

COVID-19 QFT Checklist: Consideration for Cases Identified in Melbourne

Date: 3 June 2021, 1100hrs

Time Zone Considerations



Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

The state of Victoria has announced the state will remain in lockdown until 10 June. As at 1200hrs 2 June Victoria had 67 active cases. Cases are caused by a more infectious variant in Victoria. Public health restrictions remain place. Regional Victorians able to travel regionally in Victoria, Melbournians not able. Each state imposes own interstate travel requirements managing through state governments. As at 900hrs 2 June there are 18 active cases in New Zealand: all at the border, zero in the community.

COVID-19 agencies working together to provide the Minister advice on operationalising green-light flights for New Zealanders to return, earliest flight would be night of 9 June, possible additional subsequent flights.

Public Health Assessment

On the basis of the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand is:



Key considerations

Considerations for stakeholder groups – Industry, MFAT, Communications

Industry: Government comms regarding the pause will be channelled through to industry. Government comms regarding green-light pause will be aligned with industry.

MFAT: Continued consular support, communications.

Communications: United Against COVID-19 as source of truth, synchronisation of international communications (consular response), and government decisions.

Recommendation

Our advice

On the basis of the above public health risk assessment, in conjunction with an assessment of the wider factors for consideration, we consider that a continued pause:

- is required for our quarantine partner. This will be applicable to the following region/s: Victoria
- is not required for any further flights to or from out quarantine partners;
 - The following mitigation measures are being used as a pre-pause precautionary approach;

Our advice is to extend the QFT pause until 1959hrs Wednesday 9 June, with a decision-point on Tuesday 8 June. Individuals in Melbourne following Victoria public health restrictions will have already been isolating for 14 days total.

Further Considerations

- Consular support (MFAT protocols) continues.
- Risk that Victoria clusters pose to other states due to key factors:
 - Variant (Kappa) has 24hr transmission virus cycle.
 - Victoria testing and contact tracing has increased significantly. Six new locally-acquired cases reported 2 June versus nine new locally-acquired cases on 1 June. 51,033 tests received last 24 hours.
 - NZ Officials will continue to monitor how other states respond to risk.
- Ministry of Health continuing to engage with travellers who arrived in New Zealand from Melbourne.

Potential green-light flight

Our advice is that a green-light flight on 9 June would only be required should the pause be extended beyond 9 June.

On operationalising a green-light flight:

- For anyone who has been self-isolating according to Australian public health restrictions, they will need a pre-departure test.
- Operational meeting this afternoon following Minister's meeting to discuss logistics and challenges of green-light flight.

Legal

Section 9(2)(h)

Next Steps

On pause extension advice

- Will go to Minister's Office accompanied by the public health report (MOH lead) and advice on managing returnees (DPMC lead).

On potential green-light flight

- Crown Law Office and PCO to provide legal advice around green-light flight. Dependent on Ministerial decision, there may need to be a new border order to enable green-light flight. This advice will be ready later this afternoon.
- MFAT liaising with Australian federal and state governments on feasibility of a green-light flight, decisions pending.
- Communications:
 - DPMC to disseminate core communications to travellers through Unite Against COVID-19 website and channels, informed by Ministry of Health public health advice and communications.
 - International notification update through MFAT posts to reflect core communications.

QFT Partner Response

1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have a new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.)
See situation summary
2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?)
See situation summary
3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration)
See situation summary
4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)?
See situation summary
5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days)
N/a

QFT domestic Response

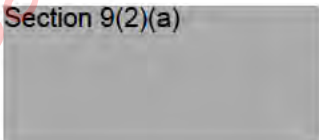
6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?)
Yes.
For managed flights next week, pre-departure testing will be required. MFAT will confirm that pre-departure tests accessible.
7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contact tracing, Healthline, testing, comms)
As normal.
8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where)
Capacity remains around 500 MIQ rooms available for QFT contingency.
Note – this is spread across multiple locations.
9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts?
Section 70 continues to apply to all areas of interest.

Other considerations

10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing)
No passenger flights to New Zealand.
Note – Aircrew advice will be presented to Minister today.
11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)
MFAT and MOH will coordinate communications through their posts with Cook Islands to inform them of the situation, as it unfolds.

Section 9(2)(a)

Signed:



Signed:

Amber Bill,
Acting National Response Group Chair
Date:

3 June 2021

Rebecca Kitteridge,
Acting National Response Leadership Team Chair
Date:

COVID-19 QFT Checklist: Consideration for Cases Identified in Melbourne

Date: 3 June 2021, 1300hrs

Time Zone Considerations

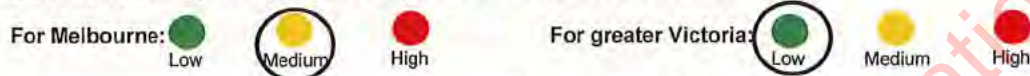


Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

Victoria government has announced the state will remain in lockdown until 10 June. As at 1200hrs 2 June Victoria had 67 active cases. Cases are caused by a more infectious variant in Victoria. Public health restrictions remain place. Regional Victorians able to travel regionally in Victoria, Melbournians not able. Each state imposes own interstate travel requirements managing through state governments. As at 900hrs 2 June there are 18 active cases in New Zealand: all at the border, zero in the community.

Public Health Assessment

On the basis of the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand is:



Key considerations

Considerations for stakeholder groups – Industry, MFAT, Communications

Industry: Government comms regarding the pause will be channelled through to industry. Government comms regarding green-light pause will be aligned with industry.

MFAT: Continued consular support, communications.

Communications: United Against COVID-19 as source of truth, synchronisation of international communications (consular response), and government decisions.

Recommendation

Our advice

On the basis of the above public health risk assessment, in conjunction with an assessment of the wider factors for consideration, we consider that a continued pause:

- is required for our quarantine partner. This will be applicable to the following region/s: Victoria
- is not required for any further flights to or from our quarantine partners;
 - The following mitigation measures are being used as a pre-pause precautionary approach;

Our advice is to extend the QFT pause to match Victoria lockdown. Individuals in Melbourne following Victoria public health restrictions will already be isolating.

Green-light flight advice and public health report will be provided to Minister Hipkins.

Further Considerations

- Consular support (MFAT protocols) continues.
- Risk that Victoria clusters pose to other states due to key factors:
 - Variant (Kappa) has 24hr transmission virus cycle.
 - Victoria testing and contact tracing has increased significantly. Six new locally-acquired cases reported 2 June versus nine new locally-acquired cases on 1 June. 51,033 tests received last 24 hours.
 - NZ Officials will continue to monitor how other states respond to risk.
- Ministry of Health continuing to engage with travellers who arrived in New Zealand from Melbourne.

Legal

Section 9(2)(h)

Next Steps

On pause extension advice

- Will go to Minister's Office to confirm what was agreed in COVID-19 Ministers meeting on 3 June at 1300hrs. Ministers Office will also receive public health report (MOH lead) and advice on managing returnees (DPMC lead).

On green-light flights

- Crown Law Office and PCO to provide legal advice around green-light flight. This advice will be ready later this afternoon.
- Communications:
 - DPMC to disseminate core communications to travellers through Unite Against COVID-19 website and channels, informed by Ministry of Health public health advice and communications.
 - International notification update through MFAT posts to reflect core communications.

QFT Partner Response

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have a new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.) | See situation summary |
| 2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?) | See situation summary |
| 3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration) | See situation summary |
| 4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)? | See situation summary |
| 5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days) | N/a |

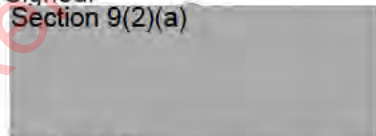
QFT domestic Response

- | | |
|---|---|
| 6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?) | Yes. |
| 7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contact tracing, Healthline, testing, comms) | As normal. |
| 8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where) | Capacity remains around 500 MIQ rooms available for QFT contingency. Note – this is spread across multiple locations. |
| 9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts? | Section 70 continues to apply to all areas of interest. |

Other considerations

- | | |
|---|---|
| 10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing) | No passenger flights to New Zealand. |
| 11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements) | MFAT and MOH will coordinate communications through their posts with Cook Islands to inform them of the situation, as it unfolds. |

Signed:
Section 9(2)(a)



Amber Bill,
Acting National Response Group Chair
Date:

3 June 2021

Signed:

Rebecca Kitteridge,
Acting National Response Leadership Team Chair
Date:

COVID-19 QFT Checklist: Consideration for Cases Identified in Melbourne

Date: 9 June 2021, 0800hrs

Time Zone Considerations



Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

Metro-Melbourne is currently in lock down until 11.59 Thursday 10 June, and the wider Victoria lockdown eased late last week. The QFT pause with Victoria has been extended until 7.59pm Thursday 10 June. As at 1130 8 June Melbourne had 2 new locally acquired cases, with 83 active cases in the outbreak. The situation in Melbourne continues to evolve. New case numbers are slowing down. There are now two clusters which are being monitored – one cluster with the Kappa variant and the second with the more transmissible Delta variant. The delta cluster has been genomically linked to a MIF but there is no epidemiological link. Melbourne is watching the situation closely in the next 48 hours to inform their Thursday afternoon (NZ time) announcement, with the Chief Medical Officer wanting a greater degree of certainty prior to any announcements about easing restrictions.

Public Health Assessment

On the basis of the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand continues to be:



Key considerations

Public health evidence currently supports a continued pause until 19:59 10 June 2021 until the situation in Victoria is clarified. Health also advise continuation of PDT even if pause was stopped. One scenario could be that Melbourne continues to have restrictions and ongoing different settings between regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne.

Industry and readiness to operationalise: If public health evidence on Thursday suggests a pause should be stopped it is recommended recommencement of flights should not occur until 23:59 12 June 2021 to ensure the system has time to operationalise these changes, including writing of the Order and communicating to key stakeholders, and then onward impacts to airlines and airport operations. This will also align with the 72 hour time requirement for PDT.

Demand on flights is low: the commercial viability of ongoing green flights will be a consideration if the pause extends for a longer period of time. MFAT: Consulate enquiries continue to be low

Recommendation

Our advice

On the basis of the above public health risk assessment, in conjunction with an assessment of the wider factors for consideration, we consider that a continued pause:

- Is required for our quarantine partner. This will be applicable to the following region/s: **Victoria**
- is not required for any further flights to or from our quarantine partners;
 - The following mitigation measures are being used as a pre-pause precautionary approach;

Note that Green flights are now available, with PDT requirement.

Further Considerations

- Our advice is to continue to extend the QFT pause to match Victoria lockdown with a review on Thursday 10 June in line with the Public Health risk assessment and advice.
- Subject to further context and clarification on Thursday from the Melbourne situation, should they be considering lifting their lock down and/or easing restrictions, and if Public Health risk assessment is to also lift our QFT pause, further extend the pause until 11.59pm / 23:59 Saturday 12 June. This is so that any legal changes can be completed and operationalised by airlines in a timely manner, and to allow for the likely continuation of PDT in line with current public health advice.
- Based on learning from the weekend, communications must be clear and accurate both within the system, with airlines and publicly facing. Communications must align with exemptions and orders, and where these are new, careful sequencing is needed.

Consultation: NRG meeting at 1600 8 June.

Legal

Section 9(2)(h)

Next Steps

- Public Health risk assessment will go to Minister's Office by noon today to recommend continuation of pause until 1959 Thursday 10 June. If there is an easing of Melbourne restrictions announced on Thursday afternoon, subject to NZ public health risk assessment, they would recommend extension of the QFT pause until 2359 11 or 12 June pending further context from Victoria. Any lifting of QFT pause would likely still see PDT requirement.
- We have recommended that work on drafting under a potential scenario of pause lifting and PDT remaining commences.
- Health will endeavour to seek direction of travel for Victoria by late morning if possible.
- NRG likely to need to reconvene to recommend a decision for NRLT on Thursday.

Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response

1. Are case numbers in the affected QFT partner jurisdiction dropping? (i.e. there are no new cases where the source is unknown, number of cases) **Number of new active cases are low and continue to remain low. 2 reported in Victoria yesterday.**
2. Have the restrictions in the affected QFT partner jurisdiction been removed or reduced? (outline actions taken) **No.**
3. Have the restrictions of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) been removed or reduced? (outline actions taken) **No.**

QFT domestic Response

4. What is the current situation in New Zealand? (i.e. do we have a response domestically? Is it contained? Can our health care system manage a domestic resurgence and reopening QFT) **No community transmission.**
5. Does New Zealand want to implement border restrictions? (i.e. in the Border Order, if so what will these be and how long will they be for?) **Existing negative Pre-departure test result requirements will remain**
6. Are there other mitigation measures New Zealand want to implement? (e.g. Pre-departure Test) **Not at this stage**

Other considerations

7. How much notice do airlines require to restore QFT travel to the affected area? (What considerations need to be taken for time zone difference?) **Air New Zealand have requested any notification of change at 14:00 the day before implementation as a minimum. Noting due to the time zone Jetstar and Qantas have suggested a minimum of 24 hours' notice from any final drafted Order before flights are communicated as being able to commence.**
8. Are we in a pause or suspension with another QFT partner jurisdiction? (Do any QFT arrangements prevent us from taking action?) **No.**
9. Are there any impacts or obligations New Zealand has with other QFT partners which need to be considered? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements) **Cook Island QFT partner.**

Signed:

Section 9(2)(a)

Amber Bill,
Acting National Response Group Chair

Date: 9 June 2021

Signed:

Section 9(2)(a)

Brook Barrington,
National Response Leadership Team Chair

Date: 09 June 2021

COVID-19 QFT Checklist: Consideration for Cases Identified in Melbourne

Date: 10 June 2021, 1200hrs

Time Zone Considerations

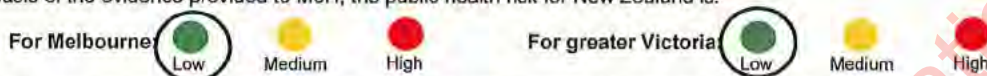


Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

- Greater-Melbourne lockdown is scheduled to lift 2359hrs Thursday 10 June. Whilst it will lift, stringent restrictions will remain in place until 17 June. As at 1100hrs Thursday 10 June, four new locally acquired cases in Victoria, total of 78 active cases.
- As at 2300hrs 9 June, Healthline was contacted by six individuals who arrived from Queensland and reported they were at a location of concern, and one of the six has flown to Wellington. Healthline advised the individuals to self-isolate and that detailed follow-up and advice would be provided to them 10 June.
- Interstate Australia cases – New South Wales and Queensland on alert after individual left Melbourne lockdown and tested positive 9 June in Queensland (1 June travelled from Victoria, through NSW, arrived in Queensland on 5 June).

Public Health Assessment

On the basis of the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand is:



Public health risk assessment supports extension of pause until Thursday 17 June, with close watch on Victoria and other states' responses as the situations unfold. Health advise green flights continue, with PDT requirement within 72hrs of flying. Victoria is still maintaining restrictions which is one factor to recommending extension of the pause, despite low public health risks.

Key considerations

Industry and readiness to operationalise: If pause is extended, Air New Zealand will continue with green flights and will consider consolidating flights. Qantas and JetStar flights are not currently scheduled to go ahead until 15 June, this may change with extended pause.

Demand for flights is low: AirNZ will continue with green flights to maintain public trust and confidence in getting New Zealanders back. They are considering the commercial viability of ongoing green flights. Strategic risk: QFT pause decisions may impact on the already-low demand for flights and confidence in the trans-Tasman QFT.

MFAT: Consulate enquiries continue to be low.

Recommendation

Our advice

On the basis of the above public health risk assessment and in conjunction with an assessment of the wider factors for consideration, we recommend that:

- Extension of the QFT pause is required for our quarantine partner.** This will be applicable to the following region/s: **Victoria**
 - And that green flights continue to require PDT within 72hrs of flying.
 - Extend pause until 2359hrs Thursday 17 June.
 - Review pause extension on Thursday 17 June. Formal advice from Director-General Health to Minister Hipkins on Wednesday 16 June.

Further considerations

- Dependent on responses from New South Wales and Queensland governments, NRG may reconvene to:
 - Discuss a QFT pause with those states
 - Discuss available risk mitigants to apply to individuals travelling to New Zealand from NSW & Queensland.
- Based on learnings from this past week, communications must be clear and accurate both within the system, with airlines, and publicly facing. Communications must align with exemptions and orders, and where these are new, careful sequencing is needed.

Consultation: National Response Group convened at 1200hrs Thursday 10 June 2021 and informed this advice.

Legal

Section 9(2)(h)

Next Steps

On QFT pause extension advice to Minister Hipkins

- Provide to Minister Hipkins' office at the same time as the Public Health risk assessment report. Send by 1400hrs 10 June.
- Two pieces of advice align on recommendation to extend QFT pause until 2359hrs Thursday 17 June.

Other

- NRG reconvene to review pause extension on Thursday 17 June. NRLT may need to convene dependent on review and advice.
 - Director-General Health will provide formal health report advice to Minister Hipkins on Wednesday 16 June.
- DPMC legal teams and PCO will continue work on PDT enforcement for multiple scenarios.
- DPMC Communications working with Health and sharing information through standard channels. Airlines following government guidance and directing travellers through to Unite Against COVID-19 website.

Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response

1. Are case numbers in the affected QFT partner jurisdiction dropping? (i.e. there are no new cases where the source is unknown, number of cases) Victoria: Number of new active cases remain low. 4 reported Thursday 10 June; Total active cases: 78.
2. Have the restrictions in the affected QFT partner jurisdiction been removed or reduced? (outline actions taken) Greater-Melbourne lockdown set to lift 2359hrs Thursday 10 June.
3. Have the restrictions of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) been removed or reduced? (outline actions taken) No lockdown announced for New South Wales or Queensland.

QFT domestic Response

4. What is the current situation in New Zealand? (i.e. do we have a response domestically? Is it contained? Can our health care system manage a domestic resurgence and reopening QFT) See situation summary.
5. Does New Zealand want to implement border restrictions? (i.e. in the Border Order, if so what will these be and how long will they be for?) Existing PDT requirement will remain.
6. Are there other mitigation measures New Zealand want to implement? (e.g. Pre-departure Test) Section 70 for individuals who arrived from Victoria remains. Changes will be made to Section 70 to reflect New South Wales and a new Section 70 will be made for Queensland.

Other considerations

7. How much notice do airlines require to restore QFT travel to the affected area? (What considerations need to be taken for time zone difference?) Air New Zealand have requested as early notification as possible ahead of public communications.
8. Are we in a pause or suspension with another QFT partner jurisdiction? (Do any QFT arrangements prevent us from taking action?) No.
9. Are there any impacts or obligations New Zealand has with other QFT partners which need to be considered? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements) Cook Islands QFT partner.

Signed:

Amber Bill,
Acting National Response Group Chair
Date:

Signed:
Section 9(2)(a)

Brook Barrington,
National Response Leadership Team Chair
Date:

10 June 2021

COVID-19 QFT: Consideration for Cases Identified in Melbourne – QFT pause

Date: 16 June 2021, 1200hrs

Time Zone Considerations



Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

- The situation in Melbourne continues to remain under control, however three new cases emerged in the last 24 hours.
- QFT pause is due to lift 1959hrs Thursday 17 June.
- Expect a situation update announcement from Victoria Government at 1400hrs 16 June.

Public Health Assessment

On the basis of the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand is:



Public Health recommendation is to return to QFT arrangement from 2359hrs Monday 21 June. This recommendation is conditional on Victoria Government's announcements to lift or maintain travel restrictions on Melbourne, Victoria Government announcement on this will be 1400hrs 17 June.

Key considerations

1. If we alter PDT requirements, travellers will need at least 72hrs of notice to obtain a PDT.
2. Public health risk assesses that we could lift the QFT pause on 2359hrs Monday 21 June. There are multiple contingencies to allow this plan to go forward safely. These contingencies will be outlined in the public health assessment and report on 17 June.

Recommendation

NRG advice

On the basis of the above public health risk assessment and given there are still uncertainties on the ground in Victoria, and the response of the Victoria Government, we therefore recommend:

1. We extend the QFT pause to 2359hrs Monday 21 June.
 - 1.1 Managed return green flights continue.
 - 1.2 PDT requirement.
2. We review on Friday 18 June.
3. That the framing of the public health advice and NRG advice is aligned to points 1 and 2 above.
4. NRLT Chair and DG Health align the framing of the advice on QFT pause extension prior to advising Minister Hipkins (before 1500hrs).

Our advice on public announcements from Minister Hipkins on QFT:

5. Wednesday 16 June Minister Hipkins public announcement that pause will be extended until 2359hrs Monday 21 June, with a review on Friday 18 June.
6. Update along the lines of a direction of travel: "Looking to lift the QFT pause next week, but this is still to be confirmed and is contingent on a number of things that we would need to see in order to be confident in lifting the QFT pause."

Consultation: National Response Group convened at 1130hrs Wednesday 16 June and informed this advice.

Legal

Section 9(2)(h)

Recommended Next Steps

On providing QFT pause advice to Minister Hipkins ahead of 1630hrs public announcement:

1. NRLT Chair and DG Health align the framing of the advice on QFT pause extension prior. Determine if NRLT is needed.
2. By 1500hrs Wednesday 16 June: Public health risk assessment and advice from Director-General Health to Minister Hipkins.
3. By 1500hrs Wednesday 16 June: DPMC system considerations advice at the same time as Public health risk assessment and report.

Timeline

4. Friday 18 June, midday: review decision on QFT pause extension. Assess possibility of a lift of QFT pause.

Other

5. IMT closely watch if situation changes in Melbourne or Victoria. Will reconvene NRG/NRLT if necessary.
6. DPMC Communications working with Health and sharing information through standard channels. Airlines following government guidance and directing travellers through to Unite Against COVID-19 website.

Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response

1. Are case numbers in the affected QFT partner jurisdiction dropping? (i.e. there are no new cases where the source is unknown, number of cases)
Victoria: 3 new cases in Melbourne on 16 June. Total active cases: 57.
2. Have the restrictions in the affected QFT partner jurisdiction been removed or reduced? (outline actions taken)
From 2359hrs 10 June
Greater-Melbourne: eased restrictions, some still remain: lifted restrictions on reasons to leave home; no visitors at home; cannot travel more than 25km except for work, care, study or to travel your nearest vaccination centre; 10 people or less can gather social outdoors; expectations on mask-wearing.
Regional Victoria: lockdown lifted, imposed restrictions: expectations on mask-wearing; up to two adults can visit your home.
3. Have the restrictions of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) been removed or reduced? (outline actions taken)
No public health restrictions in place in New South Wales or Queensland.

QFT domestic Response

4. What is the current situation in New Zealand? (i.e. do we have a response domestically? Is it contained? Can our health care system manage a domestic resurgence and reopening QFT)
No new cases.
5. Does New Zealand want to implement border restrictions? (i.e. in the Border Order, if so what will these be and how long will they be for?)
PDT still required to travel to New Zealand on green flights.
6. Are there other mitigation measures New Zealand want to implement? (e.g. Pre-departure Test)
As usual public health measures (eg contact tracing, masks on transport, etc).
Local restrictions will remain on any person [New Zealander, resident] who is a close/casual contact of a location of interest.
Cannot travel to New Zealand within 14 days from point of exposure.

Other considerations

7. How much notice do airlines require to restore QFT travel to the affected area? (What considerations need to be taken for time zone difference?)
Airlines have requested as early notification as possible ahead of public communications.
8. Are we in a pause or suspension with another QFT partner jurisdiction? (Do any QFT arrangements prevent us from taking action?)
No.
9. Are there any impacts or obligations New Zealand has with other QFT partners which need to be considered? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)
Cook Islands QFT partner.

Signed: Section 9(2)(a)

Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair

Date: 16/06/21

Signed:

Brook Barrington,
National Response Leadership Team Chair

Date:

COVID-19 QFT Advice and Checklist regarding Cases identified in New South Wales and continued response to cases identified in Victoria

Date: 18 June 2021, 1315hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT



Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

1. Advice from risk assessment conducted at 1100hrs reported that in New South Wales: Four cases identified on 16 and 17 June in Sydney NSW. Cases identified as close contacts or had been infected at locations of interest. Sydney is enforcing limited public health risk measures.
 - 1.1. QFT arrangement is live.
2. The situation in Victoria remains stable. One new local case was recorded on 18 June, public health will be assessing the risk in Greater-Melbourne.
 - 2.1. QFT pause in place until 2359hrs (NZT) Tuesday 22 June.

Public Health Assessment

3. Based on the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand in response to cases in New South Wales is:
 - 3.1. **Low**, Medium, or High
4. Based on the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand in response to cases in Victoria is:
 - 4.1. **Low**, Medium, or High

National Response Group (NRG) Advice

5. At this stage, monitoring the situation to review and respond is priority.
6. Based on the above public health risk assessment, in conjunction with an assessment of the wider factors for consideration, we recommend:
 - 6.1. **We maintain the QFT pause with Victoria, set to lift at 2359hrs Tuesday 22 June.**
 - 6.1.1. Requirement of PDT if travelling from Victoria to New Zealand before the pause lifts.
 - 6.2. **We maintain QFT arrangement with New South Wales but assess situation regularly and to determine response.**
7. We regularly review Victoria and New South Wales situations according to Next Steps section.

Further Considerations

8. On Communications:
 - 8.1. Maintain UAC information that explains PDT requirement before 2359hrs 22 June.
 - 8.2. If situation, generally, maintains with Victoria, UAC website will be updated to reflect that PDT is not required to fly from 0001hrs Wednesday 23 June.
 - 8.3. DPMC Communications working with Health and sharing information through standard channels on QFT pause extension advice and clarity on PDT requirement.
9. Airlines will be notified that from Wednesday 23 June, airlines can tell travellers that travellers will not need PDT.
 - 9.1. Airlines following government guidance and directing travellers through to UAC website.

Consultation – National Response Group Chair, MOH General Manager Response

Section 9(h)

Next Steps

On providing advice to Minister Hipkins:

12. Victoria public health risk assessment update to Minister Hipkins today 18 June.
 13. New South Wales public health risk assessment update will be provided to Minister Hipkins today 18 June.
 14. No advice on system considerations for the Victoria or New South Wales situation is needed to Minister Hipkins on 18 June.
- Timeline to assess situations
15. 19 and 20 June – IMT and other officials will continue to monitor how other states respond to risk, and how situation unfolds in Victoria and New South Wales. Will reconvene IMT/NRG/NRLT if situation requires.
 16. 21 June 0930hrs – MOH risk assessment for Victoria.

Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response	
1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have a new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.)	One jurisdiction, New South Wales.
2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?)	No.
3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration)	New South Wales - Limited public health restrictions put in place. Victoria – Public health measures still in place (eg restrictions on visitors to homes, limit on public gatherings)
4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)?	Situation is ongoing.
5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days)	New South Wales cluster origin is still unknown, strong hypothesis with a link to the border.
QFT domestic Response	
6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?)	Yes.
7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contract tracing, Healthline, testing, comms)	As usual.
8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where)	
9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts?	Section 70 order expanded for those who travelled to New Zealand and were at NSW locations of interest. Section 70 order remains for those who travelled to New Zealand from Victoria.
Other considerations	
10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing)	
11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)	Cook Island QFT arrangement.

Signed:

Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair

Date:

Signed:

Brook Barrington,
National Response Leadership Team Chair

Date:

COVID-19 QFT Advice and Checklist regarding Cases identified in New South Wales and continued response to cases identified in Victoria

Date: 21 June 2021, 1700hrs
All time markers recorded in NZT

Time Zone Considerations



Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

1. Victoria:
 - 1.1. Total current cases: 1 new local case recorded on 21 June, public health will be assessing the risk in Greater-Melbourne. Situation remains stable.
 - 1.2. QFT pause in place until 2359hrs (NZT) Tuesday 22 June.
2. New South Wales:
 - 2.1. Total cases up to Monday 21 June: 12 confirmed local cases. Of the four additional cases reported today 21 June, two were reported on Sunday 20 June, the other two were reported overnight to 21 June. New cases identified as close contacts or had been infected at locations of interest, are isolating.
 - 2.2. Emerging Bondi cluster is now at 12 cases. There are no unlinked cases.
 - 2.3. Delta strain of virus.
 - 2.4. Sydney is enforcing public health risk measures.
 - 2.5. QFT arrangement with New South Wales continues.
3. Queensland:
 - 3.1. A flight attendant tested positive after leaving quarantine. Genomic sequencing not yet completed.

Public Health Assessment

4. Based on the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand in response to cases in Victoria is:
 - 4.1. **Low, Medium, or High**
5. Based on the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand in response to cases in New South Wales is:
 - 5.1. **Low, Medium, or High**

National Response Group (NRG) Advice

6. At this stage, monitoring the situation to review and respond is priority.
7. Based on the above public health risk assessment, in conjunction with an assessment of the wider factors for consideration, we recommend:
 - 7.1. **QFT pause with Victoria lifts at 2359hrs Tuesday 22 June, as planned and announced by Minister last week.**
 - 7.1.1. Maintain requirement of PDT if travelling from Victoria to New Zealand before the pause lifts.
 - 7.2. **Agree with public health assessment that we maintain QFT arrangement with New South Wales but assess situation regularly to determine response.**
 - 7.3. **These areas are front of mind in the coming days as we assess and reassess the situation in New South Wales, and we need to keep a heightened vigilance around:**
 - 7.3.1. New South Wales social license factor (eg 24,000 tests versus the 40,000 tests target).
 - 7.3.2. Transmissibility of the variant in relation to community exposure location (eg Bondi Westfield mall).
 - 7.3.3. Growing complexity and variety of interstate measures to mitigate risk confuses the landscape (communications and operational challenge). See checklist summary of measures.
8. We regularly review Victoria and New South Wales situations according to Next Steps section.

Further Considerations

9. To mitigate the risk of the cases in New South Wales, the requirement remains that if New Zealanders have been at a location of interest, they cannot return to New Zealand until 14 days post location visit.

Consultation – National Response Group Chair, DCE COVID-19 Directorate.

Legal

10. Do the current legal Orders need amendments?
Yes / No
11. DPMC Legal have confirmed approach from a legal perspective

11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements) Cook Island QFT arrangement.

Signed: Section 9(2)(a)

Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair
Date:

21/06/2021

Signed: Section 9(2)(a)

Brook Barrington,
National Response Leadership Team Chair
Date:

22/06/21

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

COVID-19 QFT Advice and Checklist regarding Cases identified in New South Wales

Date: 22 June 2021, 1915hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT



Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

1. New South Wales:
 - 1.1. As at 1330 22 June 2021 there are 21 cases associated with this cluster. Most of the cases are known contacts of previously identified cases, the majority are household contacts.
 - 1.2. Two of the 10 newly-reported local cases in NSW are of concern to public health teams.
 - 1.2.1. Two cases viewed as concerning because one is a person who was attending school, and the other is a woman who went to work in a public place while exhibiting symptoms.
 - 1.3. New South Wales Officials announced on 22 June that mandatory mask wearing will be extended for an additional week until 2359hrs 30 June and will also be extending the requirement to the greater Sydney region.

Public Health Assessment

2. Based on the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand in response to cases in New South Wales is:
 - 2.1. **Low**, Medium, or High
3. The public health risk from Sydney, Australia for NZ is considered to be **low at present but increasing**.
4. The two new cases announced 22 June who were infectious in the community and have no clear links are of concern. In particular is the child as there is at least one intermediary case who is possibly not yet detected.

Advice

5. At this stage, monitoring the situation to review and respond is priority.
6. Based on the above public health risk assessment, in conjunction with an assessment of the wider factors for consideration, we recommend:
 - 6.1. **QFT pause with New South Wales commences at 2359hrs Tuesday 22 June, and is in place for at least 72 hours.**
 - 6.1.1. Flights that have departed tonight are able to land in New Zealand.
 - 6.1.2. Norfolk Islands is excluded from the pause.
 - 6.1.3. This is consistent with the public health assessment.
 - 6.2. **We regularly review New South Wales situation to assess if further mitigations are required.**

Further Considerations

7. These areas are front of mind in the coming days as we assess and reassess the situation in New South Wales, and we need to keep a heightened vigilance around:
 - 7.1.1. New South Wales social license factor (eg 24,000 tests versus the 40,000 tests target).
 - 7.1.2. Transmissibility of the variant in relation to community exposure location (eg Bondi Westfield mall, Bondi junction).
 - 7.1.3. Growing complexity and variety of interstate measures to mitigate risk confuses the landscape (communications and operational challenge).
8. To mitigate the risk of the cases in New South Wales, the requirement remains that if New Zealanders have been at a location of interest, they cannot return to New Zealand until 14 days post location visit.
9. As part of our risk mitigation approach, we could consider the use of pre-departure testing to mitigate risks associated with the unfolding situation in New South Wales.

Consultation – National Response Group

Legal

10. Do the current legal Orders need amendments?
 - 10.1. **Yes / No** PCO drafting work will be ready by 2300hrs tonight 22 June.
11. DPMC Legal have confirmed approach from a legal perspective
Yes / No

Next Steps

Public announcement

12. PR from Minister to be ready by 2030hrs tonight 22 June.

Review

13. MOH will run a public health assessment process the afternoon of Thursday 24 May June.

14. NRG will run a review of the pause decision on Thursday 24 May June, following IMT and DG Health considering the advice.

14.1. In reviewing the pause decision on Thursday, officials will also consider what a managed returnee process may look like and if it is required.

Communications

15. DPMC Comms team refining updates to UAC website for clear advice to travellers.

16. MOT are working proactively with industry to channel through the Comms and situation update to stakeholders in a timely manner.

Other

17. IMT and other officials will continue to monitor daily how other states respond to the unfolding situation in New South Wales.

18. Will reconvene IMT/NRG/NRLT if situation requires.

Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response	
1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.)	New South Wales has cases of concern and is the current focus. Queensland reported on 22 June that they had one case in the community, the origin is known.
2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?)	No.
3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration)	New South Wales Officials announced on 22 June that mandatory mask wearing will be extended for an additional week until 2359 30 June and will also be extending the requirement to the greater Sydney region.
4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)?	As at 21 June: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WA require arrivals from NSW to be tested upon entry and isolate until a negative test result has been returned• SA, Tasmania, ACT and Queensland have banned arrivals (with some exceptions eg returning residents) from the Waverley Council area of Sydney (which includes a number of suburbs)• Victoria has classified the City of Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra as 'Orange' travel zones, meaning that anyone arriving into Victoria from those areas since 11 June must isolate, get tested, and continue to isolate until a negative test result is returned• NT require arrivals from NSW to check Locations of Interest, and if a Close contact must get tested and isolate for 14 days regardless of result, whereas Casual contacts must get tested and quarantine until a negative test is returned.• NT, Qld and ACT require all travellers seeking entry into the state to fill out an arrival form/declaration before or upon entry.
5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days)	Origin is not known for 2 of the new locally-acquired cases of interest.
QFT domestic Response	
6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?)	Yes.
7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contract tracing, Healthline, testing, comms)	As usual.

8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where)

9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts?

Section 70 applies to New South Wales returnees.

Other considerations

10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing)

11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)

Flight schedule attached as appendix.

Cook Island QFT arrangement.

Signed:

Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair
Date:

Signed:

Brook Barrington,
National Response Leadership Team Chair
Date:

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Appendix – Flight schedule from Sydney and New South Wales 22 June to 25 June.

From Sydney

- Averaging 9 to 12 flights per day to NZ, most arrive after 1350hrs.

Tuesday, 22 June 2021					
Airline	Flight Number	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs SYD (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Air New Zealand	NZ232	ZQN	2:25 pm	11:25 am	7:25 am
Qantas	QF121	ZQN	2:30 pm	11:30 am	7:30 am
Qantas	QF137	CHC	2:35 pm	11:35 am	7:35 am
Qantas	QF161	WLG	3:15 pm	12:05 pm	8:05 am
Qantas	QF143	AKL	3:35 pm	12:35 pm	8:35 am
Air New Zealand	NZ104	AKL	4:35 pm	1:40 pm	9:40 am
Air New Zealand	NZ222	CHC	5:00 pm	1:55 pm	9:55 am
Air New Zealand	NZ106	AKL	9:55 pm	6:50 pm	2:50 pm
Qantas	QF149	AKL	10:35 pm	7:35 pm	3:35 pm
Air New Zealand	NZ248	WLG	12:05 am	8:50 pm	4:50 pm
Wednesday, 23 June 2021					
Airline	Flight Number	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs SYD (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Qantas	QF137	CHC	1:50 pm	10:50 am	6:50 am
Qantas	QF121	ZQN	2:30 pm	11:30 am	7:30 am
Qantas	QF143	AKL	3:35 pm	12:35 pm	8:35 am
Air New Zealand	NZ104	AKL	4:35 pm	1:40 pm	9:40 am
Air New Zealand	NZ222	CHC	5:00 pm	1:55 pm	9:55 am
Air New Zealand	NZ246	WLG	6:15 pm	3:00 pm	11:00 am
Air New Zealand	NZ106	AKL	9:55 pm	6:50 pm	2:50 pm
Qantas	QF149	AKL	10:35 pm	7:35 pm	3:35 pm
Jetstar	JQ205	AKL	11:55 pm	8:50 pm	4:50 pm
Thursday, 24 June 2021					
Airline	Flight Number	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs SYD (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Qantas	QF137	CHC	1:50 pm	10:50 am	6:50 am
Qantas	QF121	ZQN	2:30 pm	11:30 am	7:30 am
Qantas	QF161	WLG	3:15 pm	12:05 pm	8:05 am
Qantas	QF143	AKL	3:35 pm	12:35 pm	8:35 am
Air Chathams (Norfolk Island)	3C402	AKL	4:45 pm	2:00 pm	Departs NZ 10:30AM
Air New Zealand	NZ104	AKL	4:35 pm	1:40 pm	9:40 am
Air New Zealand	NZ222	CHC	5:00 pm	1:55 pm	9:55 am
Air New Zealand	NZ234	ZQN	5:40 pm	2:40 pm	10:40 am
Air New Zealand	NZ244	WLG	6:30 pm	3:15 pm	11:15 am
Air New Zealand	NZ106	AKL	9:45 pm	6:40 pm	2:40 pm
Qantas	QF149	AKL	10:35 pm	7:35 pm	3:35 pm
Jetstar	JQ205	AKL	11:10 pm	8:10 pm	4:10 pm
Friday, 25 June 2021					

Airline	Flight Number	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs SYD (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Qantas	QF137	CHC	1:50 pm	10:50 am	6:50 am
Air New Zealand	NZ232	ZQN	2:25 pm	11:25 am	7:25 am
Qantas	QF121	ZQN	2:30 pm	11:30 am	7:30 am
Qantas	QF161	WLG	3:15 pm	12:05 pm	8:05 am
Qantas	QF143	AKL	3:35 pm	12:35 pm	8:35 am
Air New Zealand	NZ104	AKL	4:35 pm	1:40 pm	9:40 am
Air New Zealand	NZ222	CHC	5:00 pm	1:55 pm	9:55 am
Air New Zealand	NZ234	ZQN	5:40 pm	2:40 pm	10:40 am
Air New Zealand	NZ246	WLG	7:55 pm	4:40 pm	12:40 pm
Air New Zealand	NZ106	AKL	9:45 pm	6:40 pm	2:40 pm
Qantas	QF149	AKL	10:35 pm	7:35 pm	3:35 pm
Air New Zealand	NZ228	CHC	11:05 pm	8:00 pm	4:00 pm
Jetstar	JQ205	AKL	11:10 pm	8:10 pm	4:10 pm

From Queensland

- Averaging 7 to 9 flights per day to NZ, most arrive after 1110hrs.

Tuesday, 22 June 2021						
Airline	Flight Number	Departure Airport	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Jetstar	JQ133	OOL	AKL	11:10 am	8:15 am	4:15 am
Qantas	QF119	BNE	AKL	3:00 pm	11:55 am	7:55 am
Qantas	QF135	BNE	CHC	5:10 pm	1:45 pm	9:45 am
Air New Zealand	NZ188	OOL	AKL	5:05 pm	2:00 pm	10:00 am
Air New Zealand	NZ146	BNE	AKL	5:15 pm	2:15 pm	10:15 am
Air New Zealand	NZ278	OOL	CHC	7:50 pm	2:30 pm	10:30 am
Air New Zealand	NZ242	BNE	WLG	6:50 pm	3:20 pm	11:20 am
Air New Zealand	NZ202	BNE	CHC	7:05 pm	3:35 pm	11:35 am
Air New Zealand	NZ240	BNE	WLG	12:25 am	8:55 pm	4:55 pm
Air New Zealand	NZ144	BNE	AKL	12:05 am	8:55 pm	4:55 pm
Wednesday, 23 June 2021						
Airline	Flight Number	Departure Airport	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Jetstar	JQ133	OOL	AKL	11:10 am	8:15 am	4:15 am
Air New Zealand	NZ260	BNE	ZQN	2:45 pm	11:05 am	7:05 am
Qantas	QF185	BNE	ZQN	3:20 pm	11:45 am	7:45 am
Qantas	QF119	BNE	AKL	3:00 pm	11:55 am	7:55 am
Air New Zealand	NZ188	OOL	AKL	5:05 pm	2:00 pm	10:00 am
Air New Zealand	NZ146	BNE	AKL	5:15 pm	2:15 pm	10:15 am
Air New Zealand	NZ206	BNE	CHC	12:25 am	8:55 pm	4:55 pm
Thursday, 24 June 2021						
Airline	Flight Number	Departure Airport	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Jetstar	JQ133	OOL	AKL	11:10 am	8:15 am	4:15 am

Air New Zealand	NZ142	BNE	AKL	2:50 pm	11:40 am	7:40 am
Qantas	QF119	BNE	AKL	3:00 pm	11:55 am	7:55 am
Qantas	QF135	BNE	CHC	5:10 pm	1:45 pm	9:45 am
Air New Zealand	NZ188	OOL	AKL	5:05 pm	2:00 pm	10:00 am
Air New Zealand	NZ146	BNE	AKL	5:15 pm	2:15 pm	10:15 am
Air New Zealand	NZ202	BNE	CHC	7:05 pm	3:35 pm	11:35 am
Air New Zealand	NZ240	BNE	WLG	12:25 am	8:55 pm	4:55 pm

Friday, 25 June 2021

Airline	Flight Number	Departure Airport	Arrival Place in NZ	Arrival Time in NZ	Departs (NZST)	Check in OPENS (NZST)
Jetstar	JQ133	OOL	AKL	11:10 am	8:15 am	4:15 am
Air New Zealand	NZ260	BNE	ZQN	2:45 pm	11:05 am	7:05 am
Air New Zealand	NZ142	BNE	AKL	2:50 pm	11:40 am	7:40 am
Qantas	QF119	BNE	AKL	3:00 pm	11:55 am	7:55 am
Qantas	QF135	BNE	CHC	5:10 pm	1:45 pm	9:45 am
Air New Zealand	NZ188	OOL	AKL	5:05 pm	2:00 pm	10:00 am
Air New Zealand	NZ146	BNE	AKL	5:15 pm	2:15 pm	10:15 am
Air New Zealand	NZ240	BNE	WLG	12:25 am	8:55 pm	4:55 pm
Air New Zealand	NZ206	BNE	CHC	12:25 am	8:55 pm	4:55 pm

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Domestic response – Advice and situational awareness

Overall Public Health Risk Assessment

What is the overall public health risk assessment?

Low

Medium

High

Alert Level recommendation

1

2

3

4

It is too early to make a public health assessment regarding Alert Level recommendation.

However, given the wider system considerations, NRG advises that:

- Wellington region shifts to Alert Level 2, and:
- Strengthen the public health guidance to require individuals wear face coverings when in public, either indoors or outdoors (eg in malls, supermarkets, public transport) to mitigate risk of community transmission.

Following the Health Situation Assessment, NRG will consider the following factors and report to the NRLT

NRG RAG status



Ready



Preparing



Not Ready/ Issue

Situational awareness

Considerations	Who is accountable for providing this information?	NRG RAG Status
1 Is the proposed response proportionate to the risk?	All	
2 Are the legal order templates ready for response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional face covering requirement legal drafting is underway. Boundary-setting of Wellington Region legal drafting is underway. 	COVID-19 Head of Readiness and Planning, Boundary Workstreams Lead	
3 Have key stakeholders been notified? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government Transport Operators Business Sectors CDEM groups Schools Social Welfare Caring for Communities Are they ready and able to assist? Do they have any local knowledge that would aid the response or communications? 	COVID-19 Head of Readiness and Planning	
4 Do we have assurance that the system is ready to respond to the needs of this situation to support the public health response?	COVID-19 Head of Readiness and Planning	
5 What additional measures, if any, have been put in place to mitigate risk?		

Following the Health Situation Assessment, NRG will consider the following factors and report to the NRLT

NRC RAG status ● Ready ● Preparing ● Not Ready/ Issue

Communications
In a response, this checklist needs to identify a clear Communications lead, timing for information, collateral

Considerations	Who is accountable for providing this information?	NRG RAG Status
6 What assurance can be given we are able to contact and communicate with cultural and linguistically diverse groups? (As a group).	Head of Communications and Public Engagement, COVID-19 Response Group	● ● ●
7 Which city/region is affected? • What is the demographic make-up of the place • How does the system best engage with the area? • Are there specific issues/characteristics of this region we need to take account of?	Head of Caring for Communities	● ● ●
8 Do we know the key points we need to communicate regarding any Alert Level change? • Are any special communications required for specific groups? • What risks are there in relation to miscommunication and how do we mitigate these?	Head of Communications and Public Engagement, COVID-19 Response Group/Paul Giles	● ● ●

MIQ Assurance

Considerations	Who is accountable for providing this information?	NRG RAG Status
9 What assurance can you give that the settings within our facilities are appropriate in light of the most recent developments?	DCE MIQ	● ● ●
10 What changes have been made in the facilities recently to continue to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose?	DCE MIQ	● ● ●
11 Is there sufficient capacity in our quarantine facilities to manage the current situation? <i>To note: Capacity in Wellington MIQ is good. Grand Mercure rooms could be repurposed for quarantine, around 100 rooms may become available.</i>	DCE MIQ	● ● ●
12 Is it clear where the source of the infection has come from within the facility? (if applicable)	DCE MIQ	● ● ●
13 What assurance do we have that we have contained the spread within the MIF? (if applicable)	DCE MIQ	● ● ●
14 Does this facility remain appropriate for accepting further returnees? (if source is from a MIF)	DCE MIQ	● ● ●
15 Do we have the right staff on the ground to manage this situation?	DCE MIQ	● ● ●
16 What assurance can be given that the virus is not getting through MIQ into our community? • How many new people have been infected at MIQ? (staff and returnees)	DCE MIQ	● ● ●

COVID-19 Response Checklist

1

NRG to complete upon notification of a High Risk Positive Case

2

Chair NRG to report this checklist to Chair NRLT

3

NRLT to assess and recommend course of action to Ministers Board meeting (pre-Cabinet)

4

The indicators and assessment questions covered in this checklist will form the basis of a shortened AL Cabinet Paper

Checklist A - Key Risk Assessment Indicators for Shifting Alert Levels

Questions

1 Are there community cases where we cannot identify the source?

Assessment

MoH

Current case source investigation underway – current hypothesis is that the individual contracted the virus in Sydney. However, at this point cannot rule out transmission in New Zealand until WGS is processed.

2 Are there active clusters or outbreaks in multiple regions?

MoH

At this stage, no clusters or outbreaks. However, multiple locations of interest that could lead to wider-than-Wellington consideration.

3 Evidence of the effects of the measures on the economy and society?

TSY and MSD

In event of AL change, considerations for a proportionate response from an economic and social perspective:

- Key issue is always access to services, arrangements are robust including in the regions.

Economic impact small if it only impacts Wellington, and only lasts a few days. Note Wage Subsidy Scheme is not available in AL2, only in AL3 and 4.

4 Evidence of the impacts of the measures for at risk populations in particular?

MSD

5 Public attitudes towards the measures and the extent to which people and businesses understand, accept and abide by them?

MoH / DPMC*

Behaviours around adherence to restrictive measures maybe hard to predict given we have not had a domestic response in some time. However, range of things we have done:

- Targeted radio, boosted posts on social, targeted press on AL changes.
- Nationwide push around key public health safety measures given complacency is an issue we have been aware of.
- DPMC Comms will work with teams to ensure messaging is aligned and consistent ahead of 1300hrs Ministerial stand up.
- UAC will update websites and posts when new locations of interest are available, including how the public need to respond.

6 Our ability to operationalise the restrictions, including satisfactory implementation planning?

MoH / DPMC

7 Is this case QFT related and if so what risk does this present to NZ Alert Level settings?

MoH

Yes, it is related to the QFT arrangement in New South Wales and poses a high-risk to alert level settings.

Checklist B - Public Health Assessment

Consideration

Assessment

8 Source: known/unknown/pending

Rationale: Source can give us an indication of how many generations of transmission may have occurred before the identified case

Origin case is **Section 9(2)(a)**

4 confirmed close contacts:

2 were with **Section 9(2)(a)** in all weekend, back in Palmerston North now. WGS results of those 2 contacts will come in soon.

2 were with **Section 9(2)(a)** at Floriditas over weekend, both now in Tauranga. WGS results of contacts will come in soon.

Confirmed epidemiological link for the original case to Bondi cluster.

9 Movements and exposure events during infectious period including to super

Rationale: Provides us with a view of potential for onward infection in the community

Origin case and close contacts in Wellington went to multiple locations as tourists – eg cafes, bars, restaurants, Te Papa, utilised taxis and transit.

10 High risk activities in infectious period

Rationale: Supports risk assessment for onward transmission

Unlikely the 4 close contacts were infectious while in Wellington. Tests will shed more light on this.

11 Vulnerable groups or communities at risk

Rationale: Provides an indication of risk and/or potential issues in communicating with communities at risk

12 Number of close contacts including household

Rationale: Provides an indication of most likely onward transmission

4 close contacts, detail in question 8.

13 Length of time since last close contact

Rationale: Provides an indication of how far potential onward spread has got

Detail in question 8.

14 Travel history of case or contacts

Rationale: Supports risk assessment of case onward transmission, and any contacts who may become cases onward transmission

Origin case is from Sydney, New South Wales.

Origin case with close contacts visited multiple locations over the weekend.

15 Vaccination status

Rationale: Provides an indication of how protected the community may be

Origin case has had first dose of vaccine.

Close contacts couple in Palmerston: one of them is vaccinated, unknown if partner is vaccinated.

Close contacts couple in Tauranga: vaccination status unknown.

16 Contact Tracing and Testing Capacity and Readiness

Contact tracing systems live, compiling locations of interest and pushing that comms out when information is available.

17 Any other considerations or factors deemed pertinent by the panel

Travel methods by origin case were following public health protocols (mask-wearing) through airport transit. Airport staff are advised to get tested.

COVID-19 Domestic response update and considerations

Domestic: Wellington region in Alert Level 2

Date: 24 June 2021, 1500hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

Purpose

To keep the Chair of the National Response Leadership Team apprised of the situation unfolding domestically and update on key areas for contingency preparations.

Situation Summary

1. The public service is actively responding to a domestic situation.
2. Domestic situation update:
 - 2.1. As at Thursday 24 June 1300hrs, no positive cases in the community. All four close contacts of Sydney tourist have received negative tests.
 - 2.2. Approximately 7,000 tests were processed yesterday, about 2,100 in Wellington region.

Demands on the response system

3. Healthline: At this stage, 20-minute queue for callers.
4. Testing: More testing sites available in Wellington for surge testing capacity.
 - 4.1. MOH media release reiterated the importance of testing first those who are most at risk due to proximity to locations of interest or close contacts.
 - 4.2. Lab capacity increased to achieve a 24-hour turnaround on test results. Contingency: If Wellington lab is at full capacity, overflow will be sent to Palmerston North labs.
5. Contact tracing: Figure is predicted to be 2,000 individuals contacted as close/casual by COP today Thursday 24 June. Using National Contact Tracing Centre, this draws on all DHB systems.
6. Auckland DHB is on standby for surge capacity support to Wellington DHB.
7. DPMC Communications: Continual alignment and support for MOH Comms pushed via UAC channels.

If the domestic situation were to escalate, below are the areas we focused on for contingency preparations:

8. Is Alert Level 3 fit for purpose for Delta variant transmissibility?
 - 8.1. DPMC Policy with MOH science and public health leads to input into assessment of Alert Level measures, in relation to Delta variant presence. DPMC Policy underway with this work.
9. Is DPMC Policy/Legal prepared for orders to mandate mask-wearing?
 - 9.1. DPMC Policy leading piece of work today Thursday 24 June on mandatory mask-wearing, with a view of delivery in next 48 hours.
10. Is DPMC/MOH Communications teams geared to push out comms on mask-use (and if mask-use is mandated)?
 - 10.1. Communications team involved in Policy processes (para 9), communications approach will be worked through today.
11. What are the mass events scheduled for next period outside of Wellington?
 - 11.1. Communications team putting this together today Thursday 24 June.

Health-specific

12. Is the testing surge capacity understood? Is the contact tracing capacity understood?
 - 12.1. See para 4, 5, and 7.
13. Wellington DHB surge resource considerations?
 - 13.1. See para 4.2, 5, and 6.
14. Wastewater testing?
 - 14.1. Update on rate and scope of testing due by COP today Thursday 24 June.

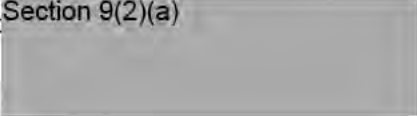
Ongoing considerations

The following are areas we need to keep a heightened vigilance around for the domestic response:

15. Social license.
16. Complacency amongst the public was a concern before the current domestic response. Going forward, there is risk of increased complacency as we have an increasingly-vaccinated public. This is informed by experiences of other jurisdictions.

17. It has been some time since a QFT arrangement has directly affected our domestic situation.

17.1. We will consider the impacts on our approach to QFT: instead of framing the arguments around reasons to close, we frame the arguments around reasons to open.

Signed **Section 9(2)(a)**


Signed

Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair

Brook Barrington
National Response Leadership Team Chair

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COVID-19 Advice: QFT New South Wales and broader system considerations impacting on domestic response (Wellington region at Alert Level 2)

Date: 24 June 2021, 1700hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

Time Zone Considerations



WA GMT +8hrs
NSW/VIC/QLD GMT +10hrs



NZ
GMT +12hrs



Cook Islands
GMT -10hrs

Situation Summary – Holistic system overview

1. New South Wales:
 - 1.1. As at Thursday 24 June, another 11 new community cases.
 - 1.2. The situation does not seem to be stabilising, continues to pose a risk to New Zealand.
2. Queensland:
 - 2.1. Three new community cases in last 24 hours.
3. Domestic situation update:
 - 3.1. As at Thursday 24 June 1300hrs, no positive cases in the community. All four close contacts of Sydney tourist in New Zealand have received negative tests.
 - 3.2. Approach remains cautious.
 - 3.3. Agencies are preparing in case of an Alert Level escalation and remain cautious.

Public Health Assessment

4. Based on the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand in response to cases in New South Wales is:
 - 4.1. Low, **Medium**, or High

Advice

QFT pause with New South Wales advice

5. Based on the above public health risk assessment, we recommend:
 - 5.1. **The QFT pause with New South Wales extends until Tuesday 6 July at 2359hrs.**
 - 5.1.1. Norfolk Islands remains excluded from the pause.
 - 5.1.2. This is consistent with the public health advice to extend the QFT pause.
 - 5.2. Officials will commence work on an approach to offer managed return flights for New Zealanders in New South Wales while the pause is in effect.

Additional risk mitigation measures

6. At this stage, we recommend applying additional risk mitigation measures to: (1) those offshore intending to travel from Australia to New Zealand, and (2) those in the Wellington region.
7. Further strengthening of risk mitigants is top of mind for Officials because of the medium risk posed to New Zealand due to Sydney's response.
8. To mitigate offshore risk:
 - 8.1. Based on the growing complexity to mitigate risk with a state-by-state approach, we will explore if we can enforce a pre-departure test in Australia (eg some states, all states, individual-based, etc.).
 - 8.2. Based on lessons-learned with the Sydney case causing a domestic response, officials will explore scenarios in which we might enact a QFT pause quicker (eg when one community case is recorded).
9. To further mitigate risk in Wellington region, along with Alert Level 2 requirements:
 - 9.1. Based on Delta variant transmission risk, Officials are investigating if we can mandate face coverings to slow the spread, and how timely can we mandate this.

Consideration

10. Queensland situation remains front of mind as it unfolds, and Officials will review daily.

Consultation – National Response Group

Legal

11. Do the current legal Orders need amendments?
Yes / No
12. DPMC Legal have confirmed approach from a legal perspective
Yes / No

Next Steps

13. COVID-19 Response Minister will announce decision on QFT pause arrangement with NSW.
14. Policy advice on face-coverings will be available tomorrow 25 June.
15. NRG daily.
16. Sunday 27 June review of domestic response Alert Level 2.
17. Monday 28 June initiate advice for managed return travel.
18. Situation in NSW is monitored daily. Formal review date of QFT pause decision to be confirmed next week.

Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response – New South Wales

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.) | Another 11 new cases today Thursday 24 June. |
| 2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?) | No. |
| 3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration) | Limits on household guests, four-square-metre distancing rule indoors and outdoors, mandatory masks in all indoor non-residential settings, including workplaces. |
| 4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)? | Cook Islands on high-alert.
Interstate measures are being tracked.
As at 21 June: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WA require arrivals from NSW to be tested upon entry and isolate until a negative test result has been returned• SA, Tasmania, ACT and Queensland have banned arrivals (with some exceptions eg returning residents) from the Waverley Council area of Sydney (which includes a number of suburbs)• Victoria has classified the City of Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra as 'Orange' travel zones, meaning that anyone arriving into Victoria from those areas since 11 June must isolate, get tested, and continue to isolate until a negative test result is returned• NT require arrivals from NSW to check Locations of Interest, and if a Close contact must get tested and isolate for 14 days regardless of result, whereas Casual contacts must get tested and quarantine until a negative test is returned.• NT, Qld and ACT require all travellers seeking entry into the state to fill out an arrival form/declaration before or upon entry. |
| 5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days) | N/a |

QFT domestic Response

- | | |
|---|---|
| 6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?) | Yes. |
| 7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contract tracing, Healthline, testing, comms) | As usual. |
| 8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where) | Daily capacity reported via MIQ situation reports. Current capacity adequate to manage the situation. |

9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts?

Section 70 applies to New South Wales and Queensland returnees.

Concurrently, Alert Level 2 requirements apply in Wellington region.

Other considerations

10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing)

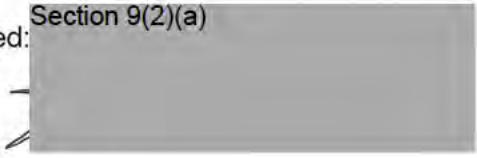
Pause in effect.

11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)

Cook Islands on high-alert.

Signed:

Section 9(2)(a)



Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair

Date:

24/06/2021

Signed:

Brook Barrington,
National Response Leadership Team Chair

Date:

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

COVID-19 domestic and QFT work underway and next steps

25 June 1300 hrs

Purpose

1. To keep the Chair of the National Response Leadership Team across the work underway and our next steps.

Situation update

2. As at 0900 hrs 25 June, there are 1,752 contacts identified in relation to this case (this number is expected to increase), of these:
 - 2.1. Of the 1,752 contacts, 532 (30.4%) have returned a negative test result with 8 contacts requiring no further action and 1,212 pending results.
 - 2.2. Of the 2 close plus contacts, 2 (100%) have returned negative test results.
 - 2.3. Of the 550 close contacts, 248 (45%) have returned a negative test result with 8 contacts requiring no further action and 294 pending results.
 - 2.4. Of the 550 close contacts, 6 are located in MIF due to no ability to isolate at their residences.
3. Updates from MOH in Ministerial stand up today 25 June at 1200hrs:
 - 3.1. Testing centres around the region has ramped up over the past few hours this morning. Sites report as busy (not as busy as yesterday), steady-flow of customers, have booking space available during the weekend for all testing sites, today's sites will stay open for as long as they need to stay open. The wait time has lessened since yesterday.
 - 3.2. Healthline is coping with demand.
 - 3.3. Wastewater testing up until Tuesday 22 June have tested negative. 24 June test results will be available today 25 June.

Work underway

4. Operational capability and capacity snapshot for regional testing and contact tracing:
 - 4.1. DPMC (Planning and System Readiness) and MOH (COVID-19 Directorate): will deliver today 25 June.
5. Managed return policy and operationalisation for New South Wales.
 - 5.1. DPMC (Policy, Planning and System Readiness): will deliver initial advice Monday 28 June, to outline forward approach and delivery.
6. Alert Level review due to Delta variant presence.
 - 6.1. DPMC (Policy): will deliver before Cabinet review.
 - 6.2. Cabinet review of Alert Level decisions on Sunday 27 June.
7. Mandatory face-covering advice.
 - 7.1. DPMC (Policy): will deliver early w/c 28 June.
8. QR code advice.
 - 8.1. DPMC (Policy): TBC delivery.
9. Major events across New Zealand
 - 9.1. See appendix.

Next steps

10. On Friday 25 June 1200hrs Ministers requested particular data points from the Ministry of Health to inform the review of Alert Level decisions on Sunday 27 June.
11. DPMC Policy team will mirror these data point requests in the event that a Cabinet paper is required for Sunday's Cabinet Alert Level decision.
12. The data points requested mostly relate to testing data, specifically are:

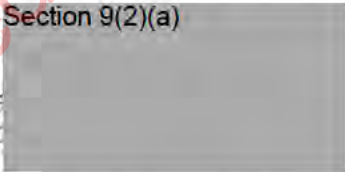
13. Risk sense across exposure sites. And, testing results of those who were in locations of interest:
 - 13.1. Granularity: symptomatic versus non-symptomatic testing, this is to provide a sense of how the risk profile has changed after receipt of 500 negative tests.
 - 13.2. Granularity: disaggregate close contacts and others, to provide comparative sense across those who are required to self-isolate or not.
14. Testing capacity: Maximum number of tests processed on Saturday.
15. Wastewater results up until Sunday 27 June. DPMC suggestion: Include wastewater testing from around the country to show national picture.

Weekend cadence, COVID-19 Domestic response and QFT arrangement review

As at 25 June 2021

All times in NZT

Date	Domestic response	QFT
Fri 25 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOH Situation update • MOH IMT. • Ministers update 1200hrs. • MOH IMT 1500hrs. • NRG at 1630hrs. • <i>Advice to NRLT Chair.</i> 	Monitoring situations daily: New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria.
Sat 26 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoH Situation Update (am). • MoH IMT (am). • Daily NRG (time TBC). • <i>Advice to NRLT Chair.</i> 	
Sun 27 June Wellington AL2 Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0830hrs MOH risk assessment • 0830-0930hrs MoH IMT • 0930-1000hrs NRG • 1000-1030hrs NRLT • 1030-1130hrs Ministerial meeting (TBC) • 1130hrs Cabinet Review – AL2 	<i>At present – QFT Pause with New South Wales lift on Tuesday 6 July 2359hrs.</i>

Signed  Section 9(2)(a)

Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair
25/06/2021

Signed

Brook Barrington
National Response Leadership Team Chair

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Appendix – Major events across New Zealand

Context:

- The table below shows the large events and gatherings where dpmc has directly organised in-person activity or other comms support. They were prioritised for engagement because of their risk profile or ability to reach key communities
- There are a number of large gatherings and events happening over the next 14 days not shown in the table below -
- The events space is currently very fluid, for example with the recent announcement that TSB Showgrounds is going into liquidation, a number of large events are currently being postponed/rethought.
- In addition the events sector is highly sensitised to alert level changes and is keeping a close eye on the situation, and taking proactive steps - for example the Dawn Raids apology has been postponed.

Event list over next 2 weeks that DPMC Communications are tracking.

Note: Some possibly at risk of postponement or cancellation if AL2 is extended, or Alert Level escalates.

Date from	Date to	Event name	Location	Attendees	Demographic	Note
25/6/2021	26/6/2021	Career-Expo	Wellington			AL2 cancel
26/6/2021	27/6/2021	Waikato Baby Expo	Hamilton			
27/6/2021	27/6/2021	Wellington Marathon	Wellington	4000 (runners and walkers)		AL2 cancel
27/6/2021	27/6/2021	Waikato Wedding Expo	Hamilton			
27/6/2021	27/6/2021	Mardi Gras	Queenstown	5000	Under 35's, youth	
27/6/2021	4/7/2021	Queenstown Winter Festival	Queenstown	5000	Tourists	
27/6/2021	3/7/2021	Ahi Ka - Matariki Event	Wellington	15000	Urban Māori, Wellington City residents	
3/7/2021	3/7/2021	All Blacks vs Tonga	Auckland	35000	Men, Under 35's, Māori, Pacific, mass audience	
3/7/2021	3/7/2021	L.A.B	Wellington		Under 35's, youth	
3/7/2021	3/7/2021	GABS 2021	Auckland		Under 35s, men	
5/7/2021	5/7/2021	L.A.B	Auckland		Under 35's, youth	
9/7/2021	13/7/2021	Te Korakora on Takutai - Matariki	Auckland		Urban Māori, Auckland city residents	
9/7/2021	11/7/2021	Rotorua Home & Lifestyle Show	Rotorua		Rotorua residents - high Māori demographic	
9/7/2021	9/7/2021	Nelson Light Festival	Nelson			
10/7/2021	All month	The Lion King	Auckland	School holidays from now	Families	
10/7/2021	10/7/2021	All Blacks vs Fiji	Dunedin		Men, Under 35's, Māori, Pacific, mass audience	
10/7/2021	10/7/2021	Capital Fibre Fest 2021	Wellington		Arts & crafts lovers	
10/7/2021	10/7/2021	Midwinter Feast @ Hobbiton	Matamata			

COVID-19 Advice: QFT arrangement with Australia

Date: 26 June 2021, 1800hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

Situation summary

Australia

1. The situation in Australia has materially deteriorated, with a significant event in the Northern Territory and the likelihood of wide dispersal, potentially Trans-Tasman. It is likely the cases evolving in Australia are infected by the Delta variant.
2. Multiple states impacted: New South Wales, Victoria, Northern Territory.

Domestic response update

3. Wellington region is still in Alert Level 2, until 27 June 2359hrs with a Cabinet review of Alert Levels on Sunday 27 June.
4. No new cases identified in Wellington.

Public Health Assessment

5. Based on the evidence provided to MoH, the public health risk for New Zealand in response to cases in Australia, particularly New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, and other states remains:
*Low, **Medium**, or High*

Advice

QFT advice

6. Based on the above public health risk assessment, we recommend:
7. **Quarantine Free Travel from all of Australia be paused for 72 hours from 2359hrs Saturday 26 June, until 2359hrs Tuesday 29 June.**
 - 7.1. **Review of pause in 48 hours.**
 - 7.2. **Note our advice to pause QFT does not preclude further advice to move to a suspension, if the situation warrants.**
 - 7.3. Note public health advice is to suspend QFT with Australia and review decision in 48 hours.
8. Aircrew and returning Air New Zealand aircrafts are enabled as an exemption to this arrangement.


Considerations – operational considerations for QFT pause with Australia

9. Flight schedules from Australia to New Zealand from tonight will be available shortly.
10. Flights will not be able to leave Australia for New Zealand after 2359hrs NZ time. Flights en route but landing after 2359hrs will be able to land as normal.

Consultation – National Response Group

Legal

Section 9(2)(h)



Next Steps

14. Minister for COVID-19 Response will announce decision on QFT arrangement with Australia tonight 26 June.
15. Review of QFT pause in 48 hours. Consider the escalation pathway to full suspension, following 72 hours if the situation has not stabilised.
16. Officials will monitor the situations evolving in Australia daily.
17. Additional steps as required.

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Completed by National Response Group

Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response	
1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.)	4.
2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?)	New South Wales, Sydney has announced a two week lockdown is in effect covering greater Sydney and neighbouring locations.
3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration)	At the time of this report, it is reasonable to expect that other jurisdictions will respond to the growing risk in Australia as the interstate complexity increases.
4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)?	Cook Islands on high-alert. Australia interstate measures are being tracked. As at 21 June: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WA require arrivals from NSW to be tested upon entry and isolate until a negative test result has been returned• SA, Tasmania, ACT and Queensland have banned arrivals (with some exceptions eg returning residents) from the Waverley Council area of Sydney (which includes a number of suburbs)• Victoria has classified the City of Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra as 'Orange' travel zones, meaning that anyone arriving into Victoria from those areas since 11 June must isolate, get tested, and continue to isolate until a negative test result is returned• NT require arrivals from NSW to check Locations of Interest, and if a Close contact must get tested and isolate for 14 days regardless of result, whereas Casual contacts must get tested and quarantine until a negative test is returned.• NT, Qld and ACT require all travellers seeking entry into the state to fill out an arrival form/declaration before or upon entry.
5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days)	N/a
QFT domestic Response	
6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?)	Yes.
7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contract tracing, Healthline, testing, comms)	As usual.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where) | Daily capacity reported via MIQ situation reports. At the time of preparing this report, current capacity adequate to manage the situation. |
| 9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts? | At the time of writing this report, Section 70 applies to New South Wales and Queensland returnees.

Concurrently, Alert Level 2 requirements apply in Wellington region. |

Other considerations

- | | |
|---|--|
| 10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing) | As attached. |
| 11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements) | New Zealand government has been in contact with Cook Islands government to inform them as the situation unfolds. |

Signed

Signed

Graham MacLean
National Response Group Chair

Brook Barrington
National Response Leadership Team Chair

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

COVID-19 Domestic response advice and situational awareness checklists

Date: 27 June 2021, 0930hrs

All time markers in NZT

Situation summary

1. At time of report-writing, Wellington region is in Alert Level 2, until Sunday 27 June 2359hrs with a Cabinet review of Alert Levels on Sunday 27 June.
2. Wellington region moved to Alert Level 2 on Wednesday 23 June 1800hrs after a positive case was identified in Sydney after they visited Wellington over the weekend of 19 and 20 June.
3. No positive cases have been confirmed in Wellington region. The critical public health interventions remain contact tracing and self-isolation.
4. A 72 hour pause of the QFT arrangement with all of Australia went into effect Saturday 26 June at 2230hrs in response to the growing concern regarding spread of cases in Australia that span multiple jurisdictions (three states, one territory).

Public health assessment

5. Saturday 26 June 1530hrs, a Public Health Risk Assessment was completed for the Wellington to Sydney Visitor regarding the current Alert Level 2 status.
6. Based on the Public Health Risk Assessment, public health recommends holding Alert Level 2 for the Greater Wellington region, including Wairarapa, for a further 48 hours until Tuesday 29 June.
7. Public health recommends these considerations to decrease to Alert Level 1 if the following points are met:
 - 7.1. Test results for at least 95% of all close contacts including 100% of symptomatic contacts, and a high degree of confidence that contacts are abiding to isolation constraints.
 - 7.2. No new cases identified in the Greater Wellington region who were infectious whilst not in quarantine.

Alert Level recommendation

8. Based on the public health assessment and wider system considerations, the National Response Group recommends:
 - 8.1. Extension of Alert Level 2 settings until Tuesday 29 June 2359hrs.
 - 8.2. Review of Alert Level 2 settings within 48 hours.
 - 8.2.1. Note the reviews of Alert Levels and of QFT pause with all of Australia are aligned.
9. Consultation – National Response Group

Next steps

10. National Response Leadership Team discuss recommendations Sunday 27 June 1000hrs.

Signed

Signed

Graham MacLean
Chair, National Response Group

Brook Barrington
Chair, National Response Leadership Team

COVID-19 Response Checklists, informed by National Response Group

Checklist A – Key risk assessment indicators for shifting Alert Levels, Wellington region
(note Wellington region is currently in Alert Level 2)

	Questions	Assessment
1.	Are there community cases where we cannot identify the source?	MoH No.
2.	Are there active clusters or outbreaks in multiple regions?	MoH No.
3.	Evidence of the effects of the measures on the economy and society?	TSY and MSD
4.	Evidence of the impacts of the measures for at risk populations in particular?	MSD
5.	Public attitudes towards the measures and the extent to which people and businesses understand, accept and abide by them?	MoH/ DPMC* Extending Alert Levels for Wellington region is appropriate as a precautionary measure. This will maintain public trust and confidence in contrast to a hypothetical scenario in which Alert Level decreases and a positive case is reported in Wellington.
6.	Our ability to operationalise the restrictions, including satisfactory implementation planning?	MoH/ DPMC Systems ready to support extension of Alert Level settings (eg Communications).
7.	Is this case QFT related and if so, what risk does this present to NZ Alert Level settings?	MoH Yes the case is related to QFT. A 72 hour pause of the QFT arrangement with all of Australia went into effect Saturday 26 June at 2230hrs in response to the growing concern regarding spread of cases in Australia that span multiple jurisdictions (three states, one territory).

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Checklist B – Public health assessment

	Consideration	Assessment
8.	<p>Source: known/unknown/pending Rationale: Source can give us an indication of how many generations of transmission may have occurred before the identified case</p>	<p>Case A (Wellington to Sydney Visitor who was in Wellington over 19 and 20 June), was reported to be infected by the Delta variant and was epidemiologically connected to Bondi cluster. Partner of Case A developed symptoms when back in Sydney.</p>
9.	<p>Movements and exposure events during infectious period including to super period including to super Rationale: Provides us with a view of potential for onward infection in the community</p>	<p>Multiple exposure sites in Wellington over 19 and 20 June. Locations of interest are reported via all COVID-related communications channels.</p>
10.	<p>High risk activities in infectious period Rationale: Supports risk assessment for onward transmission</p>	<p>Visited popular locations: cafes, Te Papa, bars and restaurants. Largely in Cuba and Courtenay Place areas.</p>
11.	<p>Vulnerable groups or communities at risk Rationale: Provides an indication of risk and/ or potential issues in communicating with communities at risk</p>	
12.	<p>Number of close contacts including household Rationale: Provides an indication of most likely onward transmission</p>	<p>As at 26 June 1530hrs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the 2 close plus contacts, 2 have returned negative test result (100%). • Of the 792 close contacts, 607 have returned a negative test result (77%), 117 are not yet overdue for a result and 8 contacts require no further action. • Of the 1,516 casual plus contacts, 1,702 have returned a negative test result (71%) and 444 are not yet overdue for a result.
13.	<p>Length of time since last close contact Rationale: Provides an indication of how far potential onward spread has got</p>	
14.	<p>Travel history of case or contacts Rationale: Supports risk assessment of case onward transmission, and any contacts who may become cases onward transmission</p>	<p>Case A travelled from Sydney to Wellington, then back to Sydney on 21 June.</p>

15.	Vaccination status Rationale: Provides an indication of how protected the community may be	Case A was partially vaccinated.
16.	Contact Tracing and Testing Capacity and Readiness	Contact tracing and testing capacity has increased to support Alert Level 2 settings and Wellington response.
17.	Any other considerations or factors deemed pertinent by the panel	

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COVID-19: QFT considerations and domestic update

Date: 28 June 2021, 1700hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

Situation summary

Australia

1. There are multiple outbreaks in Australia in differing stages of containment. These outbreaks are across four states: New South Wales, Queensland, and Northern Territory.
2. New Zealand responded decisively on Saturday 26 June to pause QFT with all of Australia for 72 hours, until Tuesday 29 June 2359hrs, to continue to assess the risks posed to New Zealand.

Domestic response update

3. Wellington region is in Alert Level 2, until Tuesday 29 June 2359hrs, with a Cabinet review of Alert Levels on Tuesday 29 June.

Public health risk assessment

Australia and QFT

4. Public health assessed the risks posed by Australian states.
5. Public health recommend extension of the pause for New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia (high and medium risk).
6. Public health recommended QFT could resume with Victoria, ACT, South Australia, and Tasmania (low risks) from Saturday 3 July, with a PDT requirement.

Domestic

7. Public health risk assessment regarding the domestic response, in Wellington region, the public health risk is: **Low**, *Medium*, or *High*.
8. Due to the low public health risk, public health recommended that Wellington region move to Alert Level 1 at 2359 Tuesday 29 June.

Considerations

The National Response Group discussed the public health risk assessments, and broader system and implementation risks. We considered:

9. Due to the presence of the Delta variant in Australia, and the higher transmission rates, a national approach to the unfolding situations in Australia is appropriate.
10. While the QFT framework allows for a state-by-state approach, there are considerable capacity risks involved in operationalising that approach.
11. There are concerns regarding public trust and confidence if we implement QFT responses state-by-state, in particular if the communications and implementation is not clear to the public.
12. Australia's Cabinet will meet tonight 28 June to discuss the interstate outbreaks.

Implementation considerations

13. In anticipation of implementation of Pre-departure testing:
 - 13.1. Immigration NZ have made a decision to augment their ALO presence in airports.
 - 13.2. Implementation of spot-checks is possible if airlines are given clear lead-in time and expectations to check PDT.
 - 13.3. Passengers will need 72 hours of notice to receive a PDT.
 - 13.4. Officials' perspective is that a change to QFT arrangements should be effective on a weekday, rather than a weekend day, to mitigate capacity risk on the system.

Work underway

14. Enabling managed return travel to give New Zealanders the opportunity to return if they are stuck in Australia due to the QFT pause.
 - 14.1. Advice will be provided to Minister Hipkins on Wednesday 30 June. DPMC is coordinating this work, implementation and operationalisation is being worked through with DPMC and the BEB.
15. Pre-departure testing requirement when QFT with Australia resumes.
 - 15.1. Minister Hipkins will discuss this with Cabinet tomorrow 29 June.
16. For the domestic response, advice is being prepared on mandatory record keeping and face covering options. A briefing on these issues will go to Minister Hipkins on Wednesday 30 June.

Next steps

17. NRG/NRLT, if required.
18. Cabinet meeting tomorrow 29 June at 1145hrs.
19. Public health teams assessing unfolding situations in Australia daily.

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Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response	
1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.)	4. New South Wales: as at 0900 28 June, there was an increase of 30 locally acquired cases in the previous 24hours. Of the 30 new cases, 19 were infectious while in the community. Northern Territory: as at 27 June, NT announced four new positive cases were detected, all linked to the Granites gold mine in NT. Queensland: as at 0900 28 June, nine cases associated with the Brisbane Metropolitan outbreak. Western Australia: on 28 June, WA reported one new community case (associated with the Bondi Westfield outbreak in Sydney).
2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?)	New South Wales: Expanded lockdown covers Greater Sydney as well as Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Wollongong. Stay-at-home orders in place until 9 July for all of Greater Sydney and other specified areas. Northern Territory: as at 27 June, announced a 48hour lockdown for Darwin, Palmerston and Litchfield. Queensland: From 0600 28 June, maximum of 10 visitors permitted to households, and two-metre rule reintroduced for venues. Western Australia: restrictions imposed for Perth and Peel regions, including mandatory mask-wearing indoors and on public transit.
3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration)	At the time of this report, it is reasonable to expect that other jurisdictions will respond to the growing risk in Australia as the interstate complexity increases.
4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)?	Cook Islands on high-alert. Australian states have introduced many interstate measures.
5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days)	N/a
QFT domestic Response	
6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?)	Yes.
7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contract tracing, Healthline, testing, comms)	As usual.

8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where)

Daily capacity reported via MIQ situation reports.

9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts?

At the time of writing this report, Section 70 issued to locations of interest in: Victoria, New South Wales and the ACT, Queensland, and Wellington.

Concurrently, Alert Level 2 requirements apply in Wellington region.

Other considerations

10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing)

N/a, QFT pause in effect.

11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)

New Zealand government has been in contact with Cook Islands government to inform them as the situation unfolds.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

COVID-19: QFT advice and considerations

Date: 02 July 2021, 1200hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

Situation summary

Australia

1. There are multiple outbreaks in Australia in different stages of containment.
2. Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania have reasonably low, or no, cases of COVID-19.
3. Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia, New South Wales have multiple outbreaks underway.
4. On 29 June Cabinet made an in-principle decision based on information and public health advice available at that time, that QFT from the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria can recommence any time from 2359hrs Sunday 4 July 2021 (NZT) for travellers who:
 - 4.1. Have not previously been in New South Wales, Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia on or after 2230hrs on 26 June; and
 - 4.2. Have provided evidence of a negative COVID-19 test, taken within three days of departure.

Public health risk assessment

Australia and QFT

5. Public health assessed the risks posed by Australian states.
 - 5.1. Victoria, South Australia, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania deemed as low risk.
 - 5.2. Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland deemed as medium risk.
 - 5.3. New South Wales deemed as high risk.
6. Public health recommend that the pause for QFT flights be continued for states assessed as high and medium risk (NT, NSW, QLD, and WA).
7. Public health recommend commencement of QFT flights for states assessed as Green (Victoria, SA, ACT and Tasmania), and subjected to:
 - 7.1. No new community cases of concern identified within these states.
 - 7.2. Any other conditions already agreed by the Minister (eg pre-departure testing).
 - 7.3. Must not have been in high and medium risk states or at a location of interest for 14 days prior to travel. Travellers must make a pre-departure declaration at airports.

Advice

8. The National Response Group Chair and the Readiness and Planning Team discussed the public health risk assessments, and broader system and implementation risks. We advise that:
9. On Communications:
 - 9.1. Communications associated with recommencing of QFT flights from low-risk states is accurate and targeted for industry and the travelling public in a timely manner.
 - 9.2. DPMC Communications to coordinate with MOH comms and stakeholders.
 - 9.3. Minister Hipkins statement on commencement of QFT flights should reflect previous government messaging on in-principle decisions, monitor situation, and that there is potential for the situation to change.
 - 9.4. Indication for the public on when they can expect decisions for the immediate future as the situations unfold in Australian states (eg Cabinet meeting Monday 5 July).

Considerations

10. Workforce capacity across the system continues to be impacted by QFT arrangements, particularly as the response becomes more complex.
11. MFAT will provide consular feedback on issues related to QFT.

Next steps

12. MOH IMT will monitor situations daily in Australian states. NRG/NRLT will convene as required.
13. Monday 5 July
 - 13.1. 0830hrs MOH IMT risk assessment process. Will include review timeframes for pause with NSW.
 - 13.2. 1000hrs NRG (NRLT if required).
 - 13.3. TBC late morning COVID Minister meeting.
 - 13.4. Afternoon the Cabinet will meet to reconsider the QFT arrangement with medium and high-risk states. Cabinet will consider advice on managed return flights for New Zealanders unable to travel due to lockdown in New South Wales.
14. BORA review for trans-Tasman QFT on Monday 5 July.

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Checklist: situational awareness key questions

QFT Partner Response

1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.)
2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?)
3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration)
4.

New South Wales: At 1300 1 July 2021, NSW Health reported 24 new cases overnight, with 17 of these cases linked to previous new cases. Of these, 9 were in isolation for full infectious period, 3 were in isolation for part of their infectious period and 12 were in community while infectious. The increase in cases is described by NSW Health as a steady increase of cases.

Northern Territory: As at 1300 1 July there are eight cases reported in NT associated with the Tanami Outbreak with one new case reported on 1 July. There are a total of 16 cases associated with the outbreak across Australia, one case identified in New South Wales, two cases identified in Queensland and five cases identified in South Australia.

Queensland: There are 12 cases associated with the Brisbane Metropolitan Outbreak. Of the cases, 7 were in isolation during their infectious period. On 1 July, one new case was reported who is a known close contact of a previous case and has been in isolation during their infectious period.

Western Australia: Western Australia have reported a total of four locally acquired cases, including one additional case reported on 1 July who is linked to other cases and was in quarantine throughout their infectious period.

New South Wales: Expanded lockdown covers Greater Sydney as well as Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Wollongong. Stay-at-home orders in place until 9 July for all of Greater Sydney and other specified areas.

Northern Territory: Northern Territories has announced a 48-hour lockdown for Darwin, Palmerston and Litchfield until 1300hrs (local time) 2 July.

Queensland: Queensland Health declared a 72-hour lockdown from 1800hrs (local time) 29 June until 18hrs (local time) 2 July for South-east Queensland, Townsville city, Magnetic Island and Palm Island. They have also made mask wearing compulsory across Brisbane, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Noosa, Redlands, Moreton Bay, Somerset and Logan.

Western Australia: Perth and Peel is in a 4-day lockdown until 12.01am Saturday, 3 July, 2021. Masks are mandatory during this period. At the time of this report, it is reasonable to expect that other jurisdictions will respond to the growing risk in Australia as the interstate complexity increases. Australian states have introduced many interstate measures, largely relying on the interstate travel permit systems.

4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)?	Cook Islands on high-alert.
5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days)	N/a
QFT domestic Response	
6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?)	Yes.
7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contract tracing, Healthline, testing, comms)	As usual.
8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where)	Daily capacity reported via MIQ situation reports.
9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts?	At the time of writing this report, Section 70 issued to locations of interest in: Victoria, New South Wales and the ACT, Queensland, and Wellington.
Other considerations	
10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing)	N/a, QFT pause in effect.
11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)	New Zealand government has been in contact with Cook Islands government to inform them as the situation unfolds.

Signed

Graham MacLean
Chair, National Response Group

Signed

Brook Barrington
Chair, National Response Leadership Team

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

COVID-19: QFT and domestic responses, considerations

Date: 14 July 2021, 1900hrs

National Response Group meeting 14 July 2021, 1900hrs

Situation summary

1. The situation in Victoria has worsened, at least one case has been attributed to an individual who travelled from New South Wales to Victoria.
2. The situation in New South Wales has remained high-risk to New Zealand.
3. Playa Zahara: 17 of 18 crew members have returned positive results. Shipping vessel has embarked for Lyttleton, set to arrive 1000hrs Friday 16 July. MIQ beds for all 18 crew, Customs still arranging which crew will stay on board. MPI have agreed to allow for 40tons of fish to remain on board.


Public Health assessment

4. On the situation evolving in Victoria, public health recommended maintaining 'green' or low risk assessment posed to New Zealand, and the response system remains on a watching brief, with daily reviews of the situation.
5. On the shipping vessels, public health is working through the finer details of how to manage the positive cases on vessels (eg MIQF approach).

Advice

6. The National Response Group discussed the public health risk assessments, and broader system and implementation risks, including capacity considerations to operate QFT on an Australian state-by-state basis.
7. The NRG advise that for the situation in Victoria, the response system remains on a watching brief, with daily reviews of the situation, to prepare the system for a possible QFT pause with Victoria.

Considerations across active responses

8. The risk posed to New Zealand is apparent across all components of the COVID response system as the number of responses is compounding. Multiple agencies noted that the cumulative risk on the system is apparent, and causing concern for the regions, eg system capacity focus on QFT causes concern for the system capacity to respond domestically.
9. Before travellers leave Australia, Government communications need to be very clear that if individuals embark on a green flight for New Zealand without a PDT those individuals will be put into MIQ. NRG members are advising that our approach going forward should increase the focus on off-shore levers and communications to prevent travellers from coming here against regulations or as border breaches.
10. Section 6(a) 
11. There are flights scheduled throughout the day tomorrow 15 July, earliest midday. MOT will provide exact timings later tonight 14 July.

MIQ

12. In the response to the situation in New South Wales and our approach to utilise MIQFs poses a high contingency risk to New Zealand to respond to concurrent events (eg a domestic outbreak may not be contained if the system is not able to use MIQFs for close-contacts of a positive case).

12.1. DPMC will lead contingency planning via a workshop tomorrow 15 July to assess this consideration.

13. There is additional stress to stand up an additional MIF facility in a short period of time. The NRG discussed that to operationalise this, an interim step might be to pause the stress on the MIQF system immediately (eg stopping international flights) to recoup MIQF capacity.

13.1. DPMC will lead contingency planning via a workshop tomorrow 15 July to assess this consideration.

14. MIQ are preparing a paper to Minister Hipkins that suggests how to build back the MIQ contingency in light of the higher-risk situations posed to New Zealand from the situations in Australia, and the pressure on MIQ systems.

Legal

15. BORA advice will be provided on the New South Wales situation.

Signed
Graham MacLean

Signed
Rebecca Kitteridge

Chair, National Response Group

Acting Chair, National Response
Leadership Team

COVID-19: QFT advice and considerations regarding the situation in Victoria

Date: 15 July 2021, 1615hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

Situation summary

Australia

1. Cases reported today and yesterday in Victoria are of-concern to New Zealand, officials are on a watching-brief of the state. Of the cases identified majority have been reported to be epidemiologically linked, and others are awaiting WGS results.
2. Victoria is entering into a lockdown at midnight tonight 15 July.
3. Cases reported today in Queensland have two separate chains of transmission but majority of the cases are epidemiologically linked to one of the chains.
4. Of note are concurrent responses underway:
 - 4.1. New South Wales and an emerging situation in Queensland.
 - 4.2. Shipping vessels off-shore of New Zealand.

Public health risk assessment

Victoria and QFT

5. Public health assessed the risk of the situation unfolding in Victoria as **high risk**.
6. Public health recommended that the QFT arrangement with Victoria pauses from midnight tonight and is reviewed on Monday 19 July.

Queensland and QFT

7. Public health assessed the risk of the situation unfolding in Queensland as **medium risk**.
8. Public health recommended that the QFT arrangement with Queensland maintains in place with officials to review tomorrow Friday 16 July.

Australia and QFT

9. Public health notes the volatility of the current situation across Australia but do not consider a pause with all of Australia is necessary at this stage.

Advice

10. The National Response Group discussed the public health risk assessments, and broader system and implementation risks. We advise that:
11. On the QFT arrangement with Victoria:
 - 11.1. **Pause QFT arrangements with Victoria from 2359hrs today 15 July and review the pause on Monday 19 July.**
 - 11.2. This is because the risk to public health is high, the Victorian government will be announcing a lockdown in the state for several days and there is minimal capacity across the MIQF for cases of COVID-19 to quarantine if required.
 - 11.3. Work will commence to plan for managed returns (green flights) if the situation necessitates. The system is working toward a 2-week horizon for completion of preparations.
 - 11.4. Note there are two flights that depart from Australia scheduled to land around the time of the recommended pause commencement (2359hrs). One is due to land in Wellington at 2350hrs, and one is due to land in Auckland at 0020hrs Friday 16 July. Note there is one flight scheduled to land at 0500hrs Friday 16 July.

12. On communications:
 - 12.1. Notification to airlines via MOT following Ministerial decision.
 - 12.2. Notification to MFAT channels following Ministerial decision.
 - 12.3. UAC website will be updated to reflect the Ministers decision.

Considerations discussed with NRG members

13. System capacity risks have been identified by agencies as these risks impact on the ability of the system to keep the virus out.
14. The risk posed to New Zealand is apparent across all components of the COVID-19 response system as the number of responses is compounding. Multiple agencies noted that the cumulative risk on the system is apparent, and causing concern for the regions, e.g. system capacity focus on QFT causes concern for the system capacity to respond domestically.
15. MIQF are at capacity, this contributes to the system capacity risk in terms of:
 - 15.1. Workforce ability to accommodate the demand
 - 15.2. Hospitality ability to respond to demand
 - 15.3. Government maintenance (e.g. ventilation improvements) to MIQFs is postponed due to increase on demand, which pushes those risks out further.
16. MIQF at capacity and utilisation of MIQF contingency accumulates to increased risk to respond domestically. This is due to the fact that MIQF would not be a viable tool to support managing a domestic response. The original intent of MIQF contingency (500 rooms) is for emergency and exceptional circumstances to manage keeping out or containing the virus.
17. Border breaches remains a concern for the system.
18. Work underway or to be discussed further:
 - 18.1. Maritime border settings and assessment of suitability or fit-for-purpose given current context.
 - 18.2. Reduction of demand on the system could include restricting traveller numbers to New Zealand, with due regard to BORA obligations.

Next steps

19. MOH IMT will monitor situations daily in Australian states. NRG/NRLT will convene as required.
20. Thursday 15 July
 - 20.1. 1800hrs Ministerial stand up
 - 20.2.
21. Friday 16 July
 - 21.1. IMT MOH review. 1615hrs review by NRG of current settings.
22. Monday 19 July
 - 22.1. Review of Victoria pause.

Checklist: situational awareness key questions for the situation in Victoria

QFT Partner Response	
1. How many QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. states and territories) have new cases of concern? (How many cases? etc.)	Victoria situation is focus of this advice. To note – New South Wales continue to respond to cases in the community.
2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories) chosen to lock down? (part of or whole jurisdiction?)	Victoria will go into lockdown at 2359hrs tonight 15 July.
3. What are the Public Health measures the QFT partner jurisdiction are putting in place? (i.e. legal requirements and duration)	Victoria is not currently in lockdown. From 2359hrs 14 July mask-wearing is mandatory.
4. What is the initial responses of other QFT partner jurisdiction (including other states and territories)?	Other states continue to impose travel restrictions. However, border breaches have occurred.
5. What is the travel history of the case? (i.e. have they travelled to any other states in the past 14 days)	N/a
QFT domestic Response	
6. Is it appropriate for New Zealand citizens to remain in the QFT partner jurisdiction? (e.g. can the local health facilities cope with demand this would entail for their health services?)	Yes.
7. What is New Zealand's likely health care capacity for managing affected persons coming in? (e.g. contract tracing, Healthline, testing, comms)	As usual.
8. What is New Zealand's likely MIQ capacity for managing affected persons coming in if required? (e.g. how many rooms are available and where)	Daily capacity reported via MIQ situation reports.
9. What are the domestic requirements for any identified contacts?	At the time of writing this report, Section 70 issued to cover individuals who have been to locations of interest.
Other considerations	
10. What is the flight schedule for the next 24 hours? (including where are these flights landing)	Attached as appendix for reference, as at 2000hrs Wednesday 14 July.
11. Does this affect any other QFT partner arrangements New Zealand has? (e.g. notification obligations under other QFT partner arrangements)	New Zealand government has been in contact with Cook Islands government to inform them as the situation unfolds.

Signed

Signed

Graham MacLean
Chair, National Response Group

Rebecca Kitteridge
Acting Chair, National Response Leadership Team

Appendix: Flights departing Melbourne for New Zealand, Thursday 15 July and Friday 16 July

Carrier	Flight #	Date	ESTIMATED time of departure (NZT)	Time of arrival (NZT)	Departure Airport	Arrival Airport
JQ	219	Thursday, 15 July 2021	8:25 AM	11:25 AM	Melbourne	Queenstown
QF	177	Thursday, 15 July 2021	10:55 AM	1:55 PM	Melbourne	Queenstown
QF	151	Thursday, 15 July 2021	11:25 AM	2:25 PM	Melbourne	Auckland
NZ	264	Thursday, 15 July 2021	11:30 AM	2:30 PM	Melbourne	Queenstown
QF	171	Thursday, 15 July 2021	11:30 AM	2:30 PM	Melbourne	Wellington
NZ	212	Thursday, 15 July 2021	11:40 AM	2:40 PM	Melbourne	Christchurch
QF	133	Thursday, 15 July 2021	11:45 AM	2:45 PM	Melbourne	Christchurch
NZ	124	Thursday, 15 July 2021	2:30 PM	5:30 PM	Melbourne	Auckland
NZ	250	Thursday, 15 July 2021	8:50 PM	11:50 PM	Melbourne	Wellington
NZ	126	Thursday, 15 July 2021	9:20 PM	12:20 AM	Melbourne	Auckland
JQ	217	Friday, 16 July 2021	2:00 AM	5:00 AM	Melbourne	Auckland
JQ	173	Friday, 16 July 2021	8:30 AM	11:30 AM	Melbourne	Christchurch
QF	177	Friday, 16 July 2021	10:35 AM	1:35 PM	Melbourne	Queenstown
QF	151	Friday, 16 July 2021	11:25 AM	2:25 PM	Melbourne	Auckland
NZ	264	Friday, 16 July 2021	11:00 AM	2:00 PM	Melbourne	Queenstown
QF	171	Friday, 16 July 2021	11:30 AM	2:30 PM	Melbourne	Wellington
QF	133	Friday, 16 July 2021	11:45 AM	2:45 PM	Melbourne	Christchurch
NZ	124	Friday, 16 July 2021	2:30 PM	5:30 PM	Melbourne	Auckland
NZ	214	Friday, 16 July 2021	3:40 PM	6:40 PM	Melbourne	Christchurch
NZ	250	Friday, 16 July 2021	8:50 PM	11:50 PM	Melbourne	Wellington
NZ	126	Friday, 16 July 2021	9:20 PM	12:20 AM	Melbourne	Auckland

COVID-19: Trans-Tasman Quarantine Free Travel advice and considerations regarding South Australia and approach to QFT arrangement with Australia

Date: 20 July 2021, 1715hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

South Australia

Situation summary

Australia

1. QFT is currently paused between New Zealand and two states in Australia, New South Wales and Victoria. Public health will review the situations tomorrow 21 July.
2. New South Wales is currently in lockdown until 30 July, and Victoria is currently in lockdown until 27 July to contain the outbreaks. South Australia has announced a lockdown to commence tonight 20 July and last until 27 July in response to new locally-acquired cases reported today.
3. Queensland reported 2 new locally-acquired cases today.
4. To note, public health assessments of situations in New South Wales and Victoria will go ahead tomorrow Wednesday 21 July as previously-agreed.

Public health risk assessments

South Australia and Queensland

5. Public health assessed the risk of the situation unfolding in South Australia as **medium** risk. Public health recommended pause of QFT from South Australia, given the assessment of risk by the South Australian government.
6. Enabling green flights (managed return) with the requirement of PDT, which is standard for all travel from Australia to New Zealand.
7. Public health assessed the risk of the situation in Queensland as **low** risk. Public health recommended QFT arrangement remains in place from Queensland.

National Response Group advice

8. The National Response Group discussed the public health risk assessments, and broader system and implementation risks. We advise:
9. Pause of the QFT arrangement with South Australia is necessary, to commence from 2359hrs tonight 20 July. Flights over the next two days from South Australia can continue to New Zealand, travellers will need PDT. Public health will review on 27 July.

Considerations

10. Industry can enable green flights (managed return) from South Australia if they are given notice tonight 20 July.
11. Parliamentary Council Office in place to draft legislation changes should the Minister decide to pause QFT with South Australia.

Approach to QFT arrangement with Australia

Public health view

12. Public health recommended that New Zealand re-assess QFT with Australia, in favour of a staged approach to suspend QFT with all Australia.
13. Public health assessed the risks across all of Australia given the increasing complexity. Porous borders and long land borders have resulted in cases appearing in multiple states, public health have considered social licence factors in states with lockdowns and active cases.
14. Public health will continue to be on a watching-brief of all states in Australia.

National Response Group advice

15. The National Response Group discussed the broader system implications and implementation risks associated with changing our Australian approach from a state-by-state to national approach.
16. The situation is volatile, unpredictable, and the presenting additional layers of challenge present us with an opportunity consider how we manage and assess our approach to Australia QFT right now.
17. We advise that:
18. Officials provide advice to Ministers regarding operationalisation of a suspension and the pros and cons (ie economic impacts, health impacts, risks, etc).

Considerations

19. Public communications must emphasise that individuals should not travel from New Zealand to Australia. Communications preference is a holistic approach to a situation for ease of clearer communications and 'package' a consistent approach to all of Australia. There will be ongoing communications challenges to clearly communicate what individuals can do if they are unable to return. Recent lessons show that successful communications are effective when we communicate what is known now and what the next decision point might be.
20. Relativity issue is present in New Zealand government's approach to the whole state of Australia in contrast to other countries **Section 6(a)**
21. Red flights (managed return) from states where travel is suspended would be difficult to implement given the New Zealand MIQF system is at capacity.
22. If individuals are encouraged to return to New Zealand before the situation materially worsens, officials would have to think carefully on how much time to allow for individuals to return.
23. The systems put in place to enable red flights (managed return) from New South Wales is not a sustainable model for red flights from all of Australia.
24. A government call centre would be a reasonable system to put in place to manage the effects of any holistic approach to QFT with Australia.
25. A holistic approach along precautionary lines will reduce the possibility (to zero or close to zero) of border breaches occurring and negatively impacting New Zealand.

26. One risk to a staged approach to QFT suspension is that we may see an increase in border breaches by individuals desperate to return. The system currently sees individuals enter New Zealand on green flights (managed return) without satisfying the requirements (eg no PDT, or individuals were in red Australian states).

Considerations regarding system capacity to respond

27. NRG considers that the Domestic Response System is reaching a threshold where the ability to respond to a domestic outbreak is at risk and could materially impact the ability of the ability to keep the virus out.
28. Pressure that is being seen on the air border with frequent pauses to TT QFT is also being seen increasing on NZ maritime border.
29. NZ is currently managing multi-agency responses to three separate incidents on our maritime border involving commercial vessels with crew who have tested positive for COVID-19.
30. Three berths at three separate New Zealand ports (Wellington, Lyttelton and Bluff) are now occupied with vessels in Quarantine. It is becoming known that vessels with COVID stricken crew is an emerging global problem that will likely engage increasingly more of the system to respond to.

Next steps:

31. The NRLT endorsed a tree-phase plan for next couple days:

32. Phase 1 (tonight 20 July): Pause QFT with South Australia today 20 July commences at 2359hrs. Flights over the next two days from South Australia can continue to New Zealand, travellers will need PDT. Public health will review on 27 July.

32.1. Process: standard via Public health advice to Minister Hipkins.

32.2. Minister Hipkins announces tonight 20 July.

33. Phase 2 (21 and 22 July): Suspend all QFT travel with the whole of Australia, with advice and detailed planning to be completed by officials by COP Wednesday 22 July.

33.1. Process: Advice is approved by Cabinet, DPMC-led advice process.

Section 9(2)(g)(i)

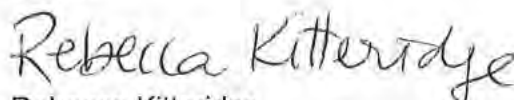
34. Phase 3: Officials produce advice on returning eligible individuals to return from the whole of Australia.

Signed



Graham MacLean
Chair, National Response Group

Signed



Rebecca Kitteridge
Acting Chair, National Response
Leadership Team

Overview of situations in Australian states of-interest due to presence of COVID-19, as at 1600hrs 20 July

South Australia

- South Australia health authorities have so far identified five cases linked to a current cluster. The fifth case identified today is not among the original family. Health authorities confirmed the state's outbreak is the Delta strain.
- The government of South Australia today announced a lockdown will be in place from 1800hrs (ACST) for seven days, until 27 July.
- The restrictions in place are referred to as 'Level 5' which include a stay at home requirement, closure of community activities, masks for public places. Reasons to leave home are to care for someone, essential work, purchase of essential goods, essential healthcare including COVID testing and vaccination.

Queensland

- Cases: 2 new locally-acquired cases reported in last 24 hours (up until 19 July as per the state's reporting cycles).
- Health authorities have reported a new case this morning, a woman who had travelled from Melbourne, had been at an exposure site, was tested and isolated (until negative result) and then in the community (Sunshine coast) 2 days before retesting and resulting in a positive result.
- Queensland will monitor situation, no further restrictions at this point.

Victoria

- Cases: 13 new locally-acquired cases reported in last 24 hours (up until 20 July as per the state's reporting cycles).
- The government of Victoria announced today that their lockdown will be extended until 2359hrs 27 July. This follows 13 new cases (9 in full isolation during infections period).
- To note – QFT pause between state of Victoria and New Zealand in place, review to occur tomorrow Wednesday 21 July.

New South Wales

- Cases: 78 new locally-acquired cases reported in last 24 hours (up until 20 July as per the state's reporting cycles). New South Wales reported there are 1,239 active locally-acquired cases in the state.
- To note – QFT pause between New South Wales and New Zealand in place, red flights (managed return) underway. New South Wales is in lockdown until at least 2359hrs 30 July.

COVID-19: QFT and Australia following Cabinet decision on 22 July 2021

Date: 23 July 0930hrs National Response Group meeting

Updates from NRG members and sectors

Industry update

1. MOT provided heads-ups to industry airlines: MOT communicated the legal position of a QFT pause for 7 days (23 July to 30 July), then suspension (from 30 July). And will clarify with them today that the public communications strategy is to regard it is a suspension from midnight Friday 23 July. Industry airlines were grateful for the heads up from MOT. Commercial issues will need to be worked through between MOT and airlines.
2. Noted that the PDT requirement may mean there will be an increase in demand for flights after a few days once individuals have had the opportunity to receive a PDT.
3. MOT requested draft comms and FAQs to provide to airlines.
4. MOT would prefer they are able to provide an officials heads up to industry airlines by mid-morning.

4.1. Action: Graham MacLean to engage Ministers office to get the go-ahead to communicate with airlines by mid-morning.

5. MOT working with airlines today to clarify what the government's data needs are from industry through operationalising suspension of QFT with Australia.

Call centre update

6. Andy Milne noted that the number for the call centre is 'live'. Raised that they are working through any issues that may be associated with reaching the 0800 from outside of New Zealand.
7. Call centre numbers: The toll free number for NZ only callers is 0800 537 726. People calling from Australia will need to call 09 952 1695 or 04 830 3599. MBIE are working on an Australian 1800 number but this will not be in place by 10am tomorrow. Once this established, it can add this to the COVID-19 website references.

Engagement with Australian counterparts, consular supports, travel advisory

8. MFAT noted that the Prime Minister intends to speak to her counterpart this morning and following that Minister Hipkins will speak to his counterpart.
9. MFAT noted that they will engage with Cook Islands and Niue 30 minutes before the public announcement. MFAT will need to clarify the consular position for ordinarily resident individuals to travel back to New Zealand from Cook Islands or Niue.
10. MFAT setting up a consular case management support system for individuals in Australia.
11. MFAT will raise travel advisory in line with Ministerial announcement today.

Update on operationalising three-day testing in self-isolation

12. Will line up daily reporting on three-day testing.

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13. Cadence for self-isolation calls/checks from MOH:

- 13.1. Day 0 is the day individuals arrive in New Zealand.
- 13.2. Day 1 call to make sure individuals have what they need to stay home, welfare checks, communicate what the requirements are.
- 13.3. Day 2 call to check in and organise day 3 test.
- 13.4. Day 3 call to confirm individuals underwent a COVID test.
- 13.5. Day 4 regarding COVID test result. If negative they can enter community.

PDT checking and Nau Mai Ra

- 14. MOH checking that all travellers have completed Nau Mai Ra.
- 15. Customs will operationalise 100% checking of PDTs.

Next steps

16. Andy Milne confirmed that he will be the SRO for border-related operationalisation.

- 16.1. Will need tease out what is in scope or out of scope for BEB lead of operationalisation.
- 16.2. BEB CEs will have a discussion this afternoon on:
 - 16.2.1. Joining up all the information coming in regarding the border to create a coherent narrative around the operationalisation of QFT suspension, and coherent understanding of the operational components.
 - 16.2.2. Confirm SRO.
 - 16.2.3. Confirm BEB CEs expectations across this work.

17. To be discussed further:

- 17.1. Daily rhythm.
- 17.2. Data requirements for a data and SITREP perspective. DPMC has a role to play here.

18. Early next week we will need a more-refined position on what we will communicate to the public regarding what is available to travellers who are in Australia and unable to return within the immediate 7-day period, and therefore unable to return via green flights from 30 July.

19. DPMC will circulate a table to the NRG that collates the required report-backs to Cabinet out of the Cabinet decision yesterday.

COVID-19: Domestic response advice, considerations, suggested next steps regarding a positive case identified in Auckland

Date: 17 August 2021, 1500hrs

All time markers recorded in NZT

Situation summary

Auckland

1. One 58 years old male lives in Devonport tested positive 17/08, he is unvaccinated.
2. The man owns a small business, has a small number of employees one of which was sick in July and 1 in the last fortnight, the Ministry of Health are following up with these employees.
3. The man went to his GP 16/08 and tested positive 17/08 (re-test also positive). Considered infectious since 12/08.
4. The male and his wife were in the Coromandel 13/08 - 15/08. They stayed at an AirBNB and went to a buys pub to watch the rugby on Saturday night.
5. The male is a user of the app.

Alert Level options discussion

6. The National Response Group discussed Alert Level options across duration and boundary.
7. The NRG discussed the following options which would go into effect at midnight tonight 17 August:
 - 7.1. Option: Alert Level 4 in effect in Auckland and Coromandel, rest of North Island and country at Alert Level 2.
 - 7.2. Option: Alert Level 4 in effect across the North Island, Alert Level 2 in effect across the South Island.
 - 7.3. Option: Alert Level 4 in effect in Auckland and Coromandel, rest of the country at Alert Level 2.

Considerations to operationalise advice

8. Education systems preparedness to move to Alert Level 4, and consideration is needed for individuals who reside in hostels.
9. Working assumptions from recent workshops for readiness planning:
 - 9.1. Fewer movements for a period of 7 to 10 days
 - 9.2. Vaccination programme is not to be disrupted or disturbed when in higher ALs.
 - 9.3. Public communications essential (ie clarity about restriction of movements)
10. MIQ: Community isolation, supported isolation, is part of the planning for outbreaks.

Suggested next steps

11. NRG considerations communicated to NRLT.
12. Communications strategy and planning
 - 12.1. Process and leads: DPMC COVID-19 Group will lead on the communications strategy. SRO: Heather Peacocke. Have briefed media outlets on planning to ensure mass coverage across media by tomorrow morning. Engagement piece across key sectors and iwi partners will be prioritised following Ministerial decisions.
13. Legal to draft AL 4 Order
 - 13.1. Process and leads: DPMC COVID-19 Group Legal and PCO will draft AL 4 Order
14. Cabinet paper to shift to AL 4
 - 14.1. Process and leads: DPMC Policy draft Cabinet paper
15. Welfare supports will come into effect through their channels, Debbie Power will convene a Caring for Communities meeting with CEs.

Signed


Graham MacLean
Chair, National Response Group

COVID-19: Domestic Response Checklist

1. NRG to complete upon notification of a positive case
2. Chair NRG to report checklist to Chair NRLT
3. NRLT assess and recommend course of action to Ministers (pre-Cabinet)
4. Indicators and assessment questions covered in this checklist will form the basis of a shortened AL Cabinet paper.

Health situation	
<p>Is the source of the outbreak known?</p> <p>What is the geographic distribution (of known or potential close contacts)?</p> <p>How long has the virus thought to have been in the community? And the impacts.</p> <p>What is the health systems capacity for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact tracing • Testing • Surveillance 	<p>Auckland, 58year old male. Travelled to the Coromandel Peninsula over the recent weekend.</p> <p>Individual was a frequent user of the COVID-19 Tracer App.</p> <p>Connection to the border is not apparent or obvious at this stage.</p> <p>Testing and surveillance systems in Waikato and Auckland areas are gearing up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AKL is increasing number testing stations, they have identified some workforce issues with setting up additional testing sites tomorrow. - Waikato will increase testing stations when Coromandel is identified in the media.
System Considerations	
<p>What is MIQs or community isolation capacity?</p>	<p>174 quarantine spaces available currently.129 in AKL, 8 Wellington, 37 Christchurch (ability to increase numbers in Christchurch if required).</p>
<p>What are the economic impacts from the Alert Level change?</p>	<p>Supports will be rolled out at 7 days, as per standard practice. Treasury is working with DPMC on the AL Cabinet paper.</p>
<p>What are the impacts of the detection and alert level changes on at risk communities to move in the timeframes being recommended?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What welfare support is available? • Do any of the welfare support packages need to be activated earlier? 	<p>MSD will activate welfare systems after we have AL settings very clear (eg dependency on how wide the AL shift will apply).</p> <p>Plan for regions is clear.</p> <p>CDEM groups will provide coordinating role.</p> <p>Stocking food banks will commence.</p> <p>Exemption for travel will be needed to support delivery of food supports.</p>
<p>What do we believe the public attitude will be towards the measures?</p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do we believe people and businesses understand, accept, and abide by them? 	
<p>When can the decision be operationalised? Timeframes and next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orders • Hard boundaries • Welfare • Public communications 	<p>Boundaries workstream meeting to follow for operationalization discussions and inter-regional travel.</p>
<p>Do we understand what permitted activity is allowed under the proposed restriction and is this practicable?</p>	<p>Auto approvals for exemptions will be unlikely for AL4. Essential services (AL4 businesses) only had guidance previously there will be no formal approval this time. Businesses will be outlined but not specifically named and will be relatively similar to previously.</p>
<p>What Compliance measures are in place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do these need bolstering? 	
<p>Are there any legislative implications which need to be considered?</p>	
<p>Are there any border changes required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Border • Maritime border 	
<p>What are the impacts to partner countries we allow quarantine free travel with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia • Cook Islands • Niue • Samoa, Vanuatu and Tonga 	<p>Cook Islands- Section 9(2)(h)</p>  <p>Health have communicated with all QFT partners. MFAT need to communicate what next with diplomats.</p>
<p>Are there any trade-offs, risks or issues which will occur as a result of the proposed restrictions?</p>	

COVID-19: Domestic response, key operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 18 August 2021, 1000hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Situation summary

Auckland

1. Overnight, four new cases reported with connections to the first case reported yesterday (Case A). 3 of these new cases present high risk based on the locations of interest, work places and CT values.
2. Significant movement out of Auckland last night. 55 complaints were made to Police. Community check points set up in Coromandel.

Key operational updates

3. Regional plans have been activated, CDEM connected into DHBs.
4. Testing at 30,000 per day. This is at capacity and there is high testing expected in Waikato and Auckland region. MOH is working with private providers to ramp up extra capacity.
5. Vaccination programme to continue tomorrow with safe operating procedures under AL.
6. Ministers at 1000hrs today 18 August decided "A face covering must be worn by all people at all businesses and services operating at Alert Level 4 that involve customer contact". Implementation timing TBC. DPMC policy working with PCO on inclusion to order.
7. Queenstown and Dunedin are returnee hot spots – industry and AirNZ trying to put on additional flights to enable travellers to return
8. MIQ – currently at 4600 occupancy. Available capacity: 170 rooms in total; 120 in Auckland, approximately 40 in Christchurch, and a small number in Wellington. Work is underway on requirements to convert isolation hotel into quarantine. Need to use remaining rooms wisely for case isolation.
9. High interest in regional boundaries. Heavy numbers on domestic flights, but large number of no-shows. AirNZ asked for messaging for travellers to cancel booking so others can book seats. Cook Strait Ferry has capacity for travellers.
10. Cook Islands suspend inbound flights for 72hrs, outbound still operating. 2 flights scheduled today. Between 2-4,000 travellers in CKI, advice underway if extend beyond 48hrs. All recent arrivals are isolating for 14 days.
11. Australia seeking more information before federal decision on response to New Zealand. Expected update today. Noting states could take a different approach to federal approach.
12. Nuie, Tonga, Samoa, Vanuatu have been informed, no update on QFT arrangements.

Suggested next steps

13. Clarity required across agencies on essential services. DPMC, MPI, MBIE and MoH to work through what the exemption process are and the systems to support.
 - 13.1. Noted that MBIE provide guidance to agencies and businesses on what is an essential service or business, MBIE is not an approval body. Essential services and businesses are listed in Schedule 2 of the Alert Level 4 Order.
14. DPMC insights and reporting to collate agencies updates in dashboard capturing business, welfare, compliance, economic, education, international and communications. Agencies to send in key contacts for this work.
15. Social welfare support: C4C governance meeting today. Will include discussion on governance and infrastructure support.
16. MoE / MoH to enable children to pick up devices to allow for remote learning, aiming to be operational by tomorrow.

Signed

Graham MacLean
Chair, National Response Group

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COVID-19: Domestic Response Checklist

1. NRG to complete upon notification of a positive case
2. Chair NRG to report checklist to Chair NRLT
3. NRLT assess and recommend course of action to Ministers (pre-Cabinet)
4. Indicators and assessment questions covered in this checklist will form the basis of a shortened AL Cabinet paper.

Health situation	
<p>Is the source of the outbreak known? What is the geographic distribution (of known or potential close contacts)? How long has the virus thought to have been in the community? And the impacts. What is the health systems capacity for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact tracing • Testing • Surveillance 	<p>Four new cases reported overnight to 0900hrs 18 August are connected to the case reported yesterday 17 August (Case A).</p> <p>Individuals are self-isolating.</p>
System Considerations	
<p>What is MIQs or community isolation capacity?</p>	<p>MIQ – currently at 4600 occupancy. Available capacity: 170 rooms in total; 120 in Auckland, approximately 40 in Christchurch, and a small number in Wellington.</p>
<p>What are the economic impacts from the Alert Level change?</p>	<p>TSY have reported separately the economic impacts of lockdown. Ministers with powers to act agreed in-principle on 17 August that they will be given power to activate wage subsidy scheme and resurgence support payment scheme.</p>
<p>What are the impacts of the detection and alert level changes on at risk communities to move in the timeframes being recommended?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What welfare support is available? • Do any of the welfare support packages need to be activated earlier? 	<p>The Caring for Communities workstream is activated and will convene today 18 August, likely ongoing, to triage supports to communities.</p>
<p>What do we believe the public attitude will be towards the measures?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do we believe people and businesses understand, accept, and abide by them? 	
<p>When can the decision be operationalised? Timeframes and next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orders • Hard boundaries • Welfare • Public communications 	<p>Orders will be amended to reflect exemptions clarification work. Orders will be drafted to reflect the boundary work. Orders will be drafted to mandate face coverings.</p>
<p>Do we understand what permitted activity is allowed under the proposed restriction and is this practicable?</p>	<p>Agencies will work together to clarify the definitions of essential workers and services, where there is inconsistency or lack of clarity.</p>
<p>What Compliance measures are in place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do these need bolstering? 	
<p>Are there any legislative implications which need to be considered?</p>	
<p>Are there any border changes required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Border • Maritime border 	<p>Yes, the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Level Requirements) Order (No 9) 2021, will be amended as needed.</p>

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What are the impacts to partner countries we allow quarantine free travel with? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australia• Cook Islands• Niue• Samoa, Vanuatu and Tonga	New Zealand government and officials are in contact with QFT partners to provide information to support decisions to maintain, or not, QFT arrangements with New Zealand.
Are there any trade-offs, risks or issues which will occur as a result of the proposed restrictions?	

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 19 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health update

1. Public health assessments are ongoing.
2. Wastewater – positive wastewater detection around Auckland (East, West, St George, Rosedale). Coromandel wastewater sample awaiting processing.
3. Coromandel testing well underway, reasonably 'good' level of demand for testing and vaccinations (MOH view), vaccination sites increased and looking at pharmacies to deliver vaccines.
4. Frequency of testing has increased across the country. ARPHS is undertaking case investigations, surge investigations will be fielded out to other DHBs.
5. Potential MIF (Crown Plaza) transmission is being investigated.
6. Source investigations of positive cases is underway. The positive case of the Air New Zealand crew member is expected WGS today.
7. At this stage, public health officials agree there is a strong case for public health restrictions that Alert Level 4 should extend to a full seven days (four additional to the initial three days communicated), with a review on Monday of all Alert Level settings. Monday review would include assessment of split Alert Levels across regions. The final public health advice from DG-Health will be reflected in tomorrow 20 August paper for Cabinet consideration.

Key operational updates

8. Further messaging needed to target and support essential workers, such as supermarket employees (particularly in younger age groups), including encouragement to not come to work if individuals feel sick.
9. There is a known issue across that workforce utilised for testing and vaccination is the same, MOH is working through how to resolve this. Private providers may be engaged to deliver vaccinations.
10. C4C update – clarity of roles & responsibilities is being worked through currently. Meeting with NEMA on CDEM groups' roles in this response. Aiming to have clearer positions on what CDEM groups can do by tomorrow 20 August. Reminder for welfare agencies to lean in to on-the-ground support and relaying coordination efforts through C4C governance.
11. Public health advice will inform boundary-setting processes, engagement will occur across agencies regarding boundary lines. Operationalisation of the options and impacts to social license are key to progressing this work.
 - 11.1. Note that Waikato DHB encompasses Coromandel Peninsula and must be considered in the planning for individuals to access health services.

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12. International context – MFAT consular centre and international interfaces are slammed on multiple fronts: Emergency consular centre for Afghanistan; Cook Islands engagement; Australia pause of QFT for travellers from New Zealand, no red flights through rest of August but Air New Zealand is considering flights commencing from September.
 - 12.1. Critical capacity: If an outbreak were to occur in the Cook Islands that would present material capacity issues for MFAT to be able to manage concurrent activity.
13. Principles in place for exemptions when boundaries are drawn.
14. Essential workers defined in Schedule 2 AL 4 Order are considered frontline staff. Consistent vaccination messaging needed so essential workers are clear how they fit with the frontline staff prioritisation under the vaccination programme.
 - 14.1. Some public service staff under AL 4 are considered frontline. The MOH view is that the vaccination programme prioritisation of frontline staff will apply to public service staff who are now considered frontline (under essential workers definition of schedule 2 AL 4 Order).
 - 14.2. Essential workers defined in Schedule 2 AL 4 Order are now considered frontline staff.
15. AL Order: guidance will go out this afternoon with escalation points and key contacts about exemptions process, led by MBIE. Ongoing amendments to the Order will be made to reflect definitions of essential services and goods.
16. Compliance
 - 16.1. Currently 900 complaints in NZP inbox.
 - 16.2. Compliance with businesses will be prioritised based on receipt of issues/concerns.
 - 16.3. Check points – NZP actively assisting on boundary-setting work. Community check points view from NZP is that they emphasise that although well-intentioned, the people going onto these checkpoints are better off to stay at home and should not be exposing themselves to the risk associated with standing at a checkpoint. NZP are discouraging community check points, and reinforce assurance of patrols by NZP on communities' behalf.
 - 16.4. Patrol infringements – operational tonight 19 August NZP will issue infringements. Generally speaking at this point in time the public is compliant.
 - 16.5. Social license – NZP view social license as strong and do not see deterioration at this stage.
 - 16.6. If we split ALs across regions, there will be an increase in queries and enforcement-needs across the public. NZDF available staff to support this is limited.
 - 16.7. Frontline staff involved in enforcement are at-risk of becoming vectors and will be a critical system issue if there is a high rate of infection amongst essential workers.
17. MOH action specific exemption requests that need to be enabled through the Order, under section 24 of AL Order by DG Health.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 20 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health update

1. Positive cases reported in Wellington today. Wellington cases are linked to one of the Auckland gatherings. Case interviews and investigations ongoing. Additional testing sites being set up in Wellington today.
2. Ministry of Health standing up the National Health Coordination Centre to support across the health system during response. NHCC sitting across the top to pick up health workforce and health system issues.
 - 2.1. Looking to establish a fulsome view of Health workforce issues to understanding what workforce support might be needed.
3. Workforce strain will increase, updates below on support to MOH:
 - 3.1. Update: Contact tracing PHUs and DHBs are offering workforce support.
 - 3.2. Update: MOJ will be supporting contact tracing team
 - 3.3. Update: MOH workforce is ready to support exemptions work.
4. System offer to proactively provide workforce supports to some health system work (eg contact tracing), via workforce mobility hub.

Key operational updates

5. Vaccination of essential workers is an issue that has come up across a number of agencies, including local government agencies. MOH is drafting up the guidance and advice around this and it will be shared with NRG.
6. New Zealand Police do not report major issues in enforcement of AL 4 rules. On compliance: NZP have three teams operating out of Police HQ to operate triage compliance incidences. They are seeing roughly about 1 complaint every 30 seconds through the complaints pipeline. NZP confident they are managing the high-risk complaints first.
 - 6.1. Compliance – biggest incident trend relates to partying behaviour at homes; seeing breaches around mask use, social gatherings.
 - 6.2. Compliance – NZP proactive with prevention arm to manage possible incidents around mask use, particularly at supermarkets.
7. Niue Cabinet agreed that there will be red flights from Niue to New Zealand. MFAT working through further plans on how NZ would support Cook Islands if positive cases were identified there.
8. MIQ capacity – 170 available total: 125 in AKL, 8 in Wellington, 37 in Christchurch. Currently no quarantine options in Wellington, MIQ working through alternative options. Contingency space might be needed if a situation were to occur with the Cook Islands, note that contingency space is in-use due to New South Wales returnees.

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9. NEMA has stood up the National Coordination Centre to coordinate services, connects-in with local government, mayors, local CEs. Strong focus on welfare as the net underneath to support people. Actively supporting west coast to secure homes from flooding issues. NEMA undertaking further concurrent event planning.
10. Individuals can access the wage subsidy starting today. Updates on uptake will be provided through NRG meetings.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 22 August 2021, 1330hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. **Cases update** – 72 cases in total 66 AKL 6 WGN. Currently no cases outside Auckland or Wellington. Positive cases' WGS shows links to the Auckland cluster.
2. **LOIs** – there is an auto-feed online that updates Locations of Interest every two hours.
3. **Tests processing** – working through backlog, backlog is reducing. Other lab testing resource has been offered (MPI biosecurity lab), however it is not required right now.
4. **Testing centres** – Every DHB has increased community testing centres, more pop-ups, wait times across the country are steadily improving.
5. **Wastewater** – some positive results across the country.
6. **Contacts** – Discussion of the clarity and public communications around the categories of contacts (casual, casual plus, etc.). Action to take this offline.
7. **Healthline** seeing low referral rates
8. **Expanding NHCC** – ensure health system is pivoting to help with the response
9. **MIQ** – Capacity regarding Quarantine rooms. Discussions on going around community isolation who cannot isolate at home. Note 15 contacts to date were unable to isolate at home and were relocated to a facility.
10. **Food accessibility**, Auckland – Closure of supermarkets due to locations of interest is emerging. Impact of contacts needing to isolate across essential services is felt across the system. MBIE and NEMA leaning in on this work.
11. **PHRA**, completed – supports extension of AL 4 through to Friday for the whole country.
12. **Sustainability** is becoming a question across the system and ongoing how the system can help.
13. **AL4 essential workforce** – Discussions at DBH level currently. Coordinating and focusing efforts of testing and vaccination of these essential service workers. PSC – met earlier in the week to discuss essential services and constraints with MOH. Gaining a picture from MoH on impact on these services and noted interface with local government.
14. **Welfare supports** – NEMA in contact with Minister looking at options for how NEMA can support Welfare situation in Auckland.
15. **Exemptions** – DPMC briefing to Ministers on clarity of the exemptions process (informed by a paper from MOH). Note – four to five exemptions have been granted by DG Health so far.
16. **Communications** – Confusion with contact categories particularly with Pacific community groups. Mental health issues showing through social media feeds, they are escalating to New Zealand Police where required. Discussion on engaging Pacific communities more on COVID-19 information.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 23 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. MOH progressing with plans to address testing lab backlog.
2. MOH looking to establish a new call centre to work through a surge, will be with a private provider.
3. Public health risk assessments will incorporate more wastewater testing to inform the picture of the outbreaks across areas other than Auckland to help inform future Cabinet decisions.
4. Work between MOH and MIQ to model quarantine capacity/model for active cases as we move toward our likely peak of outbreaks.
5. Discussion on boundaries and the importance of early planning for the operations to establish and maintain boundaries. Emphasised the need for time to operationalise.
6. Working through alternative options for MIQ in Auckland.
7. MOH/MIQ working through key areas and questions regarding the supply & demand of quarantine as the volume of people needing to quarantine, or isolate, increases.
 - 7.1. Management of demand for MIQ for community cases.
 - 7.2. Support to close contacts to isolate safely.
 - 7.3. Provision of quarantine to rural communities or circumstances where we cannot transport individuals to a quarantine facility.
 - 7.4. DHBs support to communities/individuals to isolate.
8. Welfare supports over a sustained response
 - 8.1. Discussion on delivering supports to communities and understanding the needs and best ways to deliver supports.
 - 8.2. Current focus area is food access eg getting food to people who might be isolating.
9. Discussion on social license. Protests planned for yesterday did not go ahead due to low number turnouts and the NZP approach to protests seems to be going well to discourage large gatherings.

COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 24 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. **Boundary-settings** –

- 1.1. Ministers meeting tomorrow to talk through boundary-setting options under Alert Level split scenarios.
- 1.2. Starting point is that there should be minimal movement, generally, and across boundaries unless essential. Every exemption you allow is a cumulative risk to the response.
- 1.3. One trade-off is between breadth of exemptions allowed and the burden on the exemptions process itself. There is a critical role here for clear communications on what is already permitted under ALR Order and what would require an exemption.
- 1.4. Small number of NRG members will meet to discuss an exemptions process for non-business applications for an exemption (ie individuals and compassionate exemptions).
- 1.5. Local government requested building into the process an engagement step before public announcement.

2. **COVID-19 testing results** – Capacity to process tests. There is a codes system to prioritise COVID-19 tests.

3. **Call centre contact tracing** – Call-centre has stood up that is a mixture of public servants and Datacom, they are training about 200 people today to support contact tracing needs.

4. **Quarantine capacity** – There are a few issues with converting a MIF to a quarantine; Positive case identified in MIF workforce; Afghanistan arrivals and room availability; ventilation remediation impacts on ability to convert to quarantine.

5. **Compliance** – NZP receiving about 1,300 complaints/day. Trends are: individuals away from home and out unnecessarily, and gatherings. Complaints that are medium and high priority are immediately triaged to frontline police officers.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 25 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. Health critical issues

- a. Lab results backlog and contact tracing capacity issues are improving
- b. Balancing demand for BAU work e.g. reconnecting NZ and the response
 - i. Health priority has to be managing the outbreak
- c. wastewater surveillance ongoing;
 - i. Possible source identified for Warkworth positive wastewater sample
 - ii. South Island is still being sampled daily. Transportation issue of samples being worked through.
- d. Re-classification of contacts in the essential workforce ongoing to reduce logistic issues within critical infrastructure
- e. Able to reviewing AL and public health settings for return to work in Delta context

2. DPMC Comms

- a. Lots of messages regarding stay at home, location of interest and key health messaging.
- b. Mental health and financial support messaging to go out
- c. MoH and DPMC supporting MPP to reach into their communities and amplifying key messaging
- d. Focus on youth – trialing different channels e.g. TikTok, request for version two of Ashely's Banger.

3. Compliance

- a. 686 infringement notices issued in total, with 616 served regarding those outside their dwelling.
- b. 30% up on travel volume from last AL 4.
- c. Set to go on boundaries.

4. Transport

- a. Flagged to DPMC – People who did not make it home in the 48 hour grace period, are booking vaccines at their home location and traveling to appointments. This is allowed by the Order. Inter-islander picking these people up and turning them away. DPMC legal and Policy aware for future Orders/amendments.

5. Caring for community

- a. 1,500 Close contacts – emerging issue of securing accommodation
- b. Food for people in remote rural areas – ground truthing underway
- c. Seeking clarity around suggested increase in family violence
- d. Accommodation resolution – meeting with NEMA and MBIE TAS to discuss further – action for accommodation plan by Friday

6. Boundaries

- a. Note to come out to agencies via Brook and CEs on Minister boundary meeting.
- b. Traveling across boundaries discussion with more clarity to come in note and pending Ministers decision.
- c. MBIE and MPI to have initial in-confidence conversation with industries most affected.

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7. Treasury

- a. Businesses are not feeling as prepared as we thought they would be.
- b. Call with PM and MOF – inconsistencies on what you can do at AL4 –comms piece required

8. International perspective

- a. MFAT have 244 people in the ECC for the Afghanistan response
- b. One way QFT – Skeleton Cabinet paper to be circulated.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 26 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. *Public health situational update*
 - a. Cases are coming through as expected
 - b. System improvements have seen lab results are coming through faster
 - c. AOG cluster testing rates are going well
 - d. Most new cases are household transmissions since lockdown
 - e. Impact on MIQ is resulting in a stretched workforce. MoH are reaching across DHB's to help in Auckland.
2. Chair asked if there is an overview on BAU versus Response and how its been prioritised.
 - a. All DHBs have an AL4 and hospital care framework which has triggered deferral of all non-urgent care.
 - b. AL3 is still restrictive – not business as usual but some additional services open
3. *Cabinet paper update*
 - a. Waiting for Public health risk assessment and DG of Health advice to shape boundary options
 - b. Paper also covers
 - i. Alert Level 3 settings review – face coverings and mandatory scanning
 - ii. Treasury require appropriation update
 - iii. Supply chain tensions
 - c. Noted that public communications will be critical
4. Chair asked when we move to a AL4/3 split, what exemptions planning has been undertaken?
 - a. Follow up offline with MoH
 - b. PSC: PMO and Ministers office have asked there be a single point of contact for requests under the current AL4 arrangements.
 - i. MoH will have a system set up by tomorrow
 - ii. Alert level split process has surge capacity ready
 - iii. MPI is aligned with MBIE
 - iv. DPMC Policy note if you can travel in AL4 you can travel at a split.
5. *Boundaries*
 - a. Police:
 - i. Working with NZDF and Iwi.
 - ii. MPI prepared to offer support if required. Police and MPI to liaise.
 - b. Chair guides agencies to be prepared for implementation Friday night.
 - c. MBIE confirmed QR codes will be ready.
6. *NRLT update*
7. *Round table*
 - a. MFAT:
 - i. Several other responses ongoing concurrently
 - ii. Less than 1,500 New Zealanders left in Cooks Islands. Will take roughly a week to clear.

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- iii. Making sure our public communications, particularly around racism is going beyond New Zealand to other pacific countries
- b. Immigrations:
 - i. Noting with Afghan refugees housing is challenging which may have impacts on the COVID-19 response
- c. Customs:
 - i. Complexities in supply chain is exacerbated in a raised Alert Level
 - ii. Concern aligning with NRLT comments regarding Maritime border
- d. Transport:
 - i. Seafarer change over and MIQ spaces limitations may result in change over in Australia which may have flow on affects to New Zealand
 - ii. Clear communications regarding permitted movement

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 27 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. Public health

- 1.1. Positive COVID-19 results in wastewater around Christchurch on 21 and 23 August/ More wastewater test results available tonight or tomorrow morning for Christchurch area. Negative health result would be encouraging for public health to consider moving the South Island to a different Alert Level setting.

2. MIQ

- 2.1. Preparing a facility to be available today. Current capacity is manageable for next few days. There
- 2.2. Focus for MIQ is on modelling and assessing options available to meet demand. Meetings today to discuss options available to increase quarantine capacity.

3. Alert Level 4 workers and boundaries

- 3.1. Processes for Alert Level 4 workers to move across boundaries is under consideration. Regular testing of Alert Level 4 workers will need to be considered, including BORA perspectives.
- 3.2. Exemptions process is 'live' on the Unite Against COVID-19 website. It provides for an email address for individuals to query regarding travelling and activity under AL 4. This will be 'live' for AL 3 when that is needed. Website link:
<https://covid19.govt.nz/travel/domestic-travel/permitted-travel-at-alert-level-4/>.

4. New Zealand Police compliance update

- 4.1. Static checkpoints in place around Northland. Between now and Tuesday New Zealand Police will increase assurance patrols, monitor movement, and ensure people are staying in place.
- 4.2. With a likely AL 4 / 3 split likely, NZP will be staging an increase of checkpoints on Auckland's southern border. This will help put operations in place when an announcement is made.
- 4.3. NZP report they are well-placed for boundary operations.
5. Issue around funeral services in AL 4. Funeral Directors have written to MOH and the Maori Health Directorate on this issue.
 - 5.1. DPMC and MOH Policy will align advice to address this issue.
6. Communications of AL 3 conditions and settings, and who is permitted to travel across AL boundaries is key. Unite Against COVID-19 communications and agency communications will reflect today's announcements and Cabinet decisions.
7. Draft Alert Level Order is underway, consultation with agencies is underway.
8. Handling sensitive information – MOH and agencies concerned with leakage of information, particularly COVID-19 statistics/situational updates.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 29 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health update

Public Health

1. Work is ongoing to manage the case transfer backlog. Need to get to a point where cases are waiting no longer than 24hrs for a transfer into facility. By end of today, Holiday Inn will be signed off for quarantine facility.
2. MoH has work underway to understand insights on transmission of the virus and how the outbreak is evolving.
3. Public Health is reviewing the length of time cases must stay in quarantine for increased from 10 days to 14 days in light of Delta. This will place further pressure on MIQ spaces.

MIQ:

4. There is pressure on quarantine spaces, and we could run out of room by Tuesday. MIQ is looking at options to address this, with a paper due to the Minister later today.
5. Discussion on capacity constraints for MIQ to manage positive cases, as well as isolate close contacts within the household. Noted there is work going on across agencies to address this. DPMC Lead.

Roundtable on Readiness for boundary operationalisation:

6. New Zealand Police:
 - 6.1. The checkpoints will be stood up Tuesday evening, in time for the Order to take effect. A formal request has gone through to NZDF for 50 staff to support boundaries. Noted there are 3 checkpoints set up in Northland, that could relocate if Northland is to move to AL3.
 - 6.2. Low to medium levels of movement. Noted that the fishing and white baiting changes have created complexities for enforcement.
 - 6.3. DPMC policy and legal noted that these have not been a policy or Order change, but an information error on website that has been resolved.
7. MBIE:
 - 7.1. Business applications went live from midday. MBIE and MPI will be assessing every request that comes through on construction and primary industries.
 - 7.2. There have not been huge application volumes so far.
 - 7.3. Communications on the Go-Live have gone out to stakeholders.
 - 7.4. MBIE will provide first daily report at 1600 today
8. Conversation on the communications for boundary exemptions, noting need for alignment across agencies and the key message is movement crossing the boundaries should be limited.

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- 8.1. DPMC legal noted in the new Order, there is an obligation for businesses to minimise the amount of travel across the border.
9. MPI Reported they will have staff covering animal welfare at checkpoints. The biggest concern is regarding timely stock movement.
10. MoH confirmed the work is progressing well for exemptions. On Tuesday a team will be trained, and processing will start on Wednesday. Confirmed that DG Health has delegated decision making.
11. DPMC will lead work on what more can be done on settings to tighten movement, what more can be done for communications, and what additional insights can be pulled together to shape system focus moving forwards.
12. MFAT provided an update on the Cook Islands and Niue.
- 12.1. Cook Islands Cabinet will extend AL2 until 16 September, with all returnees to undertake 14 days MIQ.
- 12.1.1. Confirmed that Niue flights are not suspended.
13. MBIE provided an update on supply constraints for supermarkets. Countdown has 1500 workers self-isolating, with 7 stores closed. There is one distribution centre that poses a risk to supply chain if this becomes impacted. Work is underway to review what additional measures could be put in place to mitigate this.
14. Welfare support remains ongoing. There is increased resilience in Auckland as a result of the increased funding across groups.

COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 30 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. Context from the National Response Leadership Team meeting 30 August
 - 1.1. Section 9(2)(g)(i)
 - 1.2. What other countries are doing to manage caseloads (once the border is open) that NZ might be able to learn from (good and bad lessons learned).
 - 1.3. MIQF capacity pressures continue, work underway to address this, including exploring other isolation options to meet isolation requirements.
2. MIQ
 - 2.1. Additional quarantine facilities will become available in AKL, in addition to Holiday Inn and Novotel. Current predictions highlight quarantine rooms available is scheduled to deplete by Wednesday or Thursday this week.
 - 2.1.1. Action: Amber Bill, Rose King, Tania Ott, to outline resource capacity to support and lead clear piece of work around options assessment to address this problem.
3. Public health
 - 3.1. Process mapping the various risk assessment and clinical decision making points from identification of a case through to daily health checks and MIQ stays.
 - 3.2. Ongoing piece of work around healthcare system workforce, for both outbreaks and other healthcare needs in AKL. Healthcare workforce pulled from DHBs has implications on capacity for other healthcare delivery.
 - 3.3. ARPHS is the lead on gathering intelligence to paint a cohesive picture of the outbreak, more detail is expected in the next couple days.
 - 3.4. Wastewater testing continues at pace. Only areas showing positive results are parts of Wellington, Auckland (and Warkworth).
4. Noted there will be a number of reviews underway in the Ministry of Health regarding this outbreak.
 - 4.1. Action: When agencies are at the stage of identifying reviews (particularly post-outbreak), please share the planned and upcoming reviews with DPMC via CCB secretariat so that there is visibility and any overlap is avoided.
5. UAC Communications are reviewing all settings & conditions for AL 4 and 3, and UAC team are developing a comparison 'table' for the public to digest.
6. Discussion around monitoring of movement post boundary to mitigate any potential Delta transmission and risk.
 - 6.1. Health preparing advice on testing options

6.2. Action: DPMC to look into coordination of movement data, risk awareness and mitigation.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding AL 4 in effect.

Level 4 will extend in Auckland until 14 September; Outside of Auckland Alert Level 3 will come into effect from 2359hrs Tuesday 31 August.

Date: 31 August 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. Ministry of Health intelligence update on current outbreak case transmission –
 - 1.1. Decrease in transmission overall.
 - 1.2. Household transmission is well above other types of transmissions, which is what you would expect to see under lockdown settings.
 - 1.3. Four cases are essential workers and had transmitted the virus to other individuals who are now positive cases.
2. Negative COVID-19 wastewater test results in Davenport.
3. Work underway across most agencies to prepare for Alert Level split.
4. Gary Knowles updated the National Response Group on the floods that occurred in Auckland overnight to 31 August. Points to note:
 - 4.1. Working with FENZ, CDEM, and Auckland Emergency Management.
 - 4.2. There was no official evacuation facilitated by the government. Individuals evacuated on their own accord.
5. Food access and supply chain issues resulting in pressure on welfare supports systems.
6. Policy work underway to address MIQ capacity concerns.
 - 6.1. Noted the need to ensure that any advice was able to be clearly operationalised once provided to Ministers, including clarity around the lead agencies.
7. Integrity issue with data and improper information sharing.
8. DPMC update on the COVID-19 Chief Executives Board meeting this morning, including work undertaken in the Reconnecting New Zealanders space.

COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding Alert Level 4

Date: 01 September 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. MIQ update:

1.1. A paper is being drafted on alternative options to address MIQ capacity constraints. The weekend activity highlighted the need for further planning and options to be explored. Section 9(2)(g)(i) There are 2 options to be considered:

- Section 9(2)(g)(i)
- Quarantine at home

1.2. There is an emerging issue due to a delay standing up the Holiday Inn as a quarantine facility because of staffing constraints. Work is underway to resolve these. However, there is potential for this to cause a capacity overflow in the next 24-36 hrs. ARPH's can run a prioritisation mechanism to triage cases, in the short term.

1.3. Currently have 58 quarantine rooms available. If Holiday Inn staffing issues can be resolved overnight, will increase the total by an additional 195 rooms.

2. Roundtable:

2.1. Police reported that all going as expected, people coming through with correct exemption paperwork, and trucks flowing well. Northland boundary is set to go live from tomorrow night.

2.2. DPMC policy has a briefing due 02 September on potential future Alert Level changes. Options being considered are AL 4/3/2 split or an AL4/2 split.

2.3. The focus for welfare remains on the food supply issue, notably how long we can sustain the current need requirements. An additional announcement is expected later today.

2.4. Treasury reported there are fewer applications than last lockdown. Data suggests that businesses are better placed, however are finding it harder than last lockdown due to status of global activity.

2.5. Section 9(2)(g)(i)

2.6. MFAT reported that shipping delays for exporters and growing concern for businesses. This is both due to AL4/3 constraints and limited movement, as well in line with globally trends due to impacts of COVID-19.

2.7. UAC Comms are using the website as single source of truth to provide updates. Triage information and adjusting the website based on feedback as well as clarifying topics on AL4 and AL3 that are generating high interest.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding AL 4 in effect.

Level 4 will extend in Auckland until 14 September; Northland will go into Alert Level 3 at 2359hrs tonight 2 September; Everywhere else is currently under Alert Level 3.

Date: 2 September 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. Ministry of Health update –
 - 1.1. Travel exemptions process is underway.
 - 1.2. Surveillance work underway on:
 - 1.2.1. Keeping Delta contained in Auckland and maintain the boundary, and manage that people crossing the boundary do not become a transmission vector. Policy piece underway around essential workers and what kind of surveillance regime might be suitable to maintain AL 4 measures. Concurrently the DG Health and Ministers will encourage increased volunteer testing of essential workers.
 - 1.2.2. Increase testing rates in Auckland to have confidence that there are not undetected chains of transmission occurring.
 - 1.3. Work underway with MBIE on motorhomes as an alternative option for quarantine.
 - 1.4. Steve Ham noted there is interest from a fisheries business to be part of a pilot for increased testing regimes to inform policies or operations on rolling that out to other businesses, particularly essential businesses.
2. DPMC Policy are drafting a briefing on AL 2 settings and what they may look like if there are multiple ALs in effect across the country and boundaries in place.
3. Members noted travel settings between ALs are consistent with the Order.
4. The Chair provided an update on the National Response Leadership Team meeting this morning that an action item includes promulgating a bulletin of clear AL measure messages to sectors and businesses.
5. The Chair invited MIQF to provide an update:
 - 5.1. Holiday Inn coming online will give us an additional 90 quarantine rooms.
 - 5.2. MIQF still concerned about the numbers needing to go into quarantine facilities, but the new case numbers from today and the case number trend are encouraging to manage outbreaks within MIQF capacity.
 - 5.3. Acknowledgement of the teams that put in surge capacity efforts to support MIQF capacity.
6. MFAT provided an update on their operations underway with MOH on procuring vaccines from European partners.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding AL 4 in effect.

Level 4 will extend in Auckland until 14 September; Everywhere else is currently under Alert Level 3.

Date: 3 September 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. The Chair noted that the DPMC internet network is down and that this has impacted NRG attendees.
2. The Chair provided an update on the National Response Leadership Team meeting this morning, and in particular noted the work continuing around the system regarding the Auckland boundary and proposed testing regime.
3. DPMC Policy provided an update on the Cabinet Paper for Monday, and what the AL settings may look like if there are multiple ALs in effect across the country with multiple boundaries. Noted the work that was going into the exemptions process, and the complexity of this, and invited input from agencies.
4. The Chair invited Marisa Maepu from the Ministry for Pacific Peoples to provide an update on the outbreak in Auckland, and to share their insights of what they were hearing from communities. MPP noted:
 - 4.1. they were deeply connected into the community and were communicating regularly with Pasifika leaders and community providers; and
 - 4.2. that Pasifika people are heavily impacted by the latest outbreak. It had exacerbated issues with access to systems and support. Key issues arising were: access to food and food security; ensuring the right people were getting accessible information; health literacy; and continuing vaccination efforts in the community.
 - 4.3. The Chair noted that this work was critical for the success of the response, and offered the systems support where needed.
5. The Chair invited MIQF to provide an update:
 - 5.1. Holiday Inn has come online, which has given the system an additional quarantine rooms. Workforce and staffing issues for the Holiday Inn have been resolved. MIQF acknowledged the hard work that had occurred here to ensure that this could happen.
 - 5.2. Work underway to ensure that the Crowne Plaza can be brought back online. Other contingency work continues at pace. Capacity issues are better (thanks to case number trend).
 - 5.3. Work is underway to sequence those going into quarantine to use the rooms that best suit their needs.
 - 5.4. MIQF modelling chart will be included in the daily SitRep going forward.
6. The Chair invited the Ministry of Health to provide an update:
 - 6.1. Work on enhanced testing surveillance in Auckland is underway on both:

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- 6.1.1. Policy and operational options for testing at the Auckland boundary for those who are exempted to cross it. Conscious of the complexity of this work. Advice will be going to Ministers tomorrow.
- 6.1.2. Increasing the testing rates in Auckland to enable the public health risk assessment to occur with confidence prior to Monday.
- 6.2. Noted the importance of ensuring that this work is joined up with sector communications.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding AL 4 and 3 in effect

Date: 5 September 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. Ministry of Health update –
 - 1.1. 27 cases are unlinked, that is 3% of all cases. MOH is working through identifying the links to the clusters.
 - 1.2. In yesterday's new case numbers: six were infectious in the community with only six exposure sites.
 - 1.3. Most of the cases have been in the Pacific community. There appears to be testing-hesitancy in the community that can be themed across: If an essential worker tests positive they fear they will lose their income; Perceived risk of community shaming if they test positive; Fear of having to go to an MIQF if they test positive.
 - 1.4. Regular wastewater testing continues.
2. MOH updated the NRG on a piece of work underway to refine the testing approach in Auckland. Noting this connects to the policy work underway to build a testing and surveillance regime around boundary-crossing. Objectives for refinement of testing approach work: gaining assurance that there is not undetected chains of transmission, assurance that leakage is not occurring, and to support a testing regime for essential workers.
 - 2.1. Maintaining testing rates is important, MOH developing a targeted approach of symptomatic and asymptomatic testing (noting that with lockdown there are less people that appear to be symptomatic because the transmission of colds is occurring less).
 - 2.2. Exploring a testing regime for healthcare workers that are contacts, which will be important for the current and future outbreaks. MOH also exploring feasibility of saliva testing for a surveillance regime.
 - 2.3. Likely will not develop a systematic approach for a testing regime of essential workers in the community, but MOH is progressing a targeted approach for testing of essential workers in the community. MOH will continue to develop targeted testing/surveillance plans for essential workplaces where contact or proof of transmission has occurred. Note the amount of transmission that has occurred in essential workplaces appears to be low.
 - 2.4. Exploring a testing regime plan for essential workers who cross boundaries frequently.
3. Operational roundtable on exploration of a testing approach for essential workers who cross boundaries:
 - 3.1. New Zealand Police (NZP): Operational risk on providing proof of testing at checkpoints as it may slow down cross-boundary movement significantly. NZP also highlighted that boundary checks of testing has impacts on the ability to ensure compliance.

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- 3.2. Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI): Raised that with the volume of individuals crossing the boundary, availability to perform and process tests will be important. Raised that instituting a testing regime will have impacts for MPI sectors, engagement with the sectors will be key.
- 3.3. Ministry of Transport (MOT): Raised that a testing regime to cross boundaries could be considered a pre-departure test which is different to routine surveillance testing. MOT has experience in the pre-departure test area with the Australia quarantine-free travel arrangement and could provide insights to the operational plan for boundary crossing testing. MOT raised that for essential workers that frequently cross the boundary, employers and industries would need to consider putting a regular testing surveillance regime in place as that will be the main way to ensure workers consistently have a current test result. MOT echoed that compliance enforcement will be key to operationalising this piece of work, and that timing of testing will be critical to enable movement across the boundary. MOT raised that there will need to be an exemption for proof of test where crossing a boundary is needed in emergency circumstances.
4. Ruth Fairhall updated the group on the Cabinet paper due tomorrow 6 September:
 - 4.1. Proposes two options for Alert Level splits: AL 4 for Auckland, AL 3 for rest of North Island, AL 2 for South Island; AL 4 for Auckland, AL 2 for rest of country.
 - 4.2. Suggests settings for boundaries and permitted travel. Suggests a small number of enhanced AL 2 settings.
 - 4.3. Discusses surveillance and testing associated with AL splits.
 - 4.4. Process: Health papers and reports (x2) on AL settings and on surveillance testing; Consultation with agencies will continue this afternoon; NRLT will receive full Cabinet paper tonight post-final DG Health reports on AL change and the public health risk assessment.
 - 4.5. NRG discussed the importance of time required to operationalise a testing regime. This is critical should the DG Health advice recommend that an AL split is contingent upon having a testing regime in place.
 - 4.6. NRG discussed operationalising AL boundaries and that it is important to have a strategic enforcement lead (NZP) as we move forward and continue to manage checkpoints.
5. Megan Main updated the group on MIQF:
 - 5.1. Drop-off in new cases overnight relieves pressure of referrals to MIQF. In Auckland there are approximately 140 empty quarantine rooms, 783 people in quarantine currently, and today MIQF received a few referrals.
 - 5.2. Further data is coming from ARPHS to support developing a clear picture on what the next month looks like for MIQF capacity.
 - 5.3. Some of the issues the Pacific community are having in MIQ has been addressed or progressed with MBIE MIQ, MPP, and Pacific providers.
 - 5.4. Security presence increased at Holiday Inn and Novotel to help with escorting people outdoors when needed.
 - 5.5. MIQF will provide a briefing to Minister Hipkins shortly on restarting the voucher system to enable more people to return to New Zealand.

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- 5.6. Ministry of Health with MBIE MIQ have a review underway of all IPC that factors in the transmission rates of Delta. A high risk appears to be about the number of times doors open, but there are challenges to reduce the number of times this occurs.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding AL 4 and 3 in effect
Level 4 will extend in Auckland until 14 September; everywhere else is currently under Alert Level 3. A Cabinet decision on Alert Levels will be announced at 1600hrs.

Date: 6 September 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. Ministry of Health update –
 - 1.1. Cases are continuing to trend down. There are still a reasonable number of cases in hospital. Most of the new cases are household contacts, however a small number of cases are unlinked – ARPHS is working on this as a priority. Two thirds of the new cases are under 30.
 - 1.2. A new case over the weekend presented in hospital with abdominal pain, and is as yet unlinked. A reminder for the health system to look for atypical systems.
 - 1.3. ARPHS is chasing up outstanding contacts for testing. MOH noted that they are getting good compliance with testing.
2. MOH updated NRG on a number of interlinking pieces of work that are underway to refine the testing approach in Auckland, including surveillance testing at alert level boundaries –
 - 2.1. Aim of work is to ensure that essential workers continue to be prioritised for tests in Auckland.
 - 2.2. Work is continuing on a testing regime plan for permitted workers who cross alert level boundaries, including whether there will be an Order issued in respect of this change. MOH is also exploring options for presenting proof of testing. MOH are working with large employers whose workers will be impacted by the regime.
 - 2.3. Work continues to be undertaken on exploring the feasibility of saliva testing for essential workers. This is not expected to be implemented this week.
3. Members raised some operational considerations for testing permitted workers who cross boundaries –
 - 3.1. Ministry of Transport noted the importance of freight lanes at the boundary points and the need for clarity around verification or checking of tests.
 - 3.2. Ministry of Health noted the need to look at testing sites on the boundary.
 - 3.3. Noted that there may be some companies the system can work with to smooth the running of the checkpoints.
4. The Chair reiterated the offer of support from the system for this work, and the need for agencies to be joined up in their approach and communication to sectors.
5. Ruth Fairhall updated the group on the Cabinet paper; decisions to be made by Ministers; and process prior to (and after) the 1600 announcement:
 - 5.1. Cabinet paper proposed three options for Ministers consideration, primarily based around the timing of when the country outside of Auckland could move to AL2, and

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the flow on implications of this (including: testing regime; boundaries and permitted travel). The paper suggests a small number of enhanced AL2 settings.

- 5.2. DPMC Policy committed to letting NRG know when the Cabinet minute is available. Noted the Order would not be issued today, but a draft would be circulated as soon as possible.
6. The Chair returned the discussion to surveillance testing, boundary and essential worker testing for an operational roundtable:
 - 6.1. MOH noted that any testing regime would be likely to be implemented by the end of the week (10 September).
 - 6.2. Clarification was sought about whether or not the testing regime would be voluntary. MOH clarified that it was likely to not be an Order at this stage.
7. MIQF provided an update:
 - 7.1. *Capacity in quarantine*: 797 people are in quarantine, with 747 from the community. This is a declining number. There are 177 quarantine rooms available in Auckland as of 0730 this morning.
 - 7.2. *Support services in MIQ*: Noted that the increased wrap-around support that has been required for people accessing quarantine services, and MIQF staff, is having the desired effect, and no further support is needed from the system.
8. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples provided an update that they were still connecting with their communities to provide insight into areas of concern. Noted that no additional support from the system was required at this time.
9. DPMC Covid-19 Communications updated the group on a number of different pieces of work, including:
 - 9.1. Communications related to any change in Alert Level settings tomorrow. Aiming to share an update tonight.
 - 9.2. Greater support to businesses regarding the change in mandatory record keeping and scanning.
 - 9.3. Greater support to businesses that are still operating in an AL4 environment, including developing bulletins based on explaining different subject areas.
10. DPMC Covid-19 Communications also provided an update of the general sentiment observed from the public. Noted that common themes were: questions regarding the vaccine and its effectiveness against the new variant; community vigilance around compliance; and confusion regarding different parts of the country being at different alert levels.
11. Police noted that preparation work for any boundary in the Wellington/ Tasman area was well progressed.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding AL 4 and 3 in effect
Level 4 will extend in Auckland until 14 September; everywhere else is currently under Alert Level 3, moving to AL2 11.59pm Tuesday.

Date: 7 September 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. The Chair invited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to provide an update –
 - 1.1. Expecting a signal from Canberra on Australia's reaction to the AL change, and any resumption in travel, by the end of the day.
 - 1.2. No change from Cook Islands or Niue after the AL announcement.
2. Ministry of Health provided a situational update –
 - 2.1. Positive cases are continuing to trend in the right direction. There is an ongoing investigation into the worker at the Holiday Inn who has tested positive. It is likely this will be connected to the community outbreak.
 - 2.2. There is a high degree of interest in the unlinked cases. While most will eventually be linked, it is likely some will remain unlinked.
 - 2.3. ARPHS is experiencing worker fatigue. Northern DHBs are looking at additional support. There are likely to be some workforce constraints due to the specialised workforce that would be required.
3. Ministry of Health provided an update on the testing regime of permitted workers crossing AL boundaries. Noted that:
 - 3.1. there had been ongoing workshops occurring on this throughout today;
 - 3.2. work was still underway on setting up a saliva testing option and regime, and that this would be done through a mix of private providers throughout the country. This is expected to be stood up within the next couple of days; and
 - 3.3. work remains underway on options for providing electronic proof that the worker crossing the boundary has received a test.
4. The Chair provided an update on the drafting of the Order, noting that:
 - 4.1. the two points being considered by NRLT are (1) whether the onus is on the individual or the employer; (2) and the length of time required for a grace period prior to implementation; and
 - 4.2. it was likely that the Order would be a mix between an onus on businesses to support their workers to get tested, and a requirement for workers to ensure that they had been tested.
5. Members noted some further operational considerations to the regime, including:
 - 5.1. that in the immediate it will not be possible to set up a Register for those permitted to cross the boundary; and
 - 5.2. the regime was likely to be in place for 4 – 6 weeks. It is not yet clear whether there would be a boundary throughout this period.

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6. The Chair provided an update on travel through the Auckland boundaries –
 - 6.1. Noted that while some details were being worked through, travel through Auckland will remain limited to reasons that are permitted in the Order; and
 - 6.2. DPMC Covid Communications are working on some key messaging on travel through AL4 boundaries.
7. The Ministry of Health provided an update on the exemptions process –
 - 7.1. There have been 1700 requests. 1350 have been processed. 77 have been approved. Noted that only very limited exemptions were being granted.
8. The Ministry of Health noted that the Rio De La Plata is soon returning to Tauranga Port. The PHU in Tauranga is looking at testing.
 - 8.1. The Ministry of Transport noted that Maritime NZ is ensuring there is a consistent approach to its berth being taken by the Ports. Noted that the approach taken may have an impact on other vessels coming to New Zealand, and New Zealand's access to the global supply chain.
9. Jesse Nicholls, Ministry of Social Development Liaison, provided a welfare update –
 - 9.1. Noted that while the additional funding released had helped alleviate some of the pressure, there was still significant demand, particularly with access to food. Youth and Pasifika remain key focus areas of support.
10. Ministry for Pacific Peoples updated the group on welfare needs from the community –
 - 10.1. There remains a huge need for food throughout New Zealand, particularly within South Auckland. The delay between funding being provided and food reaching the community is significant.
 - 10.2. Requested broader support from the system in resolving any barriers that are preventing timely distribution of food. MPP to work with NEMA and MSD to close this gap.
11. The Chair invited Darryl Carpenter to provide a further update from the Ministry of Health on surveillance testing at the AL boundaries:
 - 11.1. Noted that the level of engagement with sector groups has been high, and that the sector understands the need for testing. Sector groups are prepared to work with Government to meet testing requirements.
 - 11.2. Plan for tomorrow: continue with operational planning; continue with the rollout of saliva testing; and continue with sector engagement.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates.

Level 4 will extend in Auckland until 14 September; everywhere else is currently under Alert Level 3.

Date: 8 September 2021, 1400hrs

National Response Group meeting

All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples provided an update –
 - 1.1. Noted that the primary concern is the delay in getting food to families. This is largely a distribution, transport and storage challenge. MPP is well connected into the system through C4C, and working with officials to find a solution and close gaps.
 - 1.2. Noted that it likely will be harder for the Pacific community to recover from this outbreak. A key focus for MPP is on how best to support these communities moving forward.
 - 1.3. The Chair reiterated the offer of support from the system.
2. NEMA noted that at the officials' level there is a considered effort underway to understand the issue and how the system can address the gap. Emphasised the importance of including local and regional agencies (such as Auckland Council) in these discussions.
3. The Ministry of Health provided an update –
 - 3.1. 15 new cases today. An Outbreak Control Committee has been stood up within the Ministry of Health. This is a group of SMEs working to strategically understand the outbreak to provide further clarity on where it could head.
 - 3.2. Noted that rapid work had been undertaken to grip up the new testing regime, and that this was being coordinated through the Ministry. There has been an uptick in testing in Auckland.
 - 3.3. A core concern remains the risk of leakage from Auckland due to the AL4/2 boundary, and any uncontrolled movement. Noted that strong and consistent messaging around permissions will continue to be required.
4. The Chair invited Erin Wynn, Ministry of Transport, to provide an update on boundary surveillance testing –
 - 4.1. A meeting with the freight sector is occurring this afternoon. MOT will provide an update to NRG on Friday.
 - 4.2. An inter-agency governance group has been stood up with MBIE, MOT and MOH. MOT is currently leading this workstream. MOT will provide a read-out on decisions from the group to NRG by email by COP.
5. DPMC Covid Comms provided an update. Noted that there were a number of pieces of work underway to provide clarity to the AL rules, boundary procedure and exemption process. The UAC website continues to be the source of truth.
 - 5.1. Noted that research is currently being undertaken to understand concerns of Maori, Pasifika, and more generally, public sentiment. DPMC Covid Comms will report back on results to NRG on Monday.

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6. The Chair invited MIQF to provide an update –
 - 6.1. There are 161 rooms in quarantine, and 216 across the system. There are no current capacity concerns.
 - 6.2. Crowne Plaza has come back online and is accepting a cohort from tomorrow.
7. Police updated the group on the status of the boundary and noted that queues were moving well so far. Work was underway for planning for the new testing regime.
8. DPMC Policy noted that work was currently underway to provide Ministers advice on potential future AL settings and exemptions.
9. The Chair requested members:
 - 9.1. Identify an agency point of contact for DPMC to contact about collating lessons identified through the response; and
 - 9.2. Provide feedback on NRG, including any reflections on content coverage and meeting frequency.
10. Members noted the Rio De La Plata is soon returning to Tauranga Port, and that work is underway to ensure there is a consistent approach to its berth being taken by the Ports. Noted that any approach taken may have an impact on other vessels coming to New Zealand, and New Zealand's access to the global supply chain.

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COVID-19: Domestic response, operational updates regarding AL 4 and 3 in effect
Level 4 will extend in Auckland until 14 September; everywhere else is currently under Alert Level 2.

Date: 9 September 2021, 1400hrs
National Response Group meeting
All time markers recorded in NZT

Public health and other operational updates

1. The Chair opened with acknowledgement of the sustained work that was continuing to be undertaken ahead of Monday's Cabinet decision.
2. The Ministry of Health provided an update –
 - 2.1. 13 new cases today. The Ministry was continuing to do a deep dive into unlinked cases to provide further assurance ahead of Monday's decision point.
 - 2.2. The Ministry was doing a push to encourage targeted community testing.
 - 2.3. Noted that the tempo for the Ministry remained the same even though other parts of the country had moved to AL2. Reflected that staff within the Ministry were tired and would need to take a break once the system moved to a steadier pace.
3. The Chair noted that the system needed to sustain the pace and keep laser focus on the response. Noted that we are moving into a high-risk period of the response due to the AL4/2 boundary.
4. Ruth Fairhall, DPMC Covid Policy, provided an update -
 - 4.1. Work was being undertaken on what AL1 could look like, including what potential changes may be needed to settings to reduce the risk of a future outbreak. This was part of a bigger piece of work looking at tools that can be used to reduce the risk of future outbreaks and AL changes.
 - 4.2. Agencies were encouraged to feed into this process where appropriate.
5. The Ministry of Health noted that it was in the process of drafting a fact-sheet on New Zealand's testing landscape.
6. Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples provided an update on welfare needs:
 - 6.1. Noted that significant work was underway across agencies to resolve delays in food access (including work to set up an 0800 number, establishing a Pacific coordinator).
 - 6.2. A good process has been set up and would be monitored over the next few days.
7. The Chair reminded members of the lessons captured process, and the importance of ensuring learnings such as these were captured in this process.
8. The Chair invited members to undertake an operational roundtable, with a focus on how the system was managing competing priorities:
 - 8.1. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade*: Noted that flights to/ from Australia remained a live issue, with a meeting this afternoon between agencies. Noted the need for messaging from "Unite Against Covid" website around sheltering in place being required for the longer term.

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- 8.2. *Police*: Noted that the AL4/2 boundary was working well. Noted that there was still work required to operationalise boundary testing, and that pressure likely rested on the testing regime itself, rather than evidence of the test itself being taken.
 - 8.3. *Ministry for Primary Industries*: Boundary testing regime remains a primary focus. Noted that there was a step-change in acceptance from industry: most had accepted the rationale and people were getting on with it. Continually looking at how an AL3/2 split would work for industry. Requested any further insights as possible.
 - 8.4. *MIQF*: Members heard that there were no current capacity concerns. However, work is needed to assist decision-making in future outbreaks regarding the delineation in responsibility between community and border quarantine cases.
 - 8.4.1. Requested that the system consider undertaking a scenario exercise on what a future outbreak would look like, and where system pressures would arise, if an outbreak occurred outside of Auckland.
 - 8.5. *Public Service Commission*: Noted that guidance had been issued on public servants returning to work at AL2, with a new set of FAQs being released. Seeking to embed lessons identified from the Hub into its modelling for future outbreaks.
 - 8.6. *Immigration*: Looking at business continuity in Auckland. Planning for resumption of QFT travel with the Pacific.
 - 8.7. *Treasury*: Noted that the new AL2 rules had made it harder for some businesses, and there was a continuing focus on the resurgence support payment.
9. The Chair noted that this outbreak had been littered with concurrent events, and the need to ensure that this is factored into future planning.
 10. The Chair closed the meeting.

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