



# Pacific People's Policy

National celebrates the unique contribution Pasifika make to New Zealand. New Zealand has, and will always have, a special cultural link with our Pacific neighbours. This stems from our common history, our shared Pacific culture and the fact that one in thirteen New Zealanders hail from the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji.

When last in Government, National increased outcomes for Pasifika in health, employment, and education. There were significant increases in NCEA achievement and in the number of Pasifika completing university degrees. We invested in trades training and employment support services to assist Pasifika to gain high value employment and run their own businesses.

The border closure is particularly challenging for Pasifika families. Many Pasifika have family who live abroad. The current border closure presents uncertainty on if and when cousins, nieces, nephews and grandchildren will be seen again. Our Border Protection Agency will create the confidence needed to consider travel-bubbles with the Pacific Islands.

## Highlights

### National will:

- Grow the number of Pacific SMEs and support them to reach their full potential.
- Work with Pacific and non-Pacific health providers to ensure our families and young people are prepared for the opportunities of the future.
- Ensure Government services reflect the communities they serve, and work with key agencies to grow Pacific talent in the public sector, challenging the private sector to do the same.
- Recognise our significant relationships within the Pacific Region and commit to work on travel bubbles with Pacific nations.

## Pacific Business and Employment and Education

National will prioritise increasing educational achievement and employment levels of Pasifika. In 2016 National established Pacific Employment Support Services to help young Pacific people in Auckland find sustainable employment, education, or training opportunities. More than 1,400 young Pacific people benefited from the pilot, and nearly 82 per cent of those who took part in the pilot were placed into work or training.

### National will:

- Support the growing range of initiatives that provide Pasifika entrepreneurs with businesses advice, mentoring and coaching.
- Encourage people to start new businesses and consider a New Business Assistance Scheme which will go further than the enterprise support currently available.
- Re-establish Partnership Schools and aim to open at least 25 new partnership schools by 2023, including schools focussed on specific learners such as Māori and Pasifika.
- Our social investment approach will see more funding allocated on the basis of need. This will benefit many Pasifika students.

## Pacific Health

The Pacific Health strategy commits the government to achieving equitable health outcomes of our growing Pasifika population. It is essential the health system is responsive to the needs of Pasifika and involves communities in service design and delivery. Under National, Pacific families led the country in vaccination uptake, achieving a 96 percent vaccination rate, a significant increase from 63 percent in 2007. We will reinstate health targets to make sure this work is not undone. We will also work to ensure Pacific families are healthier



and young Pasifika are prepared for the opportunities of the future.

#### National will:

- Continue the Pacific Health strategy so that Pasifika lead healthier and more independent lives.
- Reinstate health targets to ensure the work on Rheumatic fever, diabetes, and vaccination is not undone.
- Roll out a stepped care approach to mental health commissioning that will include cultural specific services for Pasifika.

## Pacific Travel and Immigration

Pacific island economies depend on trade and travel with New Zealand for their future prosperity. National will work to re-establish travel links with the Pacific as soon as it is safe to do so. We have announced a comprehensive border policy that will allow everyone to have confidence in our border and help support the reestablishment of travel links with the Pacific.

New Zealand's diplomatic and trading relationships with Pacific nations has grown stronger in the past decade. This largely owes to the efforts of the last National Government to re-engage with the nations of the region as equal partners, which has been continued by the current Government. A 2020 National Government will continue to honour existing agreements (such as PACER Plus) and pursue closer diplomatic and trade and relations with the Pacific Nations through the UN, Pacific Islands Forum and other bodies.

#### National will:

- Prioritise working toward a Pacific bubble, ensuring safety and minimal strain on health systems in the islands. We will support stranded RSE workers who want to go home, get home.
- Continue to pursue closer diplomatic and trading relationships with Pacific nations based on respect and as equal partners.

- Continue our commitment to the PACER Plus agreement which will create employment opportunities and increase the export capacity of Pacific nations .

## Pacific Communities

We are committed to helping young Pasifika connect with and celebrate their cultures through our support of key events like Polyfest, and language weeks. We recognise our young people's success through the Prime Minister's Pacific Youth Awards, and the Toloa STEM scholarships.

#### National will:

- Celebrate Pasifika success through the Prime Minister's Pacific Youth Awards.
- Celebrate the culture of different nations from the Pacific Islands by supporting initiatives like language weeks.