



BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING NOTES

1 – 2 pm, Wednesday, 13 January 2021

Held via Microsoft Teams

Members: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Attendees: David Soper (Customs), Chappie Te Kani (DPMC), Deborah Geels (MFAT), Vince Arbuckle (MPI)

Invitees: Sarah Davies (MBIE), Stacey Munro (MBIE), s 9(2)(g)(ii) OIA, Shelley Tucker (MoT), Ara Tai Rakena (MFAT)

Apologies: Chris Seed (MFAT), Ray Smith (MPI)

1. Welcome, Apologies, Meeting Context

The Chair welcomed members for the first meeting of the Border Executive Board and noted the meeting would focus on the work to introduce Pre-departure Testing.

2. Policy Update

DPMC updated the group on the paper being prepared on the implementation of the pre-departure testing (PDT) that is due to go to Ministers in the next day or two. While initially being prepared to address testing for the UK and US, this will now also include broadening out PDT to other countries. Issues still being worked through include whether different treatment for different countries is consistent with the Bill of Rights Act, and application to air crew.

The Board noted that the implementation of the testing needed to allow enough time for travellers to make the necessary arrangements and not be caught short.

A question was raised as to whether agencies are doing enough to test MIQ staff and other border workers. MoH advised they are continuously reviewing the guidance around testing of staff and PPE provision in the context of wider work on the response. This is detailed in an A3 which they can share. It was also noted that ongoing advice to Ministers should reflect options for supporting MIQ and border workers at a time when people coming through the border have a higher level of risk.

The Board noted the importance of continuing to work with unions, and that the approach to working with unions for the MIQ and other parts of the system be joined up.

Action Points:

- MoH to share the A3 detailing the work on the range of options to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- MIQ and Customs to work to link up engagement with all relevant unions about workforce health and safety, to ensure arrangements across the system are consistent.

3. Readiness for Go-live

The Board discussed the readiness for the implementation of the PDT, with members of the view that agencies are all on track.

MBIE noted that MIQ is anticipating that some booked places will not be used and will proactively reallocate these over the first 2 weeks of the introduction of the new policies.

The Board noted the need for good communications around the new policies and processes, including the ability to respond to questions from passengers and airlines. Messaging should include that there could be increased demand on agencies during the transition period as the new policies are introduced.

The Board discussed plans for communications with media and the likely interest in levels of passenger compliance with the new regime.

MFAT advised it is expecting more calls for assistance and is increasing staffing at the call centre. MBIE also noted its call centre will take questions. DPMC will work with agencies to develop some FAQ and appropriate responses.

There was a discussion about enforcement implementation. The Board agreed that its preference is that this occur two weeks after the wider roll-out. This will allow time to understand non-compliance and address any implementation issues. This will be conveyed to Ministers in the upcoming briefing.

4. Reporting

The Board noted that agencies will collect the best possible data about the implementation and compliance of the provisions, including those who may be stranded and seek financial assistance, but this would likely be a very manual process – particularly in the beginning.

Action Point:

- It was agreed that MBIE would work with agencies to prepare a reporting template to be used for regular reporting to Minister Hipkins on the PDT.

5. Assurance

The Chair proposed a two-stage process for the assurance of the pre-departure testing, involving an initial review of the process maps and operating procedures, followed by a future review after the PDT has been in operation for approximately 8 weeks. It was agreed that it would be important to have someone who knows the system to undertake the reviews and s 9(2)(a) OIA and s 9(2)(a) were suggested as possibilities. MoH noted the importance of guidance on the use of infection prevention control (IPC) measures and ensuring frontline workers are aware of this. MoH is running its third round of assurance over IPC in MIQ facilities. IPC Assurance at airport and seaports has not yet been undertaken. MoH agreed to look into doing this.

Action Points:

- MBIE to work with agencies to develop a proposal for the Board on suitable consultants to undertake the review.

- MOH's infection prevention control (IPC) people to provide a presentation to the Board on their work at an upcoming meeting.
- MoH to look at running an assurance programme re IPC for workers and passengers/crew at international airports and seaports.

6. Other issues and priorities

The Chair advised that one way travel from the Cook Islands to New Zealand from 21 January would be announced tomorrow. The planned Cabinet paper on the Trans-Tasman safe travel zone has been deferred by a couple of weeks.

The Board agreed to meet again on Monday 18 January to discuss the PDT implementation and any issues arising.

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING NOTES

1 – 2 pm, Wednesday, 13 January 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Members: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Attendees: Michael Papesch (Customs), Sue Gordon (MoH), Vince Arbuckle (MPI), David Taylor (MFAT)

Invitees:

Apologies: Chris Seed (MFAT), Ray Smith (MPI)

1. Welcome, Apologies, Meeting Context

The Chair welcomed members and set out the context for the meeting. The minutes for the last BSGG meeting on 17 December 2020 and the previous BEB meeting on 13 January 2021 were confirmed and completed action points were noted.

2. Safe Travel Zone update –Cook Islands go-live

The Chair noted that the first quarantine free flight was processed through Auckland airport without any issues.

3. Job description for Executive Director for the Secretariat

The Board discussed the job description for the new Executive Director role for the Secretariat and noted that feedback from Board members would be needed by Tuesday 26 January 2021.

4. Using NZeTA platform for health declaration and contact tracing

MoH updated the Group on work underway to further develop the NZeTA platform to receive pre-flight health declarations that will also assist with contact tracing. The Group discussed the benefits of using the NZeTA platform and the need for its use to be mandatory for all travellers including Australians and New Zealanders. The Board agreed that INZ would assume responsibility for further work and report back to the Board on progress in late February.

The group discussed the need for strong data protection standards and the importance of having the right information sharing agreements in place and noted that the app may also be used to collect vaccine status information from travellers. MoT noted the work underway on a paper regarding a 'Travel Pass' and offered to report back to the group with further information.

Decisions:

- **Agreed** that INZ is to assume responsibility for progressing work on using the NZeTA platform for health declarations

Action points:

- INZ to report back to the Board in late February with on progress to update the NZeTA platform to collect health declarations
- MoT to report back to the Board in late February with an update on the 'Travel Pass' paper.

5. Vaccine planning and communications with border workers

MoH updated the group on the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme noting that of the three planned scenarios, New Zealand is currently in scenario one with low to no community transmission meaning that the focus for vaccinations was on the health and border workforces. MoH outlined work underway to identify the individuals that would be offered the opportunity to be vaccinated first and noted the need for clear and effective communications between agencies whilst identifying this group.

The Board discussed the importance of working with the unions and the need for continued testing due to the possibility that even though people are vaccinated, they may still be able to act as carriers for COVID-19. The Chair raised a question about overseas postings as some countries are offering to vaccinate diplomatic staff. The group noted the need for further planning to include diplomatic staff as measures overseas may mean that New Zealand diplomats are excluded from events and buildings until they are vaccinated.

6. Terms of Reference –Review of COVID-19 Maritime Border Measures

MoT raised a question about the inclusion of seafarer welfare in the Terms of Reference for the review of COVID-19 Maritime Border Measures, however, the Board noted that the assurance work would focus on work being undertaken as part of the Maritime Border Order.

7. Other issues and priorities

No other issues or priorities were raised.

Meeting closed at 4:00pm.

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING NOTES

3 – 4 pm, Wednesday, 28 January 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Members: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Attendees: Michael Papesch (Customs), Sue Gordon (MoH), Catriona Robinson (MBIE)

Invitees: Emma Hickson (MoH), Dr Sally Roberts (MoH), Bryre Patchell (Customs), Steve Gilbert (MPI)

Apologies: Michael Papesch (Customs)

1. Welcome, Apologies, Meeting Context

The Chair welcomed members and set out the context for the meeting.

2. Infection Prevention Control presentation

The Infection Prevention Control (IPC) team from MoH gave a presentation to the Board on how practices and principles used to prevent transmission of infections in hospitals were being used at the border to help control and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 within the working environment.

The Chair thanked the IPC team for the presentation and the Board discussed issues around the establishment of health and safety committees noting that they were not functioning well due to the lack of attendance. The Board agreed that the IPC audit team should audit the Auckland and Christchurch international airports.

Decision

- Agreed that the IPC audit team should audit the Auckland and Christchurch international airports.

Action

- MoH to commission an IPC audit of Auckland and Christchurch international airports.

3. Maritime Border – Le Laperouse

The Board discussed the evolving situation with the potential arrival of a cruise ship, Le Laperouse, which was en route to New Zealand without visas for 61 members of the crew. The Board noted that there were five potential options for dealing with the emerging situation depending on the actions of Le Laperouse and that communications should be proactively released to manage public expectations. s 6(b)(i) OIA

[REDACTED]

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4. Other issues and priorities

No other issues or priorities were raised.

Meeting closed at 4:00pm.

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING NOTES

3 – 4 pm, Wednesday, 04 February 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Members: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Attendees: Michael Papesch (Customs), Sue Gordon (MoH), Catriona Robinson (MBIE), Audrey Sonerson (MFAT), Cheryl Barnes (DPMC), Maree Roberts (MoH), Una Jagose (Crown Law)

Invitees: Jacinda Funnell (Customs), Megan Main (MBIE), Andy Milne (MBIE), Erina Clayton (MPI)

Apologies: Chris Seed (MFAT)

1. Welcome, Apologies, Meeting Context

The Chair welcomed members and set out the context for the meeting.

2. Collective plan for vaccination of border staff

The Chair provided an overview of the proposed collective plan to roll out COVID-19 vaccination to border workers and their household contacts. The Board discussed issues and concerns around the potential risk to the COVID-19 elimination strategy arising from any proportion of the border staff refusing vaccinations, but was assured by MoH that risk had already been minimised to a very small degree with measures such as ongoing testing, use of PPE etc. all of which should continue to be applied as before. Aspects of employee wellbeing and safety were discussed as useful motivators to encourage and drive vaccination numbers, and it was agreed to ensure vaccination requirements get incorporated in the terms of agreement for any new employees joining the border workforce. s 9(2)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(h)
OIA

[REDACTED] MoT also noted that special factors influencing vaccination rates of private sector border staff such as airline and airport staff may need to be taken into consideration.

Board members noted the need for a tougher approach at quarantine facilities due to higher risk and the importance of clear and well-coordinated communication to border staff across agencies overall. MoH agreed to circulate advice on a detailed implementation plan and guidelines that were to be presented for Ministerial discussions and approval the following day. MoH also agreed to work with DHBs on establishing the location of vaccination centres such that employee convenience of having the vaccine administered on site would be balanced with getting DHBs to provide the required monitoring and timely reporting of vaccination results.

In order to ensure there was a consistent rollout while still managing the needs of specific agencies, the Board agreed to appoint bespoke liaison representatives from each agency to work in close collaboration with Andy Milne from MBIE, who would be the central coordinator reporting back to

the Board with regular updates on status and new developments. It was noted that another liaison group would be set up in parallel to ensure clear and targeted communication of information and instructions to all agencies.

The Chair acknowledged and thanked the joint agency teams from MoH and MBIE in pulling together the border vaccination advice within tighter timeframes than were anticipated.

Decision

- **Agreed** that the three-pronged Educate/Expect/Support approach would be the most appropriate in achieving the aim of getting the highest possible vaccination rate with smoothest possible employee experience.
- **Agreed** that Andy Milne from MBIE will be the central coordinator for border vaccine rollout, reporting back to the Board with regular updates on status and new developments.
- **Agreed** to ensure vaccination requirements get incorporated in the terms of agreement for any new employees joining the border workforce.

Action

- MoH agreed to circulate advice on the detailed implementation plan and guidelines that were to be presented for Ministerial discussions and approval the next day.

3. Other issues and priorities

No other issues or priorities were raised.

Meeting closed at 4:00pm.

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING NOTES

3 – 4 pm, Wednesday, 11 February 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Members: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Attendees: Michael Papesch (Customs), Sue Gordon (MoH), Catriona Robinson (MBIE), Cheryl Barnes (DPMC), Maree Roberts (MoH), Aaron Martin (Crown Law), Dallas Welch (PSC)

Invitees: {Roquito Lim (MPI), Danny Tsai (MoT), Alastair Farr (Customs)} – Item 2, {Andy Milne (MBIE), Heather Peacocke (DPMC), Carl Ferguson (MoH), Carl Billington (MoH)} – Item 3

Apologies: Carolyn Tremain (MBIE)

1. Welcome, Apologies, Meeting Context

The Chair welcomed members and set out the context for the meeting.

2. Financial sustainability: Updated passenger volume scenarios

The Board commented briefly on the updated scenarios, noting that the new numbers were significantly more optimistic than the previous passenger volume forecasts, and questioned the reliability of the underlying assumptions, under which Safe Travel Zones (STZ) would open soon and would then remain open.

Members pointed out that using such an assumption as the basis for formulating revised funding requirements posed considerable risks to the financial sustainability of the border sector, especially in light of the continued uncertainties and barriers in STZ implementation. The Board agreed a more prudent approach was required and asked for the preparation of alternative scenarios, based on a later start date of the STZ in October/November 2021 and disruptions to the STZs once established.

The team was also asked to discuss, with Treasury, options for addressing the on-going uncertainty over passenger volumes in the context of the Budget 2021 bids.

Action

- **The modelling team** to prepare alternative passenger volume scenarios, based on a later start date of the STZ in October/November 2021 and disruptions to the STZs once established. , and to discuss the handling of the revised scenarios with the Treasury.

3. Border vaccination status

Andy Milne provided an overview of the coordination efforts on the collective plan to roll out the COVID-19 vaccination to border workers and their household contacts. He noted that while DHB plans were still being firmed up, staff data was being prepared by agency leads for migration to MoH, and clarity was being gained on the information gathering process for household contacts of border staff.

Crown Law noted that a Cabinet paper on maximising the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines was being reframed, to outline options that would (if approved) prohibit frontline workers from remaining in that role unless vaccinated. Options for Tier 1 staff who refused vaccination, and who could not be redeployed, were discussed including what was feasible under current legislation.

Members also discussed issues related to managing vaccination exemptions, engagement with private sector staff and employers, and the implication of time lags in the case of staff who may require a brief period of time to accept and consent to the vaccine. Crown Law confirmed that the paper being put forward to Cabinet was to seek agreement in principle on the options that would be explored further, and consultation and input from border agencies was agreed to be sought prior to submission.

MoH noted that the outcomes of the frontline vaccination phase would have considerable influence on the public opinion and confidence around the broader rollout of vaccination to the public, and provided a brief overview of the communication and engagement plans designed to provide staff and employers with easy access to reliable information and support, and address key questions and concerns that were likely to present barriers to accepting vaccination. Final communications collateral was under development and would be shared with all agency communication leads over the next few days.

Action

- MoH to provide finalised communications collateral to all agency communication leads over the next few days.

4. Update on Safe Travel Zones

The Chair provided a brief update, quoting significant uncertainties in the Trans-Tasman stream,

~~s 6(b)(i) OIA~~, ~~s 6(a) OIA~~, ~~s 6(b)(i) OIA~~, ~~s 7(b) OIA~~
~~s 7(b) OIA~~
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5. Other issues and priorities

No other issues or priorities were raised.

Meeting closed at 4:00pm.

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING NOTES

3 – 4 pm, Wednesday, 18 February 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Members: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Attendees: Michael Papesch (Customs), Catriona Robinson (MBIE), Megan Main (MBIE), Erina Clayton (MPI)

Invitees: Andrew Milne (MBIE) – Item 2 and 3, Willy Trolove (MBIE), {Jacinda Funnell (Customs), David Soper (Customs)} – Item 4

Apologies: Carolyn Tremain

1. Welcome, Apologies, Meeting Context

The Chair welcomed members and set out the context for the meeting.

2. Border vaccination – operational readiness

Andy Milne provided an update of the border vaccination coordination efforts, noting progress in collaboration with DHBs, with major vaccination centres confirmed, training and dry runs of vaccine rollout underway, submissions of employee data to MoH, and the defence force assisting with coordinating vaccination appointment bookings for staff. MoH noted challenges in the reporting of vaccination booking numbers from any central source, and recommended that reporting should instead be directed on the numbers of staff being vaccinated from each agency.

3. Border vaccination – communications

Willy Trolove, the newly established single point-of-contact for vaccination-related communications, noted that border staff were now keen to understand details of the vaccination rollout process and confirmed the benefits of sharing frequently asked questions and answers among border agencies.

4. Border vaccination – HR/legal issues and engagement with unions

Customs provided an overview of a draft Ministerial report outlining the approach to maximise uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout to border workers. It is anticipated that there will be healthy uptake among border workers influenced by gradual peer pressure and the subsequent gains for people to then be able to travel overseas. The report recommends using existing employment legislation levers to maximise voluntary uptake for a sufficient period of time (such as eight weeks) before considering alternative employment options. Members discussed the need for applying different considerations for border employees who are not part of the public sector (such as airport staff), and noted issues related to individual as well as collective health-and-safety risk assessment and accountability. Members also agreed on the importance of engaging with union groups to consult on the risk assessment reviews before determining next steps.

Decision

- The board **agreed** to the recommendation that agencies should use an eight week period to use existing employment legislation levers to maximise uptake of the vaccination and provide sufficient time to work with those workers who may initially choose not to be vaccinated

Action

- Customs to share a draft health and safety risk assessment to determine the cohort for vaccination, and make it available for other agencies to personalise and use for their own Tier 1 staff.
- Customs to provide a revised process map of vaccination options (with timeline) for employers to engage with Tier 1A staff.
- Willy Trolove to circulate vaccination FAQs and other communications collateral with other agencies in the next few days.

5. Other issues and priorities

No other issues or priorities were raised.

Meeting closed at 4:00pm.

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING NOTES

3 – 4 pm, Wednesday, 25 February 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Members: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Attendees: Michael Papesch (Customs), Cheryl Barnes (DPMC),

Invitees: {Andrew Milne (MBIE), David Soper (Customs), Erina Clayton (MPI)} – Item 2, {Alastair Farr (Customs), Roquito Lim (MPI)} – Item 3

Apologies:

1. Welcome, Apologies, Meeting Context

The Chair welcomed members and set out the context for the meeting.

2. Border vaccination

Andy Milne provided an update of the border vaccination status, noting a smooth and steady commencement of staff being vaccinated, with approximately 2000 staff immunised and no significant challenges encountered so far. He noted keen Ministerial interest in the understanding of the details of the likely issues, barriers, and legal considerations related to the vaccination of border staff.

A Cabinet paper is being prepared to outline options to support the staff vaccination programme, particularly the steps to maximise vaccination uptake in the proposed 8-week period of staff engagement, and the options that would be considered beyond then. Board members agreed to provide feedback and signoff on these papers over the course of the weekend.

MPI provided an update on the development of a process for individual risk assessments, which will be shared with other border agencies once finalised. MPI agreed to report back on this work as part of the Health and Safety (H&S) and Employee Relations (ER) management of Border Worker Vaccination.

Members discussed the benefits of using the vaccination data generated in the next couple of weeks to assess whether any additional levers may be required to increase vaccine uptake. They agreed that using harder measures such as redeploying staff who are not vaccinated at this stage could risk the currently observed positive attitude and uptake from staff. They acknowledged that regular communication should be the main tool to encourage vaccination uptake, and noted the need to provide regular updates of vaccination numbers to Ministers. The Chair thanked Andy and his team for their successful outcomes and ongoing efforts.

Action

- MPI/Customs to report back on the progress of the H&S and ER management of Border Worker Vaccination.

3. Financial sustainability: Revised passenger volume scenarios

Members noted the revised passenger volumes scenarios prepared by MPI, MOT and Customs for various uptakes of Safe Travel Zones. They noted that the level of uncertainty was such that the September 2020 moderate scenario (which has been used as the basis for 2021 budget bids) should continue to be used. The Board agreed to report to the Treasury on variances between the budgeted funding, and the actual spend, according to the reporting timetable for CRF funding.

The next version of updated scenarios was commissioned to be reviewed in three months' time. The Chair acknowledged the team's excellent work on the three financial sustainability papers, which successfully passed through Cabinet Committee this week.

Decision

- The board **agreed** that 2021 budget bids for financial sustainability should continue to be based on the September 2020 'moderate' scenario.

Action

- The MoT, MPI, and Customs modelling team to present the next version of updated scenarios to BEB for review in three months' time.

4. Border Executive Board setup

Customs gave an overview of the proposed Terms of Reference and the draft Border Executive Board Work Programme. Customs outlined that the draft work programme highlighted the strategic elements of the work programme, rather than every individual project, and border related work that was within the purview of an individual agency (such as immigration visa settings) was also excluded.

Concerns were raised about the work programme was too heavily weighted to the policy-related items, whereas the operational work of the Board was not prominent enough on the work programme (eg. the inclusion of such projects as the RTT scanners and the International Mail Centre upgrade was suggested). Members also recommended showing the 'Roadmap strategy for reopening the border' and the 'Green traveller' work streams more prominently on the work programme, as it was important for the Board to remain closely involved in that work.

Members agreed that they should make time for a longer facilitated workshop in April to determine the Board's strategic intent with a particular focus on the Board's ambitions in the post-COVID world.

Decision

- The board **agreed** to the Terms of Reference and governing operating protocols as presented.

Action

- Customs to report back with an updated work programme in two weeks.
- BEB secretariat to organise a 2-3 hour facilitated workshop (eg with **s 9(2)(a) OIA**) to help the Board determine its strategic intent in the post-COVID world in particular.

5. Other issues and priorities

~~IN CONFIDENCE~~

No other issues or priorities were raised.

Meeting closed at 4:00pm.

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MINUTES

3 – 4 pm, Thursday, 11 March 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Present: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Peter Mersi (MoT), Penny Nelson (MPI)

Apologies: Cheryl Barnes (DPMC), Ray Smith (MPI)

In attendance: Andy Milne (MBIE), s 9(2)(g)(ii) OIA Bev Driscoll (MoT), Bryre Patchell (Customs), Kirstie Hewlett (MoT), Michael Papesch (Customs), Sarah Holland (BEB), Sonia Mani (BEB)

Item 1: Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Item 2: Vaccine rollout to border workers

2. Andy Milne (MBIE) provided an update of the vaccine rollout to border workers, noting positive uptake, with three quarters of the required staff having received their first round of vaccination.
3. Significant work is being undertaken to unblock data issues relating to both the total number of Tier 1A workers and also the centralised record showing the number of border workers vaccinated to date. Noting that there will always be employee turnover, MBIE was asked to consider determining a fixed number for the total number of Tier 1A employees requiring vaccination (the “denominator”). s 9(2)(f)(iv) OIA
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
4. Hotel employers were seeking strong guidance regarding requirements around vaccination of their workforce. CE MBIE planned to write to these next week stating her expectations. Unions had indicated that it was important to follow a proper process that was not rushed.
5. Caution was urged against closing vaccination centres too early, especially if these needed to be subsequently reinstated. (MoH to note)
6. MBIE is leading the drafting of a briefing paper to the Minister for COVID-19 Response outlining further advice on stronger regulatory levers to support the COVID-19 vaccine rollout to border workers. This paper is due to be submitted tomorrow (12 March). The Chair asked that this include advice that:

- a. Taking a role-based assessment approach could be used to determine which border roles were low-risk and thus vaccination may not be required;
- b. It would be difficult to guarantee that 100% of border workers would be vaccinated at all times, partly due to staff movement.

Item 3: Reconnection with the world: Strategic approach to the ‘Keep it out’ pillar and Travel Health Pass

- 7. DPMC and MoH provided an update on the content of a proposed paper outlining options for a refresh of the COVID-19 elimination strategy including aspects related to unlocking the border. One of the key policy questions was what Managed Isolation and Quarantine requirements could look like in the future.
- 8. The paper was scheduled to go to Social Wellbeing Committee on 24 March 2021.
- 9. Members noted there were a range of complex points to agree, such as which varieties of vaccine would be recognised in New Zealand, what certifications would be acceptable, and timeframes around these.
- 10. Members agreed to have their agencies provide prompt input in line with the tight timeframes on the submission of the paper.
- 11. **Action:** At the Chair’s request, DPMC to ensure that the maritime perspective, in particular the needs of commercial seafarers as part of reopening the borders, was included in the paper.
- 12. MoT provided an update on the Travel Health Pass work programme, outlining questions and scenarios that needed to be resolved to ensure the smooth facilitation of inward and outward travel from New Zealand, in readiness for when the borders are unlocked. § 9(2)
(f)(iv)
OIA
[Redacted text block]
- 13. **Action:** MoT to provide regular reporting to the Board on progress with the Travel Health Pass work programme.

Item 4: Reconnection with the world: Digital declarations

- 14. § 9(2)(f)(iv) OIA
[Redacted text block]

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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

OIA

Actions arising from this meeting

Para	Detail	Lead	Due
11	DPMC to include the maritime perspective, in particular the needs of commercial seafarers, in the border unlocking aspects of the evolution of the elimination strategy advice to Cabinet.	DPMC	March
13	Provide regular reporting to the BEB on progress with the Travel Health Pass work programme	MoT	April

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MINUTES

2.45pm – 4 pm, Thursday, 18 March 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Present: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Kirstie Hewlett (MoT) for Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI), Sue Gordon (MoH) for Ashley Bloomfield (MoH)

Apologies: Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Chris Seed (MFAT)

In attendance: Andy Milne (MBIE), s 9(2)(g)(ii) OIA, Cheryl Barnes (DPMC), Michael Papesch (Customs), Sarah Holland (BEB), Sonia Mani (BEB)

Item 1: Welcome, apologies, meeting context

1. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Item 2: Minutes and action items

2. The minutes from the meetings of 25 February 2021 and 11 March 2021 were taken to be accurate records.
3. Members confirmed that they **agreed** with the Terms of Reference for the “Review of COVID-19 measures (Maritime)” as discussed at the 21 Jan BEB meeting.
4. The following actions were closed: #04 (arrange pre-departure testing review); #18 (schedule updated modelling scenarios); #22 (schedule Travel Health Pass updates”).

Item 3: Reconnection with the world: Unlocking the border

5. DPMC and MoH provided an update on the proposed contents of a Cabinet paper that outlined options for the evolution of the COVID-19 elimination strategy. The paper proposed to build on the work done on the elimination strategy in the previous year and evolve it further by flushing out some of the additional questions that need to be resolved before the border is unlocked.
6. The evolution of the elimination strategy would also include the development of a COVID-19 work programme, an engagement and communications plan, and a blueprint to identify short and medium-term opportunities for relaxing border restrictions.
7. MoH noted a number of risks that would remain in spite of the vaccination rollout, such as ‘under 16s’ not being vaccinated, various exempted parties, and the rollout itself spanning through the rest of the year, and noted that such considerations should be included in the revised strategy.

8. Members noted that it was important to manage public expectations, including socialising how responses to minor outbreaks could be managed differently as the number of vaccinated New Zealanders increased.
9. CEs expressed a desire to engage early in the border aspects of the elimination strategy so that they can provide advice on the direction of the work and identify any risks or omissions. This would also help them ensure that the Board can deliver on its part of the blueprint, thus ensuring the strategy can be operationalised.

Item 4: Vaccine rollout to border workers

10. Andy Milne (MBIE) provided an update of the vaccine rollout to border workers, noting 90% of the designated workers had received their first jab. The next phase was focussed on administering the second dose of the vaccine to these workers and on commencing the 'why not?' conversations between employers and employees where vaccinations have been declined.
11. Andy noted issues related to the low number of registered household contacts and the accessibility of community vaccination sites available for people to visit. He noted there was a process underway to gain household contact information from border staff during their second round of immunisation. Plans were also in motion to massively scale up operations and open more vaccination sites across the country.
12. More targeted efforts were being made to identify and address the needs of Māori and Pacific cohorts. It was noted the next phase of vaccination (Tier 2 onwards) would include a significantly more diverse population and would therefore be likely to pose a number of new challenges.
13. Sue Gordon (MoH) acknowledged the excellent coordination efforts of Andy and his team in getting the vaccination rollout to this stage. Governance provided by the BEB was also acknowledged as being beneficial.

Item 5: Safe Travel Zones

14. The Chair noted the rapid progression of recent events, all of which signalled that the opening of Trans-Tasman Safe Travel Zone (STZ) may be imminent.
15. The Board acknowledged the efficient work by inter-agency teams in planning and preparing for the operationalisation of the safe travel zone including the potential for additional measures to be implemented at short notice.
16. MoH noted that it was especially critical to be able to contact passengers in the event of any further COVID-19 outbreaks. Members discussed the use of passenger data through Passenger Name Record (PNR) details and arrival cards to establish base contact information. The coinciding IATA pilot project to capture passenger health information digitally was also noted to be occurring in April, which could be helpful.
17. **Action:** DPMC COVID-19 Group **agreed** to lead in coordinating the communications required to educate passengers and the public on the specifics of the Trans-Tasman QFT implementation.

Recognised Seasonal Employers

18. In the context of decisions that would need to be made soon, members discussed the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme, specifically whether the roadmap to reopening would facilitate increased numbers of RSE workers entering New Zealand.

19. ~~s 9(2)(f)(iv) OIA~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

20. ~~s 9(2)(g)(i) OIA, s 6(a) OIA~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

21. Members asked that potential options to help with increasing the number of RSE workers be explored, such as finding more MIQ places for them, or making bespoke arrangements for their testing and vaccination. This was to include understanding the economic impacts associated with numbers of RSE workers.

22. ~~s 6(b)(i) OIA~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

Item 6: Effectiveness of pre-departure testing

23. The Board noted the results from the March 2021 assessment of the effectiveness of pre-departure testing, acknowledged the work as a good collaborative effort and **agreed** to use this piece of work as part of the Board's overall assurance framework.

Item 7: Other issues and priorities

24. No other issues and priorities were noted.

Actions arising from this meeting

Para	Detail	Lead	Due
17	DPMC COVID-19 Group to lead in coordinating the communications required to educate passengers and the public on the specifics of the Trans-Tasman QFT Implementation.	DPMC COVID-19 Group	Mar 2021
21	Explore options for increasing the number of RSE workers; estimate economic impacts associated with numbers of RSE workers	INZ	Apr 2021

Item 4: Travel health Pass – programme update

- 7. MoT gave an overview of the Travel Health Pass programme, noting the two main components of this work as vaccination certificates and the border settings applied to assess the credentials. Factors influencing this work included the tools and methods that other countries were exploring and trialling to tackle the same problem, and decisions that would be made by global standard setting bodies such as IATA³.
- 8. Substantial work was being undertaken to provide early signals on design and cost impacts of potential digital solutions, with strong engagement from inter-agency groups on this work.
- 9. It was agreed that the Board would receive ongoing updates on the progress of this work, so that adequate governance was maintained.

NB: Monthly updates on this item are already scheduled on the BEB forward agenda.

Item 5: Trans-Tasman QFT

- 10. The Chair acknowledged the Herculean efforts of all the agencies, and especially MFAT, in planning and preparing for the upcoming opening of Trans-Tasman QFT, noting that four international airports (Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Queenstown) would be ready, with IPC⁴ arrangements (approved by MoH) expected to be in place before the opening of QFT.

11. s 9(2)(g)(i) OIA
[Redacted]

- 12. Members discussed issues related to managing MIQ capacity for ‘red’ planeloads of passengers who would be likely to need quarantine and the regulatory constraints in the Government’s ability to cap incoming passenger numbers on any given flights. They also discussed challenges in managing any pre-departure requirements for incoming quarantine free travel passengers, noting the advantages of Australia using similar methods of identifying and managing such risks.

Item 6: Border sector long term insights briefing

- 13. Board members **agreed** not to progress with a border sector long-term insights briefing.

Item 7: Other issues

- 14. Members questioned the plan for vaccinating New Zealand officials based overseas, specifically whether enough was being done to get them vaccinated quickly. (Post-meeting – MFAT agreed to provide an update to the NZ Inc CEs).

Actions arising from this meeting

Para	Detail	Lead	Due

¹ PCBU Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking
² MIQF Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facility
³ NHI National Health Index



BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

MINUTES

3pm – 4pm, Thursday, 15 April 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Present: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Sue Gordon (MoH) for Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Chris Seed (MFAT), Kirstie Hewlett (MoT) for Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Apologies: Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Peter Mersi (MoT)

In attendance: {Darryl Carpenter (MoH), Michael Dreyer (MoH), Phil Baskerville (MoH)} – Item 3, Megan Main (MBIE) – Item 5, Brent Johnston (MoT), Michael Papesch (Customs), Sarah Holland (BEB), Sonia Mani (BEB)

Item 1: Welcome, apologies, meeting context

1. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Item 2: Minutes and action items

2. The minutes from the meeting of 01 April 2021 were taken to be an accurate record.

Item 3: Border worker vaccination: Understanding the databases

3. MoH gave an overview of the upgraded Border Worker Testing Register (BWTR), a record management system designed and developed to support the border PCBUs¹ in managing the information required by Government under the Required Testing Order (RTO).
4. The BWTR system, stood up in October 2020, has undergone multiple releases and improvements, made in collaboration with MBIE and other border agencies. Oversight continues to be provided by the cross-agency Border Order Testing Steering Group. It will become mandatory for organisations to use the BWTR from 27 April 2021.
5. The BWTR system uses the employees' NHI³ number as the primary identifier, providing a key link into the health sector, and is designed to send alerts and notifications of testing requirements directly to registered employees.
6. While employers would be able to use the system to identify who among their staff (that are required to undergo testing) have and have not been tested on a regular basis, employers will not be shown any of the employees' test results. This is one way the system will uphold privacy requirements.
7. Board members agreed on the benefits of PCBUs being able to receive timely updates of their employees' test data with clear identification of overdue staff members, and noted

¹ PCBU Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking

² MIQF Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facility

³ NHI National Health Index

the use of other system features, such as making employees active/inactive and the ability to view a system-level dashboard of aggregated data.

8. The recording of staff working at affected airport, ports or ships would need to be a partly manual process with PCBUs needing to regularly uploading their data to the central BWTR system.
9. MoH noted that on April 22, the national immunisation register would be synchronised with the BWTR to enable PCBUs to view the vaccination status of their registered employees (for those employees who have consented to allowing this).
10. MoH also noted that the biggest anticipated challenge was in ensuring the accuracy of the employer-employee data that would be fed into the system by border PCBUs from across NZ, noting that the question of ownership in monitoring the accuracy of system data needed to be resolved.
11. **Action:** At the Chair's request, MoH **agreed** to report back to the Board on the monitoring and assurance of the BWTR system by mid-May.

Item 4: Border worker vaccination: Redeployment by end of April

12. The Chair provided an overview of a proposed new Order that would clearly establish the Government's expectation that all high risk work at the border would only be carried out by vaccinated workers.
13. Board members **agreed** to the recommendation that public sector border agencies (excluding Maritime NZ and AVSEC) should be brought into the first Order. Advice on vaccination requirements for high risk work within the transport sector would be provided separately (led by MoT).
14. At the earliest, Ministers could agree to options in the policy briefing paper on Friday 16 April, with the Order possibly gazetted on Wednesday 21 April.

Item 5: Border worker vaccination: Rapid review of border worker testing

15. The Board **agreed** to commission a rapid review to assess testing arrangements for workers at MIQFs, and at the wider border, in order to identify actions required to strengthen assurance that all 'affected persons' were being tested for Covid-19, as required by law. The draft Terms of Reference were provided to the Board.

Item 6: Temporary suspension of NZ entry for passengers originating from India

16. DPMC provided an overview of the framework being designed to guide suspension of travellers from high risk countries, and the assessments being undertaken in relation to the temporary suspension of travellers from high risk countries. s 6(a) OIA

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Item 7: Opening of Trans-Tasman Quarantine-Free Travel (QFT)

- 17. Customs acknowledged the well-planned and coordinated efforts of the QFT cross-agency teams, noting positive alignment with Australian border preparations.
- 18. MoT and Customs also noted positive feedback related to the work of the Infection Prevention and Controls (IPC) staff at airports.
- 19. DPMC and MoH signalled their intent to run scenario planning exercises in Queenstown in order to provide assurance of 'stamp it out' processes in tourist hotspots.
- 20. MoT noted the need to highlight the risks associated with the number of significant changes being introduced to the border sector at the same time (e.g., mandatory use of the BWTR, high risk work only to be done by vaccinated employees with subsequent redeployment requirements for non-vaccinated staff; and quarantine free travel).

Item 8: Other issues and priorities

- 21. MBIE noted the development of new arrangements for spare MIQ capacity, with special Ministerial dispensations being considered for RSE⁴ workers that could be brought into the country in 'cohorts'. A Cabinet decision was expected to be made on Monday 19 April.

Actions arising from this meeting

Para	Detail	Lead	Due
11	MoH to report back to the BEB on the monitoring and assurance of the BWTR system.	Sue Gordon	Mid-May

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BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD



MINUTES

3pm – 4pm, Thursday, 22 April 2021

Held at MPI, Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street

Present: Christine Stevenson (Chair, NZ Customs), Sue Gordon (MoH) for Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Megan Main (MBIE) for Carolyn Tremain (MBIE), Peter Mersi (MoT), Ray Smith (MPI)

Apologies: Ashley Bloomfield (MoH), Chris Seed (MFAT), Carolyn Tremain (MBIE)

In attendance: {Keith Manch (CAA), Mike Hill (CAA), Mark Wheeler (AVSEC), Ben Smith (AVSEC), Natasha Rave (MoT), Terry Brown (Customs), Michael Inglis (MPI), Sally Giles (MoH)} – Item 3, Lisa McLernon (MBIE) – Item 4, Cheryl Barnes (DPMC), Sarah Holland (BEB), Sonia Mani (BEB)

Item 1: Welcome, apologies, meeting context

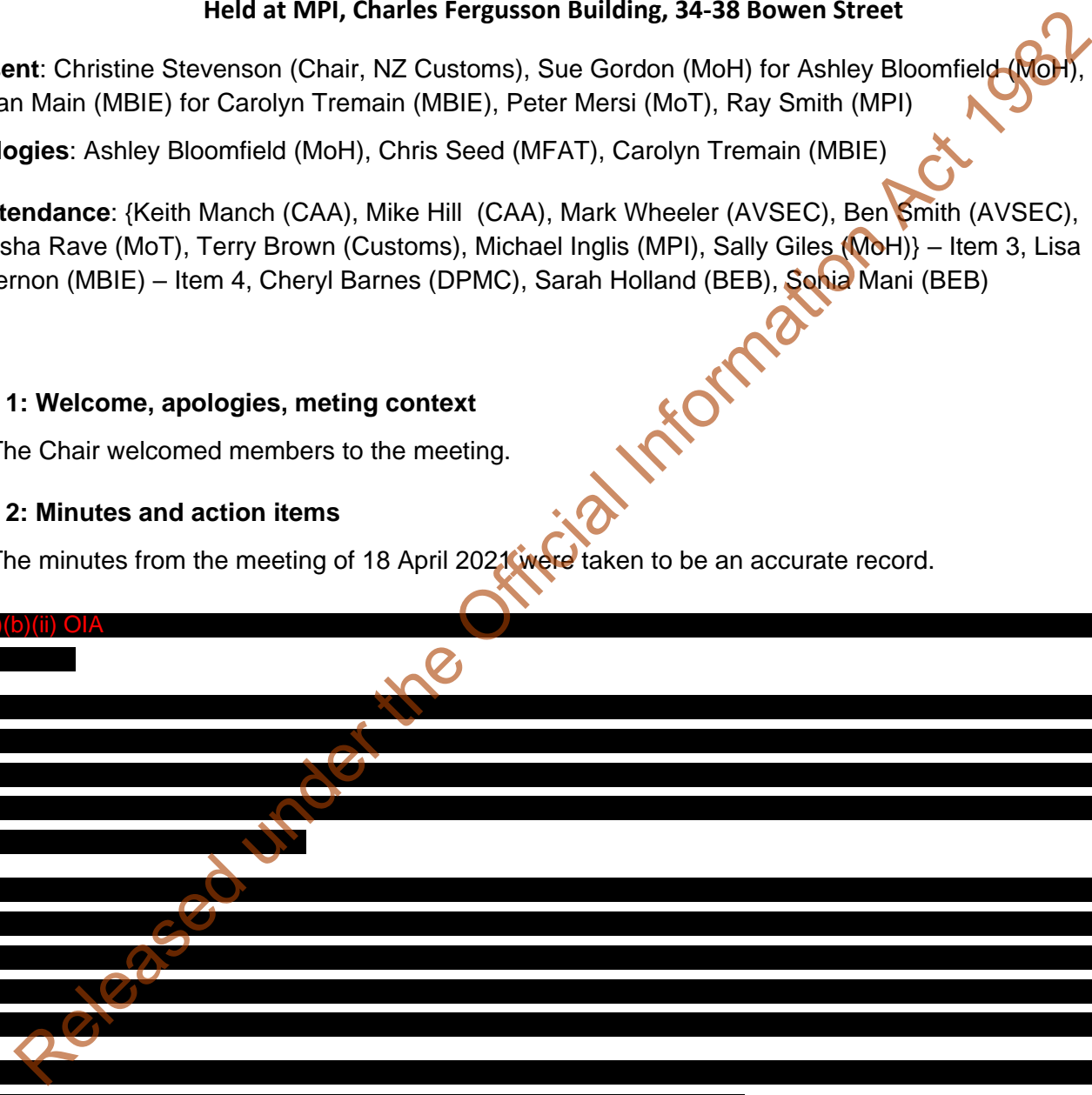
1. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Item 2: Minutes and action items

2. The minutes from the meeting of 18 April 2021 were taken to be an accurate record.

s 9(2)(b)(ii) OIA

[Redacted content follows]



Item 6: Other issues and priorities

19. The Board **agreed** to commission an independent rapid review to assess the arrangements in place to support compliance with the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Required Testing) Order 2020.
20. The Board considered the draft terms of reference for the “rapid review of border worker testing” and asked that these be re-scoped to make it clear that the review should identify whether the current arrangements, along with upcoming improvements, were sufficient to support compliance, and to identify any further improvements that would increase confidence in the arrangements. The Board noted that a number of improvements were planned, including an upgrade to the Border Workforce Testing Register on 22 April and use of the register becoming mandatory from 27 April 2021.
21. **Action:** The MIQ team to review and reword the ‘rapid review of border worker testing’ ToR in light of the Board’s feedback.

Actions arising from this meeting

Para	Detail	Lead	Due
14	MIQ risk and assurance team to provide regular three-monthly updates to the BEB.	Megan Main	Ongoing
16	MoH to ensure that border workers seeking their second vaccination could be prioritised in light of the proposed new Vaccinations Order.	Sue Gordon	April
18	MoH to look into how border employers can get new employees to the front of the vaccination queue in order to enable them to comply with the proposed new Vaccination Order.	Sue Gordon	April

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