



# Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

## Minute of Decision

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### Risk Responsive Borders

**Portfolio**                      **COVID-19 Response**

On 30 June 2021, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

- 1        **agreed** to the risk assessment framework (the framework) set out in the paper under SWC-21-SUB-0101 for travellers arriving in New Zealand from very high risk countries and jurisdictions, which includes a broader range of public health considerations;
- 2        **noted** that the framework can assess the risk to New Zealand from travellers arriving from any country or jurisdiction using a ‘traffic light’ system but will initially apply to very high risk travellers only, s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]
- 3        **agreed** that the risk assessment process will involve five stages:
  - 3.1      surveillance: weekly surveillance of the international public health situation, led by the Ministry of Health, to identify countries and jurisdictions of concern for further assessment;
  - 3.2      assessment: from the above surveillance, the Ministry of Health will undertake a detailed public health assessment of any countries or jurisdictions of concern to determine the overall level of risk to New Zealand;
  - 3.3      analysis: following the detailed public health assessment, an inter-agency process would determine appropriate risk responsive mitigation measures for travellers from countries and jurisdictions that pose a very high risk;
  - 3.4      decision: advice provided to the Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group to make a final decision, alongside public health advice from the Director-General of Health;
  - 3.5      implementation: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) to notify affected countries or jurisdictions at least 24 hours prior to announcement, and any necessary changes made to border settings;
- 4        **noted** that the information received through the Ministry of Health’s weekly surveillance is reliant on the data that is reported by other countries and jurisdictions;
- 5        **noted** that the Director-General of Health has provided the Minister for COVID-19 Response with indicative country risk assessments for Brazil, India, Pakistan, and Papua New Guinea;

- 6 **agreed** that the Ministry of Health undertake a detailed assessment of countries currently classified as very high risk, and any other countries or jurisdictions of concern, in the 24 hours following Cabinet’s decision;
- 7 **agreed** that final decisions on a country or jurisdiction’s risk classification and appropriate measures will be made by the Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group, following the process in paragraph 3 above;
- 8 **agreed** that the Ministry of Health will report to the Minister for COVID-19 Response and the Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group every four weeks to ensure that any risk mitigation measures imposed are still justified or should be reduced, in line with the requirements in the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020;
- 9 **noted** that any changes to New Zealand’s border settings and approach to assessing country or jurisdiction risk will need to be clearly communicated to the New Zealand public, and any bilateral impacts carefully managed by MFAT with the governments of directly impacted countries or jurisdictions;
- 10 **s 9(2)(f)(iv)** [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

Rachel Clarke  
Committee Secretary

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**Present:**

- Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern
- Hon Grant Robertson
- Hon Dr Megan Woods
- Hon Chris Hipkins
- Hon Carmel Sepuloni (Chair)
- Hon Andrew Little
- Hon Damien O’Connor
- Hon Kris Faafoi
- Hon Peeni Henare
- Hon Jan Tinetti
- Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
- Hon Meka Whaitiri
- Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan

**Officials present from:**

- Office of the Prime Minister
- Officials Committee for SWC