

National/ACT/NZ First Government announced

After weeks of negotiations and a patient industry waiting for a Tourism Minister announcement, a National/ACT/NZ First coalition government has been formed.

Ministerial roles have also been announced, with National's Matt Doocey named as Minister for Tourism and Hospitality, National's Melissa Lee as Minister for Economic Development, New Zealand First's Shane Jones as Minister for Regional Development, and New Zealand First's Casey Costello as Minister of Immigration.

National campaigned on promises of a new Great Walk, e-bike chargers on cycle trails, a higher age limit on working holiday visas, and the scrapping of a median wage requirement.

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon announced the policy back in September, saying it aimed to get tourism in New Zealand back to pre-pandemic levels.

Tourism industry leaders have commented on the new government, with many saying they are hopeful for change in the coming years.

Backpacker Youth Adventure Tourism Association

"BYATA is hopeful that any incoming Minister is able to translate the campaign promises that each governing party has made, into government policy and actions," says BYATA chair Haydn Marriner.

"We are keen to spend time with our new Ministers of Tourism, Economic Development, Regional Development, Transport and Immigration to foster positive working relationships and to work through some of the complexity around delivering the brand New Zealand experience for our market.

"Our lifetime model research shows very clearly the high value of our sector to the New Zealand economy and with smart governance and strategy this value can be increased and positively built upon.

"While there are some very pressing issues such as the lack of compliance in the peer to peer space, the misrepresentation of boarding houses as hostels, visa processing times, increasing WHV for South American countries, Freedom Camping regulations, road improvements and investment and the need for more funding for Tourism New Zealand, we believe that these issues can all be worked through with our new Ministers in a productive and transparent manner.

"BYATA is optimistic about the future of New Zealand tourism and look forward to having whomever are our new Ministers as part of our exciting industry and BYATA community."

Cruise Association New Zealand

“New Zealand Cruise Association have a sense of anticipation for the new Government,” says NZCA CEO Jacqui Lloyd.

“While change is expected, there are still many uncertainties and we are keen to understand what specific changes will occur, how they will be implemented, and the timeline for their implementation.

“Our immediate plans involve active engagement and collaboration with the incoming government with our draft National Cruise Strategy, which we aim to complete by late November.

“We’re also focused on ensuring the incoming government recognise cruise tourism as a vital and growing sector in New Zealand's overall tourism system; support sustainable infrastructure development, including shore power, biofuels, and other environmental measures to enable the cruise industry to fulfil their net-zero carbon commitments in Aotearoa New Zealand; and reassess the proposed blanket ban on cruise ships in the Milford Opportunities Project, with a focus on collaborative solutions that benefit local communities, support the Southland economy, and provide the best experience for all visitors within Milford.”

Business Events Industry Aotearoa

“Members have been telling me that they are pleased with the change but have some high expectations of the new Government,” says BEIA CEO Lisa Hopkins.

“It’s been difficult with the cost of living, hiring new staff has become a struggle, especially as the industry is starting to truly ramp up.

“The industry is hoping that the Prime Minister elect’s election night speech about working with business holds true. We are hoping to see a senior member of the Government hold the Tourism portfolio and are looking to engage with the new Minister as soon as possible.”

Hospitality New Zealand

“Hospitality NZ was and is prepared to work with whatever flavour of government New Zealand has to support our industry,” says Hospitality NZ CEO Steve Armitage.

“A number of issues are currently impacting the hospitality sector, including general pressure on businesses and Fair Pay Agreements. A centre-right government will relieve some pressure on those fronts, so many of our members will feel positive about the result.

“We’ll be seeking meetings with the six key ministers with an interest in the hospitality environment as soon as ministerial portfolios are announced.

“We’ve prepared briefings to bring the incoming government up to speed, outlining the key issues and why they matter to our industry, and how Hospitality NZ can work collaboratively with ministers in their respective portfolios to alleviate these issues.

“The key thing for us is that we have a minister who is willing to listen to industry. “They must devote time to the portfolio and work collaboratively on challenges facing the sector. Ideally, that sits within the National Party but if the portfolio gets allocated to someone in a smaller party who can be effective in their role, it’s not a dealbreaker.

“We are also keen to see some dedicated resource within MBIE with a specific focus on hospo.

“We’re hopeful this will come to fruition.”

Tourism Export Council New Zealand

“I believe businesses will feel relieved a more pragmatic approach will be considered with helping create an environment where businesses can plan, flourish, innovate, invest and have more confidence in the future,” says TECNZ CEO Lynda Keene.

“We have reached out to National and ACT MPs including the Prime Minister Elect to congratulate them on being the incoming government. We will now turn our focus to preparing Briefing for Incoming Minister (BIMs) papers and once Ministers are allocated portfolios, we will make approaches for meetings on relevant international tourism topics highlighting priorities for the ongoing international tourism recovery.”

Tourism Industry Aotearoa

At the recent Tourism Industry Aotearoa Summit in Wellington, TIA CEO Rebecca Ingram spoke of what is needed from government for the tourism sector. “Put simply, it’s partnership, so we can design and deliver tourism that fit for 2050.

“We are a people business made up of New Zealanders who care for Aotearoa New Zealand. We are ambitious for the role tourism can play in our progress as a nation.

“Tourism Industry Aotearoa, tourism’s peak industry body, welcomes the new government, and we’re very keen to work with the new Tourism Minister, to progress issues vitally important to the tourism industry,” says Rebecca.