Australia is implementing. This is due Monday 30 March and will be considered in due course, so a separate assessment meeting about this change is not necessary.

6. You may still wish to communicate to the public that two criteria have been met, and you have considered the implications of both but (subject to Cabinet delegation) you have decided that neither was material enough to warrant an assessment meeting in its own right.

## **We recommend that you seek delegated authority to decide whether to convene future meetings when criteria are met**

---

7. On Monday 30 March 2026, as part of your oral item at Cabinet, we recommend you seek delegated authority as chair of the Ministerial Economic Security and Supply Chains Group to determine whether, when and how to hold assessment meetings when a criterion is met in future, based on advice from officials.
8. This will allow appropriate flexibility and help to avoid unnecessary meetings.
9. In order to maintain commitment to openness and transparency on the implementation of the fuel response plan, we further recommend that when taking such decisions you publish the advice you have received, subject to relevant withholding consistent with the Official Information Act.