

2014 Confidence and Supply Agreement with ACT New Zealand

ACT New Zealand agrees to provide confidence and supply for the term of this Parliament to a National-led Government in return for National's agreement to the policy programme and other matters set out in this document.

The agreement between ACT and National builds on the stable and constructive relationship developed between the two parties over the past six years and will continue to be based on good faith and no surprises.

Consultation arrangements

The Government will consult with ACT including on:

- the broad outline of the legislative programme
- key legislative measures
- major policy issues
- broad budget parameters; and
- policy issues and legislative measures to which ACT is likely to be particularly sensitive.

Consultation will occur in a timely fashion to ensure ACT views can be incorporated into final decision-making. Formal consultation will be managed between the Prime Minister's Office and the Office of David Seymour.

Other co-operation will include:

- access to relevant Ministers
- regular meetings between the Prime Minister and David Seymour
- advance notification to the other party of significant announcements by either the Government or ACT, and
- briefings by Ministers and officials on significant issues and issues that are likely to be politically sensitive before any public announcement.

Policy programme

National and ACT have worked together constructively over the past two parliamentary terms to provide stable government and to implement policies to promote a strong economy.

In this parliamentary term, ACT has a number of priorities to progress with the government – making further progress on the development of partnership schools; reducing the regulatory burden on businesses and consumers; and on reform of the Resource Management Act, among the key ones, as follows:

1. Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua

National and ACT agree to further develop the model and expand the trial of Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua, for the purpose of improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged students. This will include maintaining the momentum and continuity of

the initiative by strengthening and enhancing the application and governance processes in order to foster high quality applications and high-performing schools.

2. Regulatory Reform

National and ACT agree with the OECD that excessive and poor-quality regulation is holding New Zealand back. The two parties will continue to work together on reducing the regulatory burden.

3. Resource Management Act reform

National and ACT agree that priority should be given to reform of the Resource Management Act, in the interests of promoting investment, jobs and prosperity as well as environmental protection.

National agrees to work with ACT on these and other policy areas as may be identified from time to time in good faith.

With respect to National's legislative agenda, ministerial offices will work with the office of David Seymour on matters to come before the House. ACT will consider its position on each Bill in good faith and advise the office of the Prime Minister and the Government Whips.

Executive position

David Seymour will be appointed to the positions of Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Minister of Education and Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Minister for Regulatory Reform, with each of these roles reflecting the policy priorities and objectives set out in the Agreement.

David Seymour will be nominated by National to be a member of the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee and will be appointed a member of the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee. He will also attend other Cabinet committees as appropriate.

Ministerial questions

National and ACT agree that National will consider and not unreasonably decline to allocate some of their questions plus supplementary questions to ACT, upon request from David Seymour.

Speaking slots

National and ACT agree that from time to time and on a case-by-case basis, National will consider giving David Seymour a full ten minute speaking slot in the House on readings and in the general debate. In addition, National will consider and not unreasonably decline giving David Seymour a five minute 'split' speaking slot on readings on bills before the House.

Proxy vote casting

National and ACT agree that National will cast proxy votes on behalf of David Seymour at his request when the need arises for him to be absent from the House.

Confidentiality

It is agreed that where briefings are provided to ACT, or where ACT is involved in consultative arrangements with regard to legislation, policy or budgetary matters, all such discussions shall be confidential unless otherwise agreed.

In the event that Government papers are provided to ACT 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.

In the event that Cabinet or Cabinet committee papers are provided to ACT for the purposes of consultation they shall be provided to a designated person within the Office of David Seymour, who will take responsibility for ensuring they are accorded the appropriate degree of confidentiality.

Collective responsibility

David Seymour agrees to be bound by collective responsibility in relation to his responsibilities as a Parliamentary Under Secretary. When he speaks about issues within his portfolio responsibilities he will speak for the Government, representing the Government's position in relation to those responsibilities. When he speaks about matters outside his responsibilities, however, he may speak as an ACT MP, or as a Member of Parliament. He will support the Government's position in all matters that are the subject of confidence and supply votes.

Where there has been full participation in the development of a policy initiative outside of any portfolio responsibility held by David Seymour, and that participation has led to an agreed position, it is expected that all parties to this agreement will publicly support the process and the outcome.

Cabinet Manual

David Seymour agrees to be bound by the Cabinet Manual in the exercise of his responsibilities as a Parliamentary Under Secretary and, in particular, agrees to be bound by the provisions in the Cabinet Manual on the conduct, public duty, and personal interests of Ministers.

Procedural motions

ACT agrees that it will support the Government on procedural motions in the House and in Select Committees, unless ACT has previously advised that such support is not forthcoming. The Government agrees that it will operate a no-surprises policy in terms of procedural motions it intends to put before the House or a Select Committee.

Legislative programme

Support for particular measures which do not relate to confidence or supply will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Dated: 29 September 2014

Rt Hon John Key
National Leader

David Seymour
ACT Parliamentary Leader