HON Paul Goldsmith, MINISTER OF DEFENCE

MINISTERIAL OVERSEAS TRAVEL 21 to 24 September 2026
November 2026

This publication provides the Cabinet proposal and report back on Hon Paul Goldsmith travel over the period 21 to 24 September 2026 to Fiji to attend the annual South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- The September 2026 Cabinet paper and associated minute of decision *Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Paul Goldsmith – September 2026* [CAB-26-SUB-0289 and CAB-26-MIN-0289]
- The October 2026 Cabinet paper and associated minute of decision *Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Paul Goldsmith – September 2026* [CAB-26-SUB-0329 and CAB-26-MIN-0329]

This pack has been released on the Ministry of Defence website, available at: www.defence.govt.nz/publications

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.

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)]

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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 Paul Goldsmith – September 2026

Portfolio **Defence**

On 7 September 2026, Cabinet:

1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Paul Goldsmith from New Zealand, from 21 to 24 September 2026, to travel to Fiji to attend the annual South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting;

2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by two members of staff, one of whose costs will be met by the Ministry of Defence;

3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to $9,240 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);

4 **noted** that he will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force, whose costs will be met by their respective agencies;

5 **agreed** that in his absence:

5.1 Hon Chris Bishop act as Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, Minister Responsible for the GCSB and NZSIS, Minister for Media and Communications, and Minister for Space;

5.2 Hon Mark Mitchell act as Minister of Defence, Minister of Justice, and Minister for Veterans;

5.3 Hon Tama Potaka act as Minister for Pacific Peoples and Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations;

5.4 Hon Simeon Brown act as Minister for the Public Service and Digitising Government;

6 **noted** that leave from the House has been approved.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

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Cabinet

Summary

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 Paul Goldsmith – September 2026

Portfolio **Defence**

The Hon Paul Goldsmith recommends that Cabinet:

1 authorise his absence from New Zealand, from 21 to 24 September 2026, to travel to Fiji to attend the annual South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting;

2 agree that he be accompanied by two members of staff, one of whose costs will be met by the Ministry of Defence;

3 approve the estimated expenditure of up to $9,240 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);

4 note that he will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force, whose costs will be met by their respective agencies;

5 agree that in his absence:

5.1 Hon Chris Bishop act as Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, Minister Responsible for the GCSB and NZSIS, Minister for Media and Communications, and Minister for Space;

5.2 Hon Mark Mitchell act as Minister of Defence, Minister of Justice, and Minister for Veterans;

5.3 Hon Tama Potaka act as Minister for Pacific Peoples and Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations;

5.4 Hon Simeon Brown act as Minister for the Public Service and Digitising Government;

6 note that leave from the House has been approved.

Rachel Clarke
for Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:
The Cabinet

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Office of the Minister of Defence
Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Paul Goldsmith – September 2026

1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Fiji from 21-24 September 2026, in my capacity as Minister of Defence, for the annual South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM).

2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle, and leave from the House of Representatives has been approved.

Purpose of Travel

3 The annual SPDMM brings together Defence Ministers, Chiefs of Defence and Secretaries of Defence from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, France, Tonga, Chile and Papua New Guinea.

4 Collaboration through SPDMM each year is an important component of New Zealand's defence relationships with our closest neighbours.

5 This year's meeting will be chaired by Fijian Minister of Defence Pio Tikoduadua in Nadi, Fiji. On the margins of the SPDMM itself, this trip will also provide the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with counterparts from SPDMM member countries, some of our closest Defence partners.

Ministerial Party

6 I will be accompanied by my Senior Ministerial Advisor (travel costs met by Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel), and my Defence Private Secretary (travel costs met by Vote Defence).

7 Officials from the Ministry of Defence and New Zealand Defence Force would also accompany me at departmental cost.

Travel Costs

8 The estimated costs of the travel (including my staff members travel) are:

Airfares:	$5000
Accommodation:	$3500
Other expenses	$300
Contingency (5%)	$440
Total:	**$9,240**

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Acting Ministers

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

9.1 Arts, Culture and Heritage – Hon Chris Bishop

9.2 Defence – Hon Mark Mitchell

9.3 GCSB and NZSIS – Hon Chris Bishop

9.4 Justice – Hon Mark Mitchell

9.5 Media and Communications – Hon Chris Bishop

9.6 Pacific Peoples – Hon Tama Potaka

9.7 Public Service and Digitising Government – Hon Simeon Brown

9.8 Space – Hon Chris Bishop

9.9 Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations – Hon Tama Potaka

9.10 Veterans – Hon Mark Mitchell

Proactive release

10 This paper will be proactively released on the Ministry of Defence's website subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

1 **authorise** my absence from New Zealand from 21-24 September, to travel to Fiji;

2 **agree** that I be accompanied by two members of staff from my office;

3 **note** that I will be accompanied by a delegation from the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force, whose costs will be met by departmental budgets;

4 **approve** the estimated expenditure of $9240 for my travel expenses and a member of staff from my office, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];

5 **agree** that in my absence, Acting Ministers in my portfolios will be:

5.1 Arts, Culture and Heritage – Hon Chris Bishop

5.2 Defence – Hon Mark Mitchell

5.3 GCSB and NZSIS – Hon Chris Bishop

5.4 Justice – Hon Mark Mitchell

5.5 Media and Communications – Hon Chris Bishop

5.6 Pacific Peoples – Hon Tama Potaka

5.7 Public Service and Digitising Government – Hon Simeon Brown

5.8 Space – Hon Chris Bishop

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5.9 Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations – Hon Tama Potaka

5.10 Veterans – Hon Mark Mitchell

6 **note** that this Cabinet paper will be proactively released following return to New Zealand by the Ministry of Defence.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Paul Goldsmith
Minister of Defence

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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Paul Goldsmith – September 2026

Portfolio **Defence**

On 27 October 2026, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Paul Goldsmith under CAB-26-SUB-0329 on his travel, from 21 to 24 September 2026, to Fiji to attend the annual South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

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Office of the Minister of Defence
Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Paul Goldsmith

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Fiji from 21-24 September 2026 for the annual South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM).

Report

1 Discussions at this year's meeting were focused on the Securing the Blue Pacific, including countering transnational organised crime, improving efforts on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief responses, and the growing challenges around emerging technology and cyber security.

2 In the Joint Communique, members agreed to commence negotiations on a SPDMM Status of Forces Agreement, in line with each members' national processes. s6(a)

3 s6(a)

Proactive release

4 This paper will be proactively released, subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Paul Goldsmith
Minister of Defence

Released by the Minister of Defence

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