



BRIEFING

Update on LNG: shortlisted options and legislative design

Date:	29 January 2026	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	REQ-0026675

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Simon Watts Minister for Energy	Discuss at your officials meeting Forward this briefing to the LNG Ministerial Reference Group, comprising of the Minister of Finance, RMA Reform and Resources	2 February 2026

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
John Scott	Policy Director	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Justine Cannon	GM, Energy Markets	s 9(2)(a)	

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



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Purpose

This briefing provides yourself and the Ministerial Reference Group with an overview of the s 9(2)(i) shortlisted options for an accelerated delivery solution for an LNG import facility; and sets out options for legislative design for the enabling legislation.

Recommended action

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

- a **Discuss** the shortlisted options with officials at your Officials meeting on Monday 2 February
Yes / No
- b **Discuss** your preferred approach to the enabling legislation
Yes / No
- c **Forward** this briefing to the LNG Ministerial Reference Group, comprising of the Minister of Finance, RMA Reform and Resources.
Yes / No

s 9(2)(a)

Justine Cannon
GM, Energy Markets
Building, Resources and Markets, MBIE

29 / 01 / 2026

Hon Simon Watts
Minister for Energy

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Background

1. As part of the NZ Energy Package, Cabinet agreed to proceed with the first phase of procurement for an LNG import facility (Action 1.1).
2. In December 2025, Cabinet considered an options analysis, informed by the procurement process, and agreed to:
 - a. proceed with the second phase of procurement for an accelerated delivery solution for an LNG import facility
 - b. delegate decisions on shortlisting proposals to yourself (the Minister for Energy)
3. Cabinet also noted that if the accelerated delivery pathway does not appear to be feasible, then the option of a full Request for Proposal process remains. This would likely mean delivery in 2029 or 2030.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



Legislative design to enable LNG

15. The LNG Enabling Bill will require (up to) three components:
 - a. Granting of permissions (including any conditions) across a number of regulatory regimes, including resource management.
 - b. Enabling provisions for fees and levies to fund LNG import services, including the import facility.
 - c. (Potentially) integration with existing regulatory systems, such as the gas regulatory system.
16. Parts (b) and (c) are relatively straightforward. The granting of permissions is complex – both in terms of scope of permissions likely to be required, associated conditions, and interaction with the procurement/contracting process.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



Next Steps

21. We recommend that you set up a meeting for the Ministerial Reference Group for early March.
22. In the interim, MBIE will assess the next submissions for the shortlisted options, and continue to develop the detail of the legislation.

Annexes

Annex One: Summary of the proposals received

Annex Two: Overview of legislative design options

