



# Cabinet Office Circular

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17 November 2008

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## **Intended for:**

All Ministers  
All Senior Private Secretaries  
All Chief Executives  
Chief of Staff, Prime Minister's Office  
Clerk of the House of Representatives  
General Manager, Parliamentary Service  
Chief Parliamentary Counsel  
Controller and Auditor-General  
Chief Ombudsman  
Official Secretary, Government House  
General Manager, Ministerial Services

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## **Arrangements for transition to new administration**

- 1 The Leader of the New Zealand National Party has announced that he is able to form a government that will command the confidence of the House of Representatives. This circular sets out the arrangements for the transition to the new administration.

## **Appointment of the new ministry**

- 2 Ministers will be appointed by the Governor-General at a ceremony at Parliament House at 11 am on Wednesday 19 November, following a formal announcement by the Prime Minister designate of the allocation of portfolios in the new ministry. The period of caretaker government, in place since polling day, will come to an end at that point.
- 3 The Cabinet Office will advise those involved in the ceremony about the arrangements.

## **The conduct of government business over the transition period**

- 4 Until the formal appointments have taken place, current Ministers continue in office. Portfolio responsibilities do not change until the incumbent Minister has resigned and the new Minister is appointed by the Governor-General.

- 5 Ministers will act in accordance with the second arm of the caretaker convention. They will therefore undertake no new policy initiatives and will act on the advice of the incoming government on any matter of such constitutional, economic or other significance that it cannot be delayed until the new government formally takes office (see [paragraph 6.24 of the Cabinet Manual](#)).
- 6 If any urgent matters requiring Cabinet-level attention arise before the new administration is sworn in on 19 November, they may be handled by the group of senior Ministers authorised by Cabinet to take such decisions, in accordance with the caretaker convention.
- 7 As provided in [paragraph 6.61\(c\) of the Cabinet Manual](#) in the period between the formal allocation of ministerial portfolios and the appointment of Ministers, chief executives may meet with incoming Ministers with the objective of ensuring that the department is well placed to engage quickly with the Minister once he or she is formally appointed. Chief executives should inform the incumbent Minister and the State Services Commissioner before meeting with incoming Ministers. Chief executives should inform the State Services Commissioner if there is a need to provide substantive advice to an incoming Minister before his or her appointment.

### **Resumption of Cabinet business**

- 8 The first Cabinet meeting of the new administration is expected to be in the afternoon of 19 November. It is not expected that Cabinet will deal with any substantive business at that meeting. Cabinet will next meet on 1 December. Further advice will be provided shortly on the resumption of Cabinet business.

Rebecca Kitteridge  
Secretary of the Cabinet