



Confidence and Supply Agreement with New Zealand First

Preamble

New Zealand First pledged, on 7 September 2005, in a keynote address in Rotorua, that it would not enter into a formal coalition arrangement with either a Labour-led or a National-led government.

It was further stated that, in the interests of political stability, the party would not oppose supply and confidence to whichever party the voters elected to form a government.

When it became apparent during the government-forming period that, without New Zealand First, there was potentially an equal split of 57 each for the opposing sides, New Zealand First moved to stabilise the position.

This required a positive vote on supply and confidence to the new government led by the party with the most seats in the House.

Such an undertaking was the only means of achieving stable government for the next three years without being part of the coalition government.

Confidence and Supply

New Zealand First agrees to provide confidence and supply for the term of this Parliament, to a Labour-led coalition.

The relationship between New Zealand First and the government will be based on good faith and no surprises.

Consultation arrangements

The Government will consult with New Zealand First on issues including:

- The broad outline of the legislative programme.
- Key legislative measures on which the government is seeking NZ First support.
- Broad budget parameters.

Consultation will occur in a timely fashion to ensure New Zealand First views can be incorporated into final decision making.

Formal consultation will be managed between the Prime Minister's Office and the Office of the Leader of New Zealand First.

Other co-operation will include:

- Access to relevant Ministers by designated New Zealand First MPs for briefings on issues as they arise
- Meetings between the Prime Minister and the New Zealand First Leader as required
- Briefings by the Government on significant issues before any public announcement.

Ministerial Positions

The Leader of New Zealand First will be appointed to a ministerial position outside Cabinet. Portfolios will be agreed between the Prime Minister and the Leader of New Zealand First.

Collective responsibility

New Zealand First agrees to fully represent the government position and be bound by Cabinet Manual provisions in respect of any areas within the portfolio responsibility of the Leader of New Zealand First and to support all areas which are matters of confidence and supply.

In other areas “agree to disagree” provisions will be applied as necessary.

Policy Programme

The Government has agreed to:

Senior Citizens

- Develop a Seniors Card able to be used to identify the holder’s eligibility for all public sector entitlements, and which is capable of also being used for claiming negotiated commercial discounts.
- Ensure that the rate of New Zealand Superannuation is set at 66 per cent of the average ordinary time weekly earnings as from 1 April 2006.
- Agree that better recognition can be given to veterans of active overseas service and investigate the best way of achieving that.
- Investigate ways to improve options for senior citizens who may be eligible for foreign pensions as well as New Zealand Superannuation.
- Address the issue of elder care as a matter of priority in the 2006 budget.

Immigration

- Conduct a full review of immigration legislation and administrative practices within the immigration service, to ensure the system meets the needs of New Zealand in the 21st century and has appropriate mechanisms for ensuring the system is not

susceptible to fraud or other abuse, and taking note of other items raised by New Zealand First.

Justice

- Budget for police numbers to be increased to provide another 1000 police staff over the three budgets of this term with a view to achieving ratios comparable with those in Australia by 2010.
- Involve the New Zealand First spokesperson in a review of the home detention scheme.
- Develop new initiatives to reduce youth offending and discourage youth involvement in criminal gangs.
- Evaluate the costs and benefits of de-merging traffic enforcement from the police.

Treaty

- Ensure the Treaty settlements process is expedited both by additional resources for negotiations and the use of expert external negotiators and by using direct negotiations as far as possible, in order to avoid the need for expensive and lengthy claims before the Waitangi Tribunal.
- Review the appropriateness of the Chair of the Waitangi Tribunal also holding an appointment as a Maori Land court judge.

Economic

- Prioritise measures to significantly grow our export sector and nominate 2007 as an "Export Year".
- Develop, with New Zealand First, a new taxation regime for the racing industry which is fair and equitable with respect to the rest of the gambling sector, but which takes account of the industry's potential as a significant export sector.
- Continue the practice of annually increasing the minimum wage, with a view to it being set at \$12.00 per hour by the end of 2008 if economic conditions permit.
- Conduct a review of the current business taxation regimes with the view of ensuring the system works to give better incentives for productivity improvements and improved competitiveness with Australia.
- Review the appropriateness or otherwise of progressing a carbon tax policy as a response to Kyoto Treaty obligations.
- No strategic asset sales.
- Investigate the feasibility of requiring all used car imports to be decontaminated off shore.

- Review conditions applying to airline advertising to ensure that they are required to advertise the full costs of their offers.
- Ensure policy settings continue to put pressure on telecommunications companies to reduce the costs of mobile phone calls.
- Support initiatives to promote a “Buy New Zealand made” campaign particularly where public money is involved.

Health

- Actively work towards the objective of having free primary health care for all under six year olds.
- Work to ensure all New Zealanders have reasonable access to 24 hour emergency health care.

Legislative proposals

- Support the re-introduction of the Electoral Integrity Act.
- Support a New Zealand First bill relating to treaty principles going to a select committee for consideration.
- Support, to a select committee for consideration, a New Zealand First Members bill proposing to lower the age of criminal responsibility to 12 years, and agree that if it has not been successful in the ballot within two years a clause may be incorporated into a government bill in order that the issue can be addressed by a select committee.

Government policies

The government has identified the pledges on its commitment card along with their election policy to extend the working for families package as priorities for them and New Zealand First agrees to support the legislation if required to give effect to these policies.

Other issues

New Zealand First have identified a range of other issues which they see as priority issues to be addressed during this term of Parliament, these are attached as Appendix 1.

The Labour-led government is committed to ensuring these issues are addressed.

Support for other legislation which is not part of a confidence or supply motion will be negotiated on a case by case basis.

House management

New Zealand First will be consulted on the outline of the legislative programme on a regular basis. New Zealand First will vote with the government on procedural motions in the House or select committees unless they relate to a bill on which the party has specifically registered their opposition.

New Zealand First and the government will consult on the make-up and operation of select committees and the distribution of officer of parliament positions with a view to reaching an agreed position.

Confidentiality

It is agreed that where briefings are provided to New Zealand First, or where they are involved in a consultative arrangement with regard to legislation or policy, all such discussions shall be confidential unless otherwise agreed.

In the event that government papers are provided to New Zealand First in the course of consultation or briefings they shall be treated as confidential and shall not be released or the information used for any public purpose without the express agreement of the relevant Minister.

Before such papers are offered or provided the Minister will make it clear if their contents are likely to compromise New Zealand First's policy positions.

Relationship to other confidence and supply agreements

Both parties to this agreement recognise that the government will be working with a range of parties both in terms of coalitions and confidence and supply arrangements.

The government agrees that it will not enter into any other relationship agreement which is inconsistent with this agreement and New Zealand First and the government agree that they will each act in good faith to allow all such agreements to be complied with.

Dated the 17th October 2005.

Rt Hon Helen Clark

Labour Leader

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Leader of New Zealand First

Appendix 1

Issues which are important to New Zealand First and which the government has agreed to address during this term of Parliament

- ensuring the South Pacific remains a top priority for New Zealand overseas aid
- keeping defence salaries under review
- funding the Maori Wardens on a similar basis to the Maori Women's Welfare League
- further exploration of a "university of technology" 'non university' class of institution
- a review of the judges superannuation scheme
- the designation of the Tauranga bridge as a fully funded state highway
- appointing a representative of New Zealand First to the Shipping Dialogue Group and requesting a full report from that group by mid 2006 on options for moving forward
- review the way in which physiotherapists are accredited and funded by ACC
- non statutory proposals to negotiate improved public access along rivers lakes and foreshore will be progressed
- the continuing problem of access for New Zealand apples to the Australian market