

## Legal update on Public Law.

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### KEY LOCKS IN NEW GOVERNMENT

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The votes are all in and counted, with the Greens picking up an additional seat through the special votes at National's expense. New Zealand's 50th Parliament will have 121 seats. National has 59 seats, Labour 34, the Greens 14, NZ First 8, the Maori Party 3, and ACT, Mana, and United Future 1 apiece. Parliament's first sitting will be on 20 December.

Rt Hon John Key has also just announced the new Ministerial appointments. The full list is available [here](#).

National signed confidence and supply agreements with ACT, United Future, and the Maori Party, giving a governing total of 64 seats in the House. These all include broad consultation and co-operation requirements. This update summarises the key features of each agreement, and National's "Post-Election Action Plan" for 2012.

### NATIONAL-ACT CONFIDENCE AND SUPPLY AGREEMENT

#### *Ministerial positions*

John Banks picks up Rodney Hide's former portfolio of Regulatory Reform, Minister for Small Business and associate positions in Education and Commerce. These portfolios are outside Cabinet, although Banks is still bound by collective responsibility in relation to his portfolios or any other matters where there is prior agreement.

#### *Economic monitoring and government spending caps*

Treasury will report annually on progress in improving the quality of institutions and policies, with reference to productivity indices and the income gap with Australia.

Legislation will be introduced within the next two years to cap core government spending, with the aim that expenditure grows no faster than the annual increase in the rate of population growth multiplied by the rate of inflation. Amendments to the Public Finance Act will help implement these targets.

### *Regulatory reform*

National and ACT will work together to progress the Regulatory Standards Bill through Parliament and achieve Resource Management Act reform.

### *Charter schools*

The government will implement a charter school system in areas of South Auckland and Christchurch. Essentially, private entities (including iwi and faith-based groups) would assume management of failing schools while retaining State funding.

Boards of Trustees of charter schools would be able to contract out school management, set teaching and remuneration practices, raise their own revenue, and adopt any curriculum or qualification pathway.

Charter schools would not, however, be able to charge tuition fees.

## **NATIONAL-UNITED FUTURE CONFIDENCE AND SUPPLY AGREEMENT**

### *Ministerial positions*

Peter Dunne retains his posts as Minister of Revenue and Associate Minister of Health, and picks up Associate Minister of Conservation. These positions are outside Cabinet.

### *Families Commission*

A single Families Commissioner will be responsible for monitoring, evaluation, and research functions. A Families Status Report will report on New Zealand families, and the government will implement parenting programmes and relationship education in secondary schools at a cost of \$4 million over four years.

### *State asset sales*

United Future has secured a number of guarantees concerning State asset sales:

- No sale or part sale of Kiwibank or Radio New Zealand
- Statutory limits on the sale of public assets to no more than 49% of shareholding to private interests
- Limiting the extent of an individual private entity's shareholding.

### *Conservation*

The government will establish a Game Animal Council. Guided helicopter hunting on the conservation estate will be banned, and the government will ensure continued free public access to rivers, lakes, forests, and coastline. United Future will also be consulted on water quality and management.

### *Health*

The government will work towards reducing elective surgery waiting lists through increased use of private hospital facilities and developing the long-term medicines strategy. The role of pharmacists in patient medicines management will also be enhanced and the provision of a free annual health check-up for over-65s investigated.

### *Other policies*

- Maintain existing funding levels for TVNZ and Radio New Zealand
- Support public-private partnerships for major roading infrastructure developments
- Investigate cross-agency co-operation for youth support services
- Introduce pre-release assessments for all sentenced prisoners appearing before the Parole Board regarding alcohol and drug dependency.

## **NATIONAL-MAORI PARTY CONFIDENCE AND SUPPLY AGREEMENT**

### *Ministerial positions*

Dr Pita Sharples retains his roles as Minister of Maori Affairs, Associate Education and Associate Corrections. Tariana Turia will be Minister for Whanau Ora, Minister for Disability Issues, Associate Health, Associate Housing, Associate Social Development, and Associate Employment. Both Dr Sharples and Ms Turia will be outside Cabinet.

### *Asset sales*

Confidence and supply measures will not include partial asset sales and the mixed ownership model (MOM), allowing the Maori Party to oppose the government on these points.

### *Whanau Ora*

The Whanau Ora initiative will continue to receive support from the government, with its own appropriation. The Maori Party and the government will work towards establishing a standalone commissioning agency for Whanau Ora over the next 12 months.

### *Poverty*

A Ministerial Committee on Poverty will be established, with six-monthly public reports beginning mid-2012. Initial initiatives to help alleviate the consequences of poverty are doubling the funding of the government's rheumatic fever programme and improving home insulation for low-income earners.

### *Environment*

The government and the Maori Party will work together to improve the quality of water in lakes, rivers, seas, and other rural water supplies, and introduce off-setting of pre-1990 forests.

The government will consider the issue of effective engagement with Maori in its review of the Crown Minerals Act 1991, and will reinstate funding to Enviro schools and Kura Taiao.

### *Constitutional reform*

The current review of New Zealand's constitutional arrangements will continue, and the advisory panel established will deliver its recommendations to the government in September 2013.

The Maori seats in Parliament will remain but will not be "entrenched".

### *Other policies*

- A continued focus on improving outcomes for Maori employment and training, education and housing
- Further work on anti-smoking initiatives, such as plain packaging for cigarettes
- Continuance of the Maori Language Strategy and the Maori Economic Strategy.

## **NATIONAL'S POST-ELECTION ACTION PLAN**

National has also released its Post-Election Action Plan, setting out the agenda for its second term. Key actions are:

### *Economy*

- Halve the budget deficit in 2012 and return to surplus in 2014/2015
- Finalise spending control targets for government departments
- Extend the Mixed Ownership Model (MOM) to four state owned enterprises, reduce the government's stake in Air New Zealand and use the proceeds to create the Future Investment Fund, which will receive all proceeds from the MOM and invest in capital projects
- Open up the ACC work account to competition through legislation, with the support of ACT.

### *Social welfare*

- Amend the Social Security Act to reform the benefit system
- Introduce sanctions for beneficiaries whose use of recreational drugs affects their work prospects.

### *Health and education*

- Review the Teachers Council
- Work with DHBs to ensure patients who need specialist appointments are seen within no more than four months by 2014
- Provide free after-hours GP visits to children under six.

### *Canterbury earthquakes*

- Receive and assess the CBD recovery plan
- Finish the red zone classification process
- Start building a 17,000 seat temporary stadium at Addington for sporting and cultural events
- Use CERA's powers to continue to release land for residential subdivision and ensure there is adequate land to rebuild.

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