

John Key's refreshed Cabinet – key out-takes

Prime Minister *John Key* has announced his new ministerial line-up. Themes that run through today's announcements include:

- **RMA reform:** The most contentious elements of proposed Resource Management Act reforms are confirmed to be up for review. Key has acknowledged a range of views on whether it's necessary to merge Sections 6 and 7 – the proposals that have most unhinged environmental groups because of the implied leg-up for economic development over environmental sustainability. By moving his blue-greenest minister *Nick Smith* back into the environment portfolio, he moves aside *Amy Adams*, whose political dexterity was sometimes lacking in this most delicate of portfolios;
- **Housing affordability and social housing reform:** the significance of the moves here cannot be underestimated. Key has created a triumvirate led by *Bill English*, who gets responsibility for Housing NZ's \$17b asset base, assisted by former Social Development Minister *Paula Bennett*, who takes a new portfolio: social housing; and Smith, whose combination of the environment and housing portfolios is intended to ensure RMA and housing objectives are aligned. Key is signalling a major issue arising around industrial land, and the need to embed Special Housing Area legislation into the RMA. The SHA's are currently governed by a sunset clause;
- **Future leaders:** the biggest winners in today's new line-up are *Paula Bennett* and *Simon Bridges*. Bennett may only climb four places to 5th-ranked in the Cabinet, but she is effectively understudying to both English in the housing role and to Key, as associate tourism minister. Bridges leaps nine places to 9th ranking and gains transport from Gerry Brownlee, whom he understudies as deputy leader of the House. Also on the rise, if not future leader material, is *Todd McClay*, who has made a reasonable fist as revenue minister, enters the inner Cabinet at 18th, and gains SOE's as well as associate trade and foreign affairs – both portfolios likely to be vacated by veterans *Tim Groser* and *Murray McCully*, whose rankings slip. McCully also loses Sport and Rec to *Jonathan Coleman*, who has reluctantly taken on the health portfolio, moving from 6th from 10th ranking. *Hekia Parata*, once tipped as a future leader, is a relative loser, dropping three places to 10th and keeping the education portfolio;
- **New blood:** *Paul Goldsmith* is the lowest ranked member of the ministry, at number 25 and outside Cabinet. Yet he has the commerce and consumer affairs portfolios. Key wants to give Goldsmith time to mature by giving him responsibilities of substance but not much else, and expects him to concentrate at first on shepherding through cartel law reform. No mention at this stage of a competition law review, despite the Aust Harper review having obvious potential to affect NZ's competition law settings. *Maggie Barry* comes into the inner Cabinet at number 20, with conservation, arts, heritage and culture, and senior citizens. *Chester Borrows* is dropped and is destined to be deputy speaker, while under-performing *Craig Foss* is outside Cabinet with only one portfolio of significance: statistics. *Louise Upston* and *Nicky Wagner* both take ministerial posts outside Cabinet, including the weighty customs and land information portfolios respectively;
- **Children in poverty:** *Anne Tolley's* move to take social development from Bennett may seem to weaken the portfolio. However, Tolley will effectively be answering to Key on the most politically charged elements of the portfolio. **The PM is signalling he will make child poverty his special project this term**, leaving English, Joyce and their associate ministers to get on with economic policy development.
- **Spy agency governance and legislation:** while NZers didn't vote on the issues, Key is acknowledging the need for better governance of the SIS and GCSB, creating two new portfolios to be held by *Chris Finlayson*, with oversight of each, reporting to him as Minister of National Security. He is calling Labour's bluff by suggesting he won't advance reform of SIS legislation without Labour's support, once its new leader is elected.

Among other notable moves, *Amy Adams* has kept communications but *Steven Joyce* has gained the ICT part of her previous portfolio, adding to his existing burden, which is otherwise unchanged and continues to include tertiary education, which some in the sector had hoped he might relinquish.

Michael Woodhouse picks up police from Anne Tolley, while Brownlee picks up defence from Coleman. Little has changed for primary industries and racing minister *Nathan Guy*, other than moving up two places to rank 14th.

NEW CABINET UPDATE**Cabinet Ministers****1. Rt Hon John Key**

Prime Minister, Minister for National Security and Intelligence, Minister of Tourism, *Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services*

2. Hon Bill English

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, *Minister Responsible for HNZC*

3. Hon Gerry Brownlee

Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery, Minister of Defence, *Leader of the House, Minister Responsible for the Earthquake Commission*

4. Hon Steven Joyce

Minister for Economic Development (The Economic Development portfolio includes responsibility for ICT), Minister for Regulatory Reform, Minister of Science and Innovation, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment, *Minister Responsible for Novopay, Associate Minister of Finance*

5. Hon Paula Bennett (9)*

Minister of Local Government, Minister for Social Housing, Minister of State Services, *Associate Minister of Finance, Associate Minister of Tourism*

6. Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman (10)

Minister of Health, Minister for Sport and Recreation

7. Hon Amy Adams (15)

Minister of Justice, Minister for Courts, Minister of Broadcasting, Minister for Communications

8. Hon Christopher Finlayson

Attorney-General, Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations, *Minister in Charge of the NZ Security Intelligence Service, Minister Responsible for the GCSB, Associate Minister for Maori Development*

9. Hon Simon Bridges (18)

Minister of Energy and Resources, Minister of Transport, *Deputy Leader of the House, Associate Minister for Climate Change Issues, Associate Minister of Justice*

10. Hon Hekia Parata (7)

Minister of Education

11. Hon Anne Tolley (12)

Minister for Social Development

12. Hon Dr Nick Smith (-)

Minister for the Environment, Minister for Building and Housing

13. Hon Murray McCully (11)

Minister of Foreign Affairs, *Associate Minister for Sport and Recreation*

14. Hon Nathan Guy (16)

Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Racing

15. Hon Nikki Kaye (19)

Minister for ACC, Minister of Civil Defence, Minister for Youth, *Associate Minister of Education*

16. Hon Tim Groser (14)

Minister of Trade, Minister for Climate Change Issues

17. Hon Michael Woodhouse (20)

Minister of Immigration, Minister of Police, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

18. Hon Todd McClay (23)

Minister of Revenue, Minister for State Owned Enterprises, *Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Associate Minister of Trade*

19. Hon Peseta Sam Lotu-Iiga (-)

Minister of Corrections, Minister for Ethnic Communities, Minister for Pacific Peoples, *Associate Minister of Health*

20. Maggie Barry (-)

Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, Minister of Conservation, Minister for Senior Citizens

Ministers Outside Cabinet**21. Hon Craig Foss (17)**

Minister for Small Business, Minister of Statistics, Minister of Veterans' Affairs, *Associate Minister of Immigration, Associate Minister of Transport*

22. Hon Jo Goodhew (21)

Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Minister for Food Safety, *Associate Minister for Primary Industries, Associate Minister for Social Development*

23. Nicky Wagner (-)

Minister of Customs, Minister for Disability Issues, *Associate Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery, Associate Minister of Conservation*

24. Louise Upston (-)

Minister for Land Information, Minister for Women, *Associate Minister of Local Government, Associate Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment*

25. Paul Goldsmith (-)

Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, *Associate Minister for ACC*

Support Party Ministers**Hon Peter Dunne**

Minister of Internal Affairs, *Associate Minister of Conservation, Associate Minister of Health*

Te Ururoa Flavell

Minister for Maori Development, Minister for Whanau Ora, *Associate Minister for Economic Development*

Parliamentary Under-Secretary**David Seymour**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Education, Minister for Regulatory Reform

* () *Ranking in previous Cabinet* 