



Building the Future:

National's 47-point plan to support Small Businesses





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Our small businesses are the backbone of our economy. National has their back.

From the local dairy to the mechanic, the family farm to the manufacturer, café or tourism operator, small businesses make New Zealand tick. They build our homes, produce our food, keep our towns busy and take Kiwi products to the world.

Our Investment Boost policy has been a game changer. Businesses can immediately deduct 20 per cent of the cost of eligible new productive assets, giving them a powerful incentive to invest in better equipment, technology and premises.

We have restored 90-day trials for employers of every size, given contractors greater certainty, and passed the Employment Leave Act to replace the Holidays Act with a simpler system.

We are making it easier for businesses to get paid, expanding invoicing and opening banking to greater competition. We have replaced the RMA, reformed building rules and made it easier to use trusted overseas products.

But there is more to do.

For too many owners, running a business still means evenings spent on paperwork, uncertainty before taking on another employee, months resolving a straightforward dispute, delays getting approvals, fees eating into every payment and opportunities overseas that are simply too difficult to pursue.

National's plan changes that.

We will make it easier for a small business to take the leap and become an employer. National will introduce a First Employee Support Package to help owners navigate requirements around payroll, employment

agreements, tax, ACC and leave right from day one, and less paperwork for apprentices and seasonal workers.

Unlike Labour, we will keep our successful Investment Boost scheme, rewarding businesses that invest in their next stage of growth.

We will overhaul the way straightforward employment disputes are handled, with a fast-track process, firmer Authority timeframes, better use of mediation and a system where the cost and process better match the scale of the dispute.

We will give owners their time back through Tell Government Once, simpler renewals, digital records and the removal of outdated paper, newspaper, fax and telex requirements.

We will help businesses keep more of what they earn through faster payments, lower and more transparent payment costs, modern banking and payments, better access to government contracts and practical support to adopt AI.

We will make it easier to grow by delivering planning and building reforms, cutting duplicated technical work, improving access to capital and connecting growing firms with international investment.

And we will help more New Zealand businesses take on the world, with intensive support for the Next 200 high-potential exporters, simpler digital trade tools, faster border processes, another \$1 billion of non-tariff barriers targeted for removal and more markets opened to Kiwi businesses.

This is a 47-point plan built around the reality of running a small business: less time navigating government, more confidence to employ someone, more room to invest and grow, and more opportunities to sell to customers here and around the world.

A. Making it easier to employ and train employees

National is making it easier for small businesses to employ people and grow, with clearer rules and more practical support for hiring and training.

We restored 90-day trial periods for employers of every size, removed the 30-day rule so employers and employees can agree individual terms from day one, and introduced clearer contractor rules.

The Employment Leave Act has now passed, replacing the Holidays Act from August 2028 with simpler leave calculations and a two-year implementation period. Health and safety reforms are also sharpening the focus on preventing serious harm and making obligations clearer for businesses.

Alongside this, skilled-trades residence, Earn as You Learn manufacturing and industry-led school subjects will help businesses find the skills they need and give more New Zealanders practical pathways into work.

What National will do if re-elected...

Helping a sole trader become an employer

Taking on a first employee is one of the biggest steps a small business can make. Overnight, an owner who has spent years doing everything themselves becomes responsible for payroll, employment agreements, leave, tax, ACC and managing another person.

National wants more successful sole traders to have the confidence to take that step.

We will introduce a First Employee Support Package that brings the essentials together in one place.

This will ensure any new employer get the basics right from day one and have somewhere to turn before a small uncertainty becomes an expensive mistake.

We will also reduce penalties for genuine first-year administrative errors where no worker has been harmed and the employer moves quickly to put things right. Workers' pay, entitlements and safety protections will remain unchanged.

Making repeat seasonal hiring easier

Growers, vineyards and other seasonal businesses often bring back the same workers year after year. Both sides may know the job and each other well, but still have to repeat much of the same paperwork each season.

National will develop a standard recurring seasonal agreement and a short renewal process so employers and returning workers can confirm the next season's dates, terms and any changes without starting again from scratch.

Each fixed term will still need a genuine seasonal reason and existing employee rights will remain.

Making apprenticeship paperwork simpler

Employers training apprentices should be spending their time teaching skills, not chasing paper records and signatures.

National will work with training providers to ensure approved digital competency records and electronic supervisor sign-off are consistently accepted across apprenticeships.

Building on systems already in use, this will make it easier for apprentices, employers and assessors to see what has been completed and what still needs to be signed off.

Helping businesses prepare for the new leave system

The Employment Leave Act is now law, but the new system does not take effect until August 2028. Employers must continue using the existing Holidays Act rules until then.

Payroll systems will need updating, leave balances converted and employers and employees will need to understand how the new calculations work.

National will deliver that transition with early guidance, worked examples and coordinated support for employers and payroll providers.

National will:

1. Introduce a First Employee Support Package with practical first-year guidance and reduced penalties for genuine administrative mistakes;
2. Make repeat seasonal hiring easier with a standard recurring seasonal agreement and shorter renewal process, while retaining the requirement for a genuine seasonal reason;
3. Make apprenticeship record-keeping simpler with consistent digital competency records and electronic sign-off; and
4. Deliver the transition to the new employment leave system with early guidance, worked payroll examples and coordinated implementation support.

B. Backing businesses to grow

National wants to support small business to invest, expand, and grow, so they can create more jobs and contribute more to their communities and the economy.

Investment Boost is one of the biggest changes National has made to support that investment. It is a \$6.6 billion investment in kiwi businesses. It allows businesses to immediately deduct 20 per cent of the cost of eligible new assets.

That could mean better tools or another vehicle for a builder, new equipment for a café, or machinery that allows a manufacturer to fill a larger order.

Early evidence suggests businesses are responding. Inland Revenue found 40 per cent of surveyed businesses that had invested and understood Investment Boost said it had increased their investment spending.

What National will do if re-elected...

Giving small businesses more room to grow

The compulsory GST registration threshold has remained at \$60,000 since 2009. Inflation has steadily eroded its real value, meaning businesses are reaching the threshold at a much earlier stage of their growth.

Crossing the threshold brings additional administration, recordkeeping and pricing decisions, potentially creating a hurdle for a business that is still getting established.

National believes there is a strong case to look again at whether the current threshold remains fit for purpose.

That's why, in government, we will commission a review of the GST registration threshold. The review will focus on reducing unnecessary compliance and removing barriers to small-business growth, while carefully considering the fiscal cost and wider impacts of any change.

National will:

5. Review the compulsory GST registration threshold, examining options to reduce compliance and remove barriers to small-business growth; and
6. Keep Investment Boost, retaining the immediate 20 per cent deduction for eligible productive assets of any value and businesses of every size.





C. Resolving employment disputes faster and more fairly

Employment disputes are stressful for everyone involved. For a small-business owner, months spent dealing with lawyers, paperwork and hearings can mean thousands of dollars in costs and hours away from customers and staff. For an employee, the same delays can leave questions about income, reputation and their next job hanging over them.

The system should be rigorous where the issues are serious, but the cost and process should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the dispute.

National will develop a faster pathway for minor matters and reform the wider system so problems are resolved earlier, cases keep moving and both sides get a fair hearing.

This work will build on the Government's 2026 review of the employment dispute system, which specifically sought feedback on the time and cost involved in disputes, the role of employment advocates and where the system could work better.

What National will do if re-elected...

A fast track for straightforward disputes

National will develop a simplified fast-track process within the Employment Relations Authority, for suitable minor employment disputes.

The new pathway will provide a simpler route to a binding decision, with straightforward forms, clear eligibility rules and firm decision timeframes. The aim is to match the process to the scale of the dispute, rather than requiring every disagreement to work through the same pathway.

Serious, complex or precedent-setting cases will remain on the appropriate existing pathway, and fair-hearing and challenge rights will be preserved.

Resolve problems earlier

Mediation is already a standard part of the employment dispute system. We want to make use of the tools already available to resolve straightforward disputes earlier, before they become drawn out and expensive.

The law already provides options such as mediator recommendations and, where the parties agree, binding decisions. But these options are not routinely offered or well understood.

National will require the Employment Relations Authority to clearly explain and offer these resolution options in suitable minor disputes, while preserving each party's choice about whether to use them. We will also ensure prompt access to mediation, with exceptions where mediation is inappropriate or urgent action is required.

Keep Authority cases moving

Where a dispute does reach the Employment Relations Authority, parties should be able to expect steady progress and a timely determination.

National will require the Authority to issue determinations within one month of the investigation meeting or final submissions, except in genuinely exceptional circumstances. Public holidays and recognised court or Authority closedown periods, including the Christmas and New Year period, will be excluded when calculating that timeframe.

We will also track cases across the full process, from filing through case management and investigation to the final decision. The Authority's case-management powers will be strengthened to narrow the issues genuinely in dispute, direct the production of relevant information and deal efficiently with repetitive or unnecessary procedural applications.

National will review the Authority's ability to enforce its own decisions, and whether their current powers are fit for purpose.

Stop people having to give the same evidence twice

Evidence given in the Authority can currently need to be heard again if a matter progresses further. This is an additional layer of cost and duplication that parties and witnesses just don't need.

National will require the Authority to keep a reliable record of oral evidence, with appropriate privacy and access safeguards. Courts will retain the ability to hear evidence again where fairness or the circumstances require it.

Better representation, without pricing people out

Employees and employers should be able to get affordable help with an employment dispute, but paid professional representation should meet basic standards of competence, conduct and transparency.

National will develop proportionate regulation of paid employment advocates, including standards of conduct and competence, clear information about fees and a proper complaints process.

Ensuring collective bargaining has genuine workplace support

Under current New Zealand law, a union can initiate collective bargaining without first demonstrating support from a minimum number or proportion of the employees whose work would be covered by the proposed agreement.

National will change this by requiring a minimum level of employee support before new collective bargaining can be initiated. The proposal would require support from the lesser of 10 employees or 20 per cent of the employees proposed to be covered, with a minimum of two employees.

Comparable jurisdictions already use employee-support tests. In the United Kingdom, a union generally needs membership of at least 10 per cent of the proposed bargaining unit to apply for statutory recognition. In Australia, where an employer has not agreed to bargain, the Fair Work Commission can require bargaining where a majority of the employees proposed to be covered want to bargain.



Earlier certainty over who is an employee

National has already introduced the contractor gateway, which came into force in February 2026. Where all of the gateway criteria are met, a worker is treated as a contractor. Where they are not, the existing common-law test continues to apply.

But where employment status remains genuinely disputed, resolving that question early can prevent the rest of the dispute becoming more complicated and expensive.

National will create a clearer early process for determining disputed employment status under section 6 of the Employment Relations Act, consistent with the contractor gateway. The objective is to give both sides earlier certainty about which rights and obligations apply before they incur the cost of litigating the rest of the dispute.

Employment law people can actually navigate

New Zealand's employment framework has accumulated across multiple statutes over many years. We currently have a system where obligations are spread across a range of Acts, making it particularly difficult for small businesses and employees without specialist legal support to work out what applies.

National will progress an Employment Relations Consolidation Bill in the next parliamentary term. The purpose will be to bring the core employment-law framework into a clearer and more coherent legislative structure, reduce unnecessary cross-references and make rights and obligations easier to find.

Health and safety rules that make sense on the shop floor

The same principle applies to health and safety. A workshop, café or construction business should be able to understand what it needs to do to keep people safe.

National will rewrite priority health and safety codes and guidance in plain English, with practical examples developed alongside small businesses, workers and industry experts. Too often, outdated and difficult-to-understand guidance adds an unnecessary layer of compliance difficulty.

This will support the Government's wider health and safety reforms by making expectations clearer and helping businesses focus their effort on the risks that can actually cause harm.

National will:

7. Develop a fast-track process for suitable minor employment disputes, through a simplified Employment Relations Authority pathway, with clear eligibility, proportionate procedures, firm decision timeframes and fair-hearing safeguards;
8. Make better use of mediation to resolve minor disputes early, including requiring mediator recommendations and available binding options to be clearly explained and offered in suitable cases;
9. Require Employment Relations Authority determinations within one month of the investigation meeting or final submissions, and track delays across the full process from filing to decision;
10. Require the Authority to record oral evidence so it can be reused where lawful and fair, reducing unnecessary repetition;
11. Strengthen the Employment Relations Authority's powers to keep cases moving, and deal with unnecessary procedural delays;
12. Review the Employment Relations Authority's enforcement powers, including whether it should be able to enforce more of its own orders without requiring parties to begin avoidable proceedings in another court;
13. Introduce proportionate regulation of paid employment advocates, covering conduct, competence, transparent fees and complaints;
14. Require a minimum level of employee support before new collective bargaining can begin, proposing a threshold of the lesser of 10 employees or 20 per cent of those proposed to be covered, with a minimum of two employees, and consulting on its implementation;
15. Create a clearer early process for resolving disputed employment status under section 6, consistent with the contractor gateway;
16. Prepare and introduce an Employment Relations Consolidation Bill in the next term to simplify the legislative framework; and
17. Rewrite priority health and safety codes and guidance in plain English, with practical examples for small businesses.



D. Giving business owners their time back

For many small-business owners, the paperwork starts when the working day ends. After serving customers, managing staff and paying suppliers, there are still forms to complete, licences to renew and records to update.

Each requirement might seem small on its own. Together, they take time and money away from the business and time away from family.

National will make everyday compliance simpler. Businesses should be able to provide information once, use reliable digital tools and have a strong compliance record recognised. Requirements should be clear, practical and proportionate to the risks involved.

What National will do if re-elected...

Tell government once

Changing a business address or contact details should be straightforward. Owners should not have to work through a list of agencies updating the same information in different systems.

National will develop a Tell Government Once service built around the New Zealand Business Number and existing government systems. Businesses will be able to update core details in one place and securely share those changes with participating agencies, including Inland Revenue, ACC, the Companies Office and relevant licensing bodies.

National will also explore this service integrating with Councils where practical, with any necessary information-sharing changes supported by clear privacy rules and business control over the information shared.

Simpler renewals for reliable businesses

A café can have separate renewal dates for food registration, alcohol licensing, outdoor dining and signage. Keeping track of different forms, invoices and deadlines creates work throughout the year.

National will require councils to offer a coordinated approach for relevant permits, licences and registrations. Where possible, we will streamline approvals, aligning approval lengths, ensuring businesses don't have to renew more often than necessary.

We will also introduce automatic or simplified renewals for suitable low-risk approvals where a business has a strong compliance record and its circumstances have not materially changed.

For hospitality businesses, National will also deliver the alcohol-licensing reforms already announced, including simpler applications and renewals, longer renewal periods for suitable licences and changes to the fee structure.

Letting accountants help with statutory declarations

Many small businesses already rely on their chartered accountant for trusted advice and official paperwork. They should also be able to complete a statutory declaration with that professional rather than arranging a separate appointment elsewhere.

National will progress Suze Redmayne's members bill, first introduced by Carl Bates, to allow eligible chartered accountants to administer statutory declarations, with appropriate professional and identity safeguards.

This is a specific extension of who can take a declaration. Remote statutory declarations are already permitted subject to legal requirements, and this reform will build on those existing options rather than duplicate them.

Making digital the default

Businesses increasingly keep records, sign documents and serve customers digitally. Government requirements should make it easy to use reliable technology rather than forcing businesses back onto paper.

National will make clear that secure and accessible electronic records can satisfy document-retention requirements wherever a physical original is not genuinely necessary. We will also remove remaining statutory exceptions and inconsistent agency practices that unnecessarily require paper.

That will include modernising physical-display rules for alcohol licences and vehicle consumer information where accessible digital alternatives can provide the same information to customers and enforcement officers. We will also make clear that suitable electronic proof of delivery, including app confirmations, photographs and secure tracking records, can meet relevant requirements, and that accurate electronic hazardous-substance records can be used where they remain readily accessible onsite, including in an emergency.

National will replace unnecessary compulsory newspaper notices with searchable online publication, while keeping appropriate ways to inform affected communities. We will also remove obsolete fax, telex and other paper-based requirements that create a real compliance burden.

Where digital options already exist, we will make their acceptance clearer and more consistent.

Clearer fire-safety guidance

Small-business owners should be able to understand their fire-safety obligations without needing to become experts in the system.

National will publish clearer guidance on existing evacuation requirements, approved schemes and available templates, helping businesses understand what applies to them and how to comply.

The objective across these reforms is the same: less time navigating government processes, fewer unnecessary forms and more time spent running and growing the business.

National will:

18. Build a Tell Government Once service around the NZBN, so core business information can be updated once and shared across participating agencies and councils;
19. Make business renewals simpler and better coordinated by aligning renewal dates where practical and introducing automatic or simplified renewals for suitable low-risk businesses with strong compliance records;
20. Implement the announced alcohol-licensing reforms to simplify applications and renewals, extend suitable renewal periods and reform fees;
21. Allow eligible chartered accountants to administer statutory declarations, making it easier for small businesses to complete official paperwork through a trusted professional they already use;
22. Remove unjustified paper-retention requirements and publish consistent guidance on accepting lawful electronic records and evidence;
23. Modernise remaining licence and vehicle-information display rules where accessible digital alternatives preserve consumer and enforcement access;
24. Replace unnecessary compulsory newspaper notices with searchable online publication and appropriate community notification;
25. Remove obsolete fax, telex and paper requirements that impose a real compliance burden; and
26. Publish clearer small-business guidance on fire evacuation requirements, approved schemes and available templates.

E. Improving cashflow and lowering costs for businesses

Labour's Business Payment Practices Act would have required large businesses to report their payment practices without requiring them to pay suppliers any sooner. National repealed it and instead put the responsibility on government to lead by example, while committing to work with BusinessNZ on an industry-led prompt-payment code.

Government agencies are now expected to pay 95 per cent of domestic eInvoices within five business days and other domestic invoices within 10 working days. Results reported in July showed agencies paid 95.9 per cent of more than 1.6 million invoices within 10 working days.

National will build on these reforms by continuing to publish agency payment performance, addressing persistent delays and ensuring prompt-payment requirements flow through government supply chains.

We are also making invoicing easier. eInvoicing sends invoices directly between accounting systems, reducing manual entry, mistakes and opportunities for invoice fraud. By July, around 113,000 businesses were registered to receive eInvoices, up from 52,000 earlier in the year. Research estimates full adoption could deliver up to \$800 million a year in productivity gains.

What National will do if re-elected...

Lower-cost, more competitive payments

Payment fees take a slice out of every sale. The Commerce Commission's implemented interchange-fee reductions were expected to lower merchant service fees by around \$90 million a year, while proposed caps on commercial credit cards could deliver another \$40 million in annual savings.

National will make merchant fees, terminal charges and other payment-service costs easier to compare, with the disclosure obligation sitting with providers rather than small businesses. We will also monitor whether regulated savings are reaching businesses and support further evidence-based fee reductions.

Helping independent repairers compete

Modern vehicles increasingly require access to manufacturers' information to diagnose and repair faults. National will progress Dan Bidois' motor-vehicle repair-information reform to give independent workshops better access to that information.

A regulated market for manufacturers' repair information would help independent repairers compete, give customers more choice and reduce avoidable delays getting work vehicles back on the road, with appropriate safety, security and commercial safeguards.





Putting useful technology within reach

Small-business owners can see the potential of AI, but often lack the time or expertise to work out where to start. The AI Advisory Pilot helps businesses identify useful applications and put them into practice, co-funding up to 50 per cent of eligible expert support.

Around 150 businesses have already joined, another 120 places have been announced, and around 650 businesses received co-funded support for AI-related courses between July 2025 and June 2026.

Giving smaller firms a fair shot at government work

Government procurement reforms introduced in December 2025 reduced the main rulebook from 71 rules to 47 and introduced a minimum 10 per cent weighting for economic benefits to New Zealand in covered procurement evaluations.

National will monitor the reforms to ensure capable smaller New Zealand suppliers have genuine opportunities to compete. Requirements around insurance, experience and reporting should be proportionate to the size and risk of the contract being offered.

National will:

27. Build on the Government's prompt-payment reforms by holding agencies to account for low performance, tackling persistent delays and enforcing fair payment terms through procurement supply chains;
28. Complete the industry-led prompt-payment programme and expand eInvoicing with BusinessNZ, accounting providers and business organisations;
29. Keep driving down payment costs by improving fee transparency, monitoring whether regulated savings reach businesses and supporting further evidence-based reductions;
30. Complete the rollout of modern business payments, including regulated open banking and the Reserve Bank's payments modernisation programme;
31. Progress Dan Bidois' motor-vehicle repair-information reform to give independent workshops better access to manufacturers' information; and
32. Deliver the Government's expanded AI support for small businesses, including the AI Advisory Pilot.

F. Backing the businesses that build and produce

A builder will not take on another apprentice without confidence the next job can proceed. A manufacturer cannot fill a bigger order without the machinery and space to produce it. For these businesses, delays cost money and can mean missed opportunities.

National is making it easier to invest, build and expand through clearer rules, faster decisions and better access to the tools businesses need to grow. Fast-track approvals are already helping significant housing, infrastructure and productive projects move through a more coordinated process.

The replacement planning system will bring more consistent national rules and fewer unnecessary consents, with an estimated 15,000 to 22,000 fewer consent and permit applications and \$13.3 billion in administration and compliance savings over 30 years.

Building reforms will also consolidate consenting functions, halve Project Information Memorandum processing times from 20 to 10 working days and introduce proportionate liability backed by professional indemnity insurance and home warranties.

National has also opened the door to more trusted overseas building products. Recognition of Australia's WaterMark scheme alone made more than 90,000 plumbing products available under the recognised pathway, increasing choice and competition for builders and customers.

What National will do if re-elected...

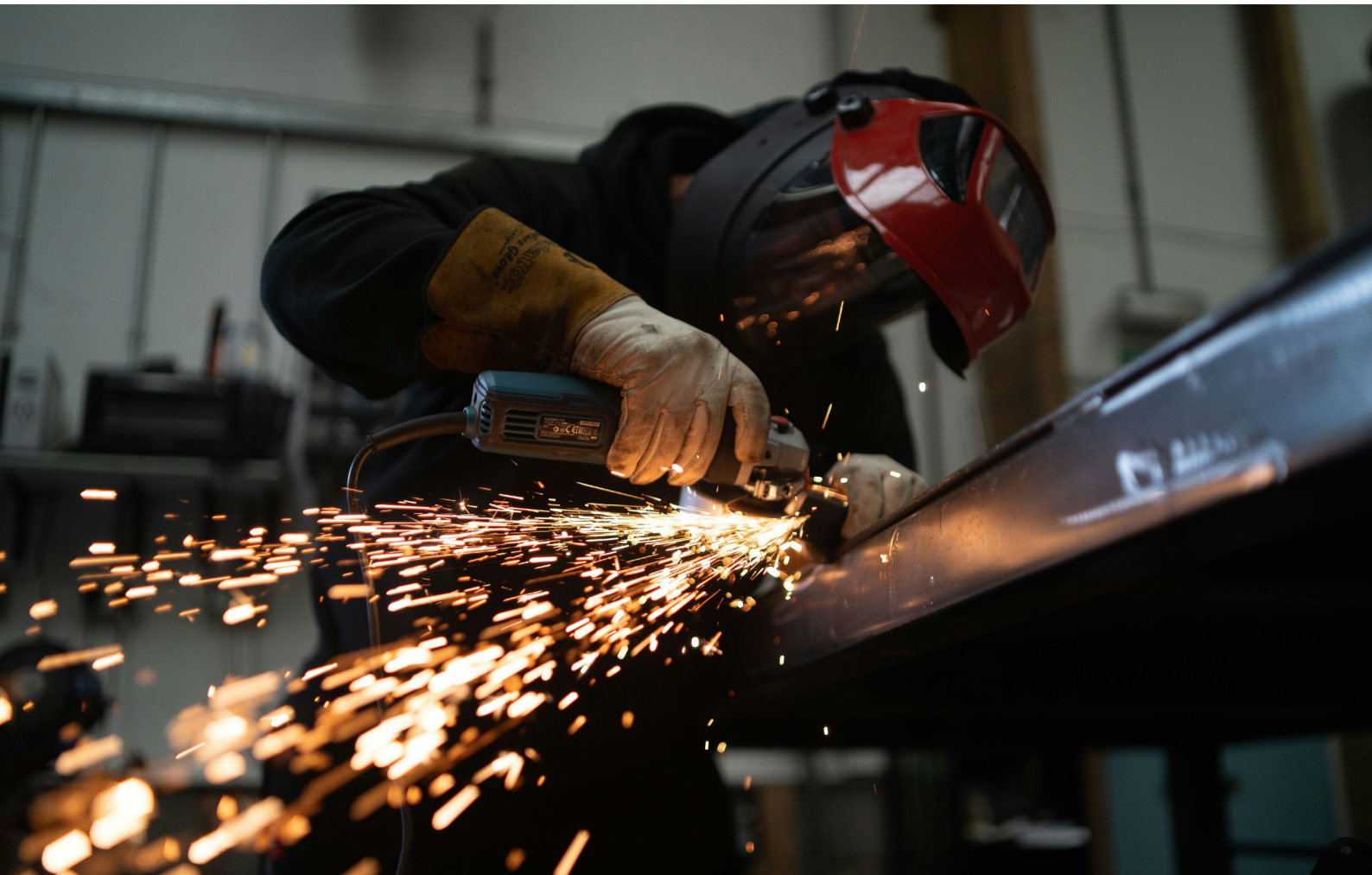
Faster approvals and less duplicated work

National will implement the replacement planning system and carry the building reforms through into practice.

We will also tackle repeated requests for the same technical information.

National will require regulators to accept and reuse relevant, appropriately certified reports where they remain current and fit for purpose. Further information can still be required where site conditions, the project or the risks have materially changed.

We will continue to recognise trusted overseas building products and standards where they meet New Zealand's requirements. Builders should have access to a wider range of reliable products, and customers should benefit from stronger competition.



Finance for the next stage of growth

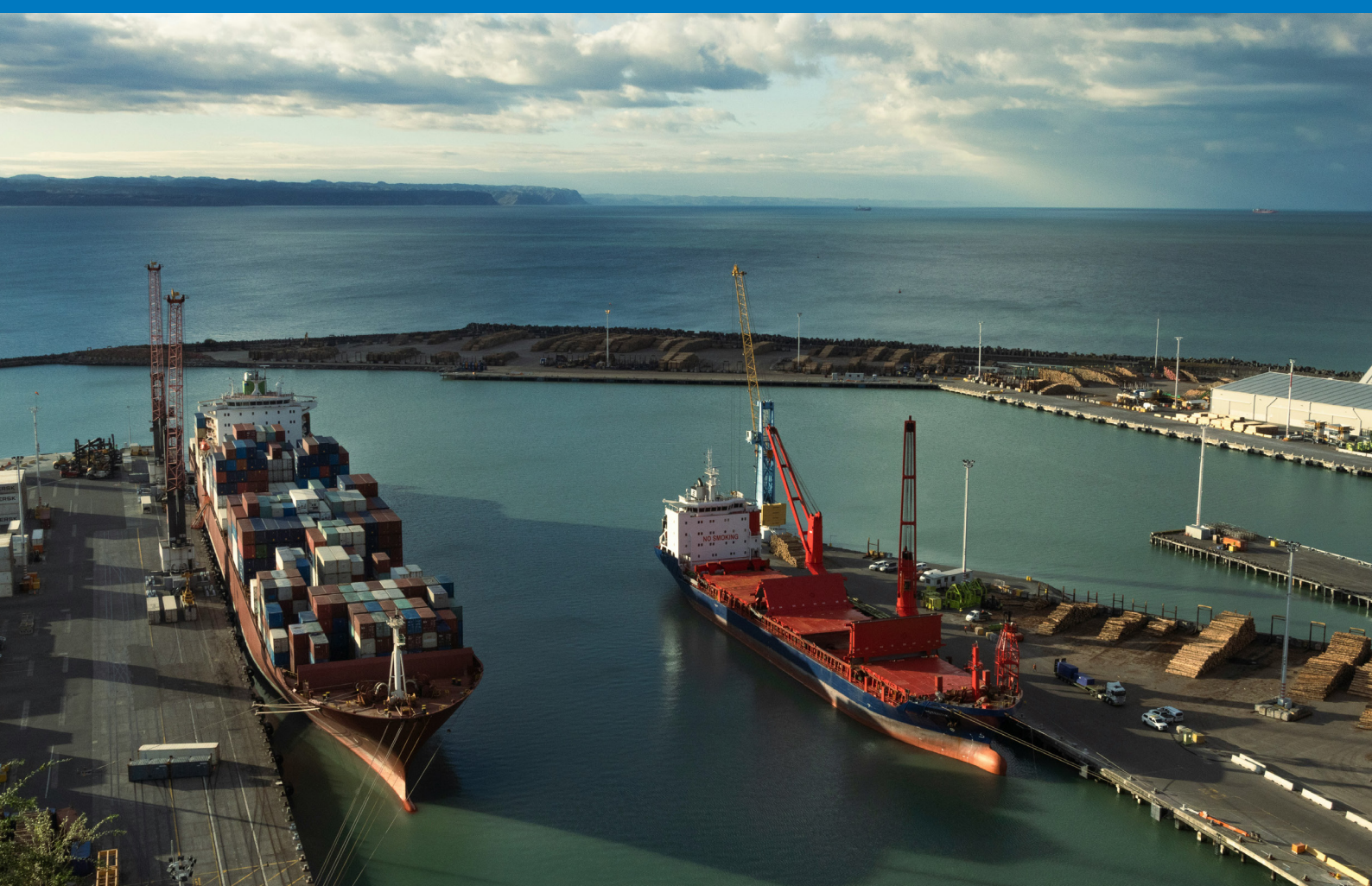
National will carry through capital-market reforms that make it easier for growing firms to raise equity and debt, with requirements proportionate to the offer and appropriate protections for investors.

We will continue attracting investment that brings productive capacity, skills and international connections into New Zealand. The goal is more businesses able to buy better equipment, develop new products, reach new customers and create skilled jobs in their communities.

National will:

33. Deliver the replacement planning system with consistent national rules, fewer unnecessary consents and practical support through the transition;
34. Deliver building-consent reforms that enable greater consolidation of consenting functions and more consistent decisions;
35. Cut Project Information Memorandum processing times from 20 to 10 working days as part of the building-system reforms;
36. Deliver proportionate building liability, backed by professional indemnity insurance and home warranties;
37. Require regulators to reuse current, relevant certified engineering and geotechnical reports where they remain fit for purpose;
38. Continue expanding recognition of trusted overseas building products and standards that meet New Zealand's requirements;
39. Deliver capital-market reforms to make it easier for growing businesses to raise equity and debt; and
40. Use Invest New Zealand to connect productive businesses with international investment, skills and commercial partners.





G. Taking more New Zealand businesses to the world

A small New Zealand business can have a product the world wants but lack the contacts, time or expertise to navigate an unfamiliar market. National will help more firms make their first export sale and turn promising overseas demand into regular orders.

National signed the New Zealand - India Free Trade Agreement in April. It has now been ratified and will enter into force on 20 October 2026, giving exporters better access to a market of 1.4 billion people.

The agreement will eliminate or reduce tariffs on 95 per cent of our current exports to India. Fifty-seven per cent will be tariff free from day one, including sheep meat, wool and more than 95 per cent of forestry and wood exports.

National has also expanded access through agreements with the UAE, brought the NZ-EU FTA into force ahead of schedule, concluded negotiations with the Gulf Cooperation Council, and continued removing non-tariff barriers holding exporters back.

What National will do if re-elected...

Backing the next 200 exporters

National's Next 200 program will provide intensive support to 200 high-potential small and medium-sized businesses ready to begin exporting or expand significantly. Each will receive a dedicated NZTE relationship manager, tailored market intelligence, overseas introductions and help with regulatory and customs requirements.

We will give NZTE a sharper role in identifying commercial opportunities and connecting smaller firms with buyers. Support should help an owner work through the practical steps from initial interest to a completed order.

Make trade rules easier to use

National will introduce three AI-powered tools: an FTA tariff adviser, a rules-of-origin navigator and a market-access requirements tool. Owners will be able to describe their product and destination in plain English and find the relevant official requirements, with access to specialist help where needed.

We will expand paperless trade, digital certification and automated customs processes, including pursuing real-time electronic certification with the United Kingdom and other close partners.

A trusted-exporter fast lane will build on Customs' existing Secure Exports Scheme. We will make its benefits easier for eligible smaller firms to use.

National will pursue the removal of a \$1 billion in non-tariff barriers by 2030, working with businesses to identify the certification, standards and market-access problems stopping otherwise competitive products from reaching customers.

More markets and stronger supply links

National will pursue the goal of doubling export value by 2034, help businesses use the India agreement and progress the Gulf agreement into force. We will pursue the next group of priority trade negotiations where they offer meaningful opportunities for New Zealand exporters.

We will modernise existing agreements, including services access with China, expand digital trade arrangements and support expansion of the CPTPP and RCEP. Our goal of lifting services to 35 per cent of export value by 2030 recognises the opportunities for smaller technology, creative and professional businesses to sell internationally.

We will pursue essential-supplies agreements with like-minded partners, using the Singapore agreement as a model. Reliable access to fuel, machinery parts and other critical inputs helps a small business keep operating when international supply chains are disrupted.

National will:

41. Establish the Next 200 program, providing intensive NZTE support for 200 high-potential small and medium-sized exporters;
42. Create an AI-powered export navigator covering tariffs, rules of origin and market-access requirements, linked to official information and specialist support;
43. Expand paperless trade and digital certification, including pursuing real-time electronic certification with close trading partners;
44. Create a trusted-exporter fast lane through the Secure Exports Scheme, making it easier for eligible smaller firms to participate and reducing duplicated documentation.
45. Remove a further \$1 billion in non-tariff barriers by 2030, prioritising restrictions identified with New Zealand exporters;
46. Open more markets for small businesses by helping firms use the India and Gulf agreements, pursuing the next group of priority markets, and expanding digital and services trade arrangements; and
47. Strengthen New Zealand's trade resilience by pursuing essential-supplies agreements that help businesses maintain access to critical goods during disruption.

