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(Hipkins, C., 2018)

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Government to proactively release Ministerial diaries



HON CHRIS HIPKINS(/MINISTER/HON-CHRIS-HIPKINS)

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All Government Ministers will for the first time release details of their internal and external meetings, Minister for State Services (Open Government) Chris Hipkins announced today.

Cabinet has agreed to the release of summary information from their Ministerial diaries from January 2019 onwards, with the first publication in February 2019.

“The move helps build trust and confidence in government,” Chris Hipkins said.

“There is a public interest in the meetings held by Ministers and proactively releasing the summary information promotes accountability.

“In September, I announced that the Government will be proactively releasing Cabinet papers, and this change is yet another step in the right direction to reflect the Government’s commitment to improving transparency.

The policy applies to the information recorded in the diary of each Minister and Parliamentary Under-Secretary that relates to Ministerial business, including meetings held outside New Zealand.

For each meeting in scope, the summary would list: date, time (start and finish), brief description, location, who the meeting was with, and the portfolio. The monthly summary will be published on the Beehive website within 15 business days following the end of each month.

“The proactive release of the diaries will be consistent with the provisions in the Official Information Act including privacy considerations,” Chris Hipkins said.

“Other jurisdictions including the UK and the State of New South Wales in Australia proactively release their Ministerial diaries. Their releases however, exclude internal meetings.

“We have decided to go further and release summaries of meetings involving other Ministers and government officials to be more open,” Chris Hipkins said.

Notes to editors

Summary of information excludes:

Material related to a Ministers’ personal, party political, or parliamentary/constituency roles;

- incidental activities;
- meetings related to consultation between government parties, consistent with s9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act;
- meetings with other MPs relating to a constituency matter or other matter that might breach personal privacy;
- travel and logistic information;
- details of meeting locations that are a private home address.

The Cabinet paper is available **here**. (<https://www.dia.govt.nz/Proactive-Releases#MS>) Minister Hipkins has released his Ministerial diary for September and October 2018 which can be found **here** (https://www.beehive.govt.nz/search?f%5B0%5D=content_type_facet%3Aministerial_diary&f%5B1%5D=ministers%3A6373&f%5B2%5D=government_facet%3A6203).



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[Features \(/features\)](/features)

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