

# Briefing

## Trans-Tasman Quarantine-Free Travel (QFT): Health advice on potential continuation of pause of QFT from Victoria

**Date due to MO:** 3 June 2021                      **Action required by:** 3 June 2021

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**Security level:** IN CONFIDENCE                      **Health Report number:** HR 20211308

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**To:** Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for COVID-19 Response

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**Copy to:** Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister  
 Hon Grant Robertson, Deputy Prime Minister  
 Hon Nanaia Mahuta, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
 Hon Michael Wood, Minister of Transport

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### Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
Ashley Bloomfield	Director-General of Health	s 9(2)(a)
Sue Gordon	Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Health System Response	s 9(2)(a)

### Minister's office to complete:

- Approved
- Decline
- Noted
- Needs change
- Seen
- Overtaken by events
- See Minister's Notes
- Withdrawn

Comment:

# Trans-Tasman Quarantine-Free Travel (QFT): Health advice on potential continuation of pause of QFT from Victoria

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**Security level:** IN CONFIDENCE      **Date:** 3 June 2021

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**To:** Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for COVID-19 Response

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## Purpose of report

1. This report provides my advice on the possible continuation of the pause of quarantine-free travel (QFT) from Victoria in light of the locally acquired cases of COVID-19 notified on and since 24 May 2021.

## Summary

2. On 25 May 2021, you decided to pause QFT from Victoria for an initial period of 3 days and a notice was subsequently issued excluding QFT for travellers who had been in Victoria on or after 7:59pm on 25 May 2021 (New Zealand time). On 28 May 2021, you agreed to continue to pause QFT from Victoria for 7 days, with a review on Thursday, 3 June 2021.

### *Latest case information*

3. Since the initial notification of a locally acquired case of COVID-19 on 24 May 2021, there are now 63 cases associated with the Victoria outbreak, with over 15,000 contacts identified which are equivalent to New Zealand's classifications of close plus and close contacts.
  - i. The case with the earliest symptom onset in this outbreak was 17 May 2021. This case was reported on 25 May 2021 and was identified through contact tracing.
  - ii. A steady number of cases are being reported each day, with 3 locally acquired cases being reported on 3 June 2021. All cases are in the greater Melbourne region.
  - iii. Although most cases have been among already identified contacts, predominately close family or workplace contacts, there have been several cases in recent days where an epidemiological link is still being investigated.
  - iv. There are two aged care facilities with a total of 4 cases reported across the two sites, including 2 staff members and 2 residents. A household contact of one of the staff has been reported.
  - v. Genomic sequencing has linked the community outbreak to the previous community-detected 'Wollert' case from the same area in early May.
  - vi. The cases in this outbreak have the B.1.617.1 'Delta' variant of concern sub-lineage, which was first detected in India.

4. Extensive contact tracing continues for all cases. Identified exposure sites have been published and continue to be updated by Victoria's health department. The locations of interest indicate that exposure events may have taken place across Melbourne and outside Melbourne in regional Victoria, with 370 locations of interest identified, including many high-risk settings. The large number of potential exposure events continues to be a concern when coupled with the relatively short incubation period of this variant.
5. Australian states and territories have all imposed restrictions and requirements on travellers from Victoria, ranging from partial restrictions confined to areas of concern to prohibiting entry from the entire state of Victoria. No cases have been identified in other states outside of Victoria. However, Victoria's health department has reported that a case travelled to New South Wales while potentially infectious, resulting in exposure sites in rural New South Wales.
6. In response to this outbreak, the Victorian government instigated a seven-day Alert Level 3 lock-down which was due to end at 11:59pm on Thursday, 3 June 2021, applying across the state. On 2 June 2021, the Victorian government announced that the lock-down would be extended for greater Melbourne by a further period of 7 days. However, the restrictions in regional Victoria will ease from 11:59pm on 3 June 2021, subject to regional areas remaining COVID-19 free.

#### *Health advice*

7. Based on the information available at 11am on Thursday, 3 June 2021, I consider the overall risk to New Zealand to be lower than last week but continues to be medium. The risk is decreasing for greater Melbourne although locally acquired cases are still being reported. The risk for regional Victoria is low. This recommendation may change as further information becomes available, but at this point I consider that **a precautionary approach should continue to be taken and recommend the following:**
  - i. **the pause on QFT should continue for travellers who are currently in greater Melbourne, with a review on Wednesday, 9 June 2021;**
  - ii. **travellers who are currently located in regional Victoria and have not visited greater Melbourne since 7:59pm on 25 May 2021 may return to New Zealand quarantine-free if they satisfy certain public health requirements;**
  - iii. **travellers who are currently located outside Victoria and have not visited greater Melbourne since 11:59pm on 27 May 2021 (i.e. when Victoria went into lock-down) may return to New Zealand quarantine-free if they satisfy certain public health requirements.**
8. The public health requirements are that they have not been at a location of interest and have obtained a negative COVID-19 test taken within 3 days of their departure. Passengers may depart from Melbourne airport, if permitted by the Victorian authorities (public health have assessed this as relatively low risk).
9. A further risk assessment may be completed if there are cases identified in other states outside of Victoria.
10. This minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading to New Zealand and will enable contact tracing and testing of the high number of close and casual contacts to continue to occur.
11. In response to the extended pause, separate advice will be provided on how managed flights from Melbourne could work in practice. This advice will set out options on how

travellers could return to New Zealand while greater Melbourne remains in lock-down either through the green zone or red zone if managed returns are required.

*Continuation of pause QFT*

12. If you agree that any continuation of the pause of QFT should be limited to travellers from greater Melbourne, which would allow travellers from regional Victoria and other Australian states and territories who have not been in a location of interest and have obtained a pre-departure test to return to New Zealand quarantine-free, then the current exemption notice will need to be changed accordingly.
13. Before amending the exemption notice, you must consult the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Transport. Other relevant Ministers may also be consulted.
14. If you agree to limiting the pause to QFT to travellers from greater Melbourne, the Parliamentary Counsel Office will prepare the revised exemption notice for your signature.

*Impact on travellers*

15. The consequence of a continued pause will be that QFT from greater Melbourne will continue to be temporarily suspended for a further period of 7 days and travellers will be required to shelter in place for the duration of the pause. If a traveller needs to return to New Zealand urgently, they will need to secure a flight and a place in the Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) system.
16. Travellers from regional Victoria and other Australian states and territories will be eligible to undertake QFT to New Zealand, provided they have not previously been in greater Melbourne on or after 7:59pm on 25 May and 11:59pm on 27 May 2021 respectively (New Zealand time).
17. Further review and advice on the COVID-19 situation in Victoria will be provided on Wednesday, 9 June 2021.

*Impact of the current exemption notice on aircrew*

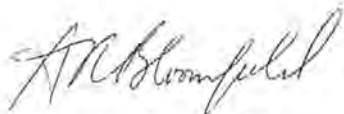
18. The exemption notice issued on 25 May 2021 has had an unintended consequence for aircrew who have been in Victoria since 7:59pm on 25 May 2021. These crew members are only permitted to arrive in New Zealand on flights relocating from Victoria and not flights from other destinations.
19. A change needs to be made to the exemption notice to specify that all aircrew arriving from all Australian states and territories can fly on QFT flights to New Zealand as long as they met agreed low-risk health criteria. The criteria will include requirements that they have not visited any exposure sites, do not have symptoms of COVID-19; satisfy all health requirements imposed by authorities in country prior to travel; and have received a negative COVID-19 test result before entry into New Zealand every time they fly.

## Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **Note** that on 25 May 2021 you decided to pause QFT from Victoria from 7:59pm on 25 May 2021 (New Zealand time), with a review no later than 28 May 2021. **Noted**
- b) **Note** that on 27 May 2021 you decided to extend the pause of QFT from Victoria, with a review on Thursday, 3 June 2021. **Noted**
- c) **Note** that as at 11am on Thursday, 3 June 2021 there have been 63 cases associated with the outbreak in Victoria. **Noted**
- d) **Note** my advice that, based on information available at 11am on Thursday, 3 June 2021, noting the increased risk to New Zealand, **taking a precautionary approach, I recommend the following:** **Noted**
- i. **the pause on QFT should continue for travellers who are currently in greater Melbourne, with a review on Wednesday, 9 June 2021;**
  - ii. **travellers who are currently located in regional Victoria and have not visited greater Melbourne since 7:59pm on 25 May 2021 may return to New Zealand quarantine-free if they satisfy certain public health requirements;**
  - iii. **travellers who are currently located outside Victoria and have not visited greater Melbourne since 11:59pm on 27 May 2021 may return to New Zealand quarantine-free if they satisfy certain public health requirements.**
- e) **Agree** that the public health requirements that returning travellers must satisfy should include that they have not been at a location of interest and have obtained a negative COVID-19 test taken within 3 days of their departure. **Yes/No**
- f) **Agree** that passengers may depart from Melbourne airport, if permitted by the Victorian authorities. **Yes/No**
- g) **Note** that the current Notice excluding travellers who have been in Victoria on or after 7.59pm on 25 April 2021 (New Zealand time) from QFT will need to be changed to reflect the advice set out in recommendation (c). **Noted**
- h) **Note** that separate advice will be provided on how travellers may return to New Zealand while greater Melbourne remains in lock-down if managed flights are required. **Noted**
- i) **Agree** that a change will be made to the exemption notice to allow aircrew arriving from all Australian states and territories to fly on QFT flights to New Zealand if they met agreed low-risk health criteria. **Yes/No**
- j) **Note** that the Parliamentary Counsel Office will prepare the revised exemption notice for your signature **Noted**

k) **Agree** to forward this advice to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Transport for consultation.  Yes/No



Dr Ashley Bloomfield

**Director-General of Health**

**Te Tumu Whakarae mō te Hauora**

Date:



Hon Chris Hipkins

**Minister of Health**

Date: 3/6/21

PROACTIVELY RELEASED

# Trans-Tasman Quarantine-Free Travel (QFT): Health advice on potential continuation of pause of QFT from Victoria

## Background

1. Two-way QFT between New Zealand and Australia began on 19 April 2021. New Zealand and Australia have opened their respective borders on a unilateral basis.
2. In the event of case(s) of COVID-19, decisions on continuation, pauses or suspension are considered independently. New Zealand's response(s) are guided by the Response Framework agreed by Cabinet [CAB-21-MIN-0101]. It is linked to our Elimination Strategy and guided by the policy objectives of keeping COVID-19 out of New Zealand, keeping QFT open and operating if safe, and minimising the impact of any disruption to travellers and operators.
3. The Ministry of Health became aware of two locally acquired cases in Victoria at 12:15pm on 24 May 2021. The following day, you were provided advice recommending that QFT from Victoria should be paused. After consulting the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Transport, you agreed there should be a pause on QFT from Victoria. On 28 May 2021, you agreed to continue to pause QFT from Victoria for 7 days, with a review on Thursday, 3 June 2021.

## Latest case information

4. Since the initial notification of a locally acquired case of COVID-19 on 24 May 2021, there are now 63 cases associated with the Victoria cluster with over 15,000 contacts identified which are equivalent to New Zealand's classifications of close plus and close contacts. All reported cases are within greater Melbourne.
  - i. The case with the earliest symptom onset in this outbreak was 15 May 2021.
  - ii. On 24 May 2021, Victoria's Department of Health and Human Services reported to the media 4 community cases of coronavirus in the Northern Suburbs of Melbourne. These were officially reported on 25 May 2021. All 4 cases are from the same family, living across 3 households.
  - iii. A steady number of cases has been reported each day since, with 3 locally acquired cases being reported on 3 June 2021. The daily number of reported cases, as well as testing data from Victoria is set out in the table below.

Date cases reported	Number of cases	Number of Tests
25 May	4	14,892
26 May	10	26,180
27 May	12	40,411
28 May	4	47,462
29 May	5	56,624
30 May	5	45,301
31 May	5	43,874
1 June	9	42,699
2 June	6	51,033
3 June	3	57,519

**Table: Daily number of reported cases and testing data (Vic Health)**

5. Extensive contact tracing continues for all cases. Identified exposure sites have been published and continue to be updated by Victoria's health department.
6. Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia have closed borders to people coming from Victoria. The Northern Territory is requiring people coming from Victoria to enter managed isolation and quarantine facilities.
7. In response to this outbreak, the Victorian government instigated a seven-day Alert Level 3 lock-down which was due to end at 11:59pm on Thursday, 3 June 2021, applying across the state. On 2 June 2021, the Victorian government announced that the lock-down would be extended for greater Melbourne by a further period of 7 days. However, the restrictions in regional Victoria will ease from 11:59pm on 3 June 2021, subject to regional areas remaining COVID-19 free.

#### Health Assessment

8. Where information is available, the following has been considered:
  - i. Potential source of COVID-19 infection e.g. setting or occupation of relevance
  - ii. Timeframes over which contacts were infectious in the community before isolation
  - iii. Locations of interest while infectious in the community
  - iv. Comprehensiveness of testing and testing results, e.g. RT-PCR Ct value(s), serology
  - v. Any other relevant considerations, such as COVID-19 strain, vaccination status, the response from individual states and territories.

#### *Potential source*

9. Whole genomic sequencing (WGS) has confirmed that all cases are linked to the previous Wollert case, and are infected with the B.1.617.1 'Delta' variant. All cases are epidemiologically linked.

#### *Timeframes while infectious in community*

10. Of the reported cases, the dates that individuals were infectious in the community are from 15 to 25 May, which is a total of 10 days.
11. More recent cases are noted to have less time in the community however are also noted to have short incubation periods (as short as 24 hours).



### *Locations of interest*

12. As at 11am on 3 June 2021, there are 370 public locations of interest on the website of Victoria's health department. These locations include bars and restaurants, educational centres, gyms and sports facilities, retail shops, a swimming pool, sports venues, supermarkets, and shopping centres. The locations identified indicate that exposure events may have taken place across Melbourne and outside Melbourne in regional Victoria. The inclusion of CBD locations of interest increases the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission, as people will have transited through them on the way to other locations.
13. The large number of potential exposure events continues to be a concern when coupled with the relatively short incubation period of this variant.

### *Testing results*

14. On 2 June 2021, Victoria's health department reported 5,200 close contacts associated with the Whittlesea Community Outbreak of which 77.8% have returned negative results. In addition, there were 57,519 tests in Victoria yesterday and contact tracing and testing of contacts continue.

### *Other matters*

15. From 11:59pm on 27 May 2021 (AEST), Victoria entered a 7-day 'circuit breaker' lockdown. People were required to stay at home and could only leave their house to go shopping for necessary goods and services; authorised work or permitted education; exercise; care giving, compassionate and medical reasons; and to get vaccinated. On 2 June 2021, the Victorian government announced that the lock-down would be extended for greater Melbourne by a further period of 7 days. However, the restrictions in regional Victoria will ease from 11:59pm on 3 June 2021, subject to regional areas remaining COVID-19 free.
16. The other Australian states and territories have placed a range of restrictions and requirements on travellers from Victoria, although these measures differ from state to state.
17. For instance, New South Wales requires people who arrive from Greater Melbourne to fill out a health declaration form to confirm that they have not visited an area of concern. People who have been in areas of concern need to self-isolate and seek a test. Casual contacts who are not residents of the respective state will need to get tested before entering the state. Close contacts may only enter the state if they are residents and must quarantine for 14 days after arriving in the state. Similar requirements have been imposed in ACT.
18. Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia do not permit anyone who has been in Victoria in the 14-days prior to their intended arrival, unless they are essential travellers or residents, who will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days and undergo testing. Northern Territory requires any new arrival who has visited Victoria to quarantine for 14 days in a Government arranged accommodation.
19. Case information, including contact tracing, locations of interest and testing volumes are updated daily. Any additional locally acquired cases will be notified immediately.

### *Travellers who have returned to New Zealand*

20. All travellers who are currently in the New Zealand who have been in the Greater Melbourne region since 20 May are required to self-isolate and be tested and to remain in isolation until a negative test result is returned. Approximately, 5,000 travellers arrived in New Zealand between 20 and 25 May 2021. All travellers who are believed to be in New

Zealand have been successfully contacted. Of these, around 55% have returned a negative test result. Of those not yet with a negative result, 709 have no result, 214 are exempt from testing, 1192 require no further action, and 36 are pending. Arrivals who have no test results who are required to be tested are being followed up by NITC. Three casual contacts have self-identified by calling Healthline and all three have returned a negative test and one is pending.

21. The requirement to self-isolate and get tested was introduced by way of a section 70 direction under the Health Act 1956. This mechanism is designed to deal with an urgent public health situation. If additional public health measures are introduced to manage the risk posed by travellers returning from Victoria once they are in New Zealand, we suggest that this is done by way of an order under section 11 of the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020.

#### *Impact of the current exemption notice on aircrew*

22. The exemption notice that was issued on 25 May 2021 has had an unintended consequence for aircrew who have been in Victoria since 7:59pm on 25 May 2021. Clause 11 of this notice grants aircrew an exemption from the prohibition of persons travelling from Victoria. However, sub-clause 11(3) provides that the exemption is only available for relocation flights from Victoria to New Zealand, and not flights from other destinations. This has had an operational impact on airlines as affected crew members are restricted to travelling on flights from Victoria, leading to concerns about crew well-being, fatigue and industrial employment issues.
23. We propose that a change is made to the exemption notice to specify that aircrew arriving from all Australian states and territories can fly on QFT flights to New Zealand as long as they met agreed low-risk health criteria. The criteria shall include that they have not visited any exposure sites, do not have symptoms of COVID-19; satisfy all health requirements imposed by authorities in country prior to travel; and have received a negative COVID-19 test result before entry into New Zealand every time they fly.
24. If you agree with this proposal, the Parliamentary Counsel Office will include the change in the revised exemption notice that will be provided for your signature.

#### **Health advice**

25. Based on the information available at 11am on Thursday, 3 June 2021, I consider the overall risk to New Zealand to be lower than last week but continues to be medium. The risk is decreasing for greater Melbourne although locally acquired cases are still being reported. The risk for regional Victoria is low. This recommendation may change as further information becomes available, but at this point I consider that **a precautionary approach should continue to be taken and recommend the following:**
  - i. **the pause on QFT should continue for travellers who are currently in greater Melbourne, with a review on Wednesday, 9 June 2021;**
  - ii. **travellers who are currently located in regional Victoria and have not visited greater Melbourne since 7:59pm on 25 May 2021 may return to New Zealand quarantine-free if they satisfy certain public health requirements;**
  - iii. **travellers who are currently located outside Victoria and have not visited greater Melbourne since 11:59pm on 27 May 2021 (i.e. when Victoria went into lock-**

**down) may return to New Zealand quarantine-free if they satisfy certain public health requirements.**

26. The public health requirements are that they have not been at a location of interest and have obtained a negative COVID-19 test taken within 3 days of their departure. Passengers may depart from Melbourne airport, if permitted by the Victorian authorities (public health have assessed this as relatively low risk).
27. This will continue to minimise the risk of COVID-19 spreading to New Zealand and will enable contact tracing and testing of the high number of close and casual contacts to occur.
28. In response to the extended pause, separate advice will be provided on how managed flights from Melbourne could work in practice. This advice will set out options on how travellers could return to New Zealand while greater Melbourne remains in lock-down either through the green zone or red zone if managed returns are required.

**Continuation of a pause of QFT**

29. A continuation of the pause of QFT from greater Melbourne will make travellers from that area subject to the requirements of the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Air Border) Order (No 2) 2020 (the Air Border Order), including isolation and quarantine on arrival and a confirmed allocation to enter a managed isolation or quarantine facility.
30. The current exemption notice issued on 25 May 2021 will need to be amended to allow people from regional Victoria and other Australian states and territories to travel to New Zealand quarantine-free.

**New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990**

31. The exemption discretion must be exercised consistently with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 (NZBORA).
32. New Zealand citizens have the right to enter New Zealand. Citizens unable to return due to the pause will have their right to enter New Zealand limited for the duration of that pause. Any limit on the right of New Zealanders to enter the country must only extend as far as necessary and be proportionate in the circumstances. A prolonged pause may risk becoming an unjustifiable limitation on the right of New Zealand citizens to enter the country.
33. The greatest threat to the health of people in New Zealand continues to be from the introduction of COVID-19 cases at the border. That risk continues to be present with the emergence of new Covid-19 variants, one of which is currently circulating in the state of Victoria, Australia. Extending the pause in QFT for an additional 7 days would further this important objective of preventing the introduction of COVID-19 to New Zealand, pending further clarification of the risk this outbreak poses and whether it is able to be contained.
34. A continuation of the pause in QFT also affords officials time to consider and prepare public health options (including the likely impact on MIQ facilities) in the event travellers are permitted to resume travel.
35. When assessing the proportionality of a pause it is also relevant to note that the Government has been transparent with advice to the public that for the purposes of QFT, New Zealand citizens departing the country do so at their own risk. Bearing in mind the

advice that New Zealanders going to Australia should be prepared for the possibility of a pause, being required to shelter in place for a period should not cause significant hardship, especially given the social rights enjoyed by New Zealand citizens in Australia (e.g. reciprocal health care).

36. Ongoing New Zealand Bill of Rights Act analysis will be required when assessing further responses to the current COVID-19 outbreak in Victoria.

### **Equity**

37. The continuation of the pause of QFT will disrupt travel and prevent New Zealand citizens, residents and visa holders who have been in greater Melbourne on or after 7:59pm on 25 May 2021 (New Zealand time) from returning to New Zealand in the short-term.
38. Preventing the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in New Zealand will protect vulnerable New Zealanders, including Māori and Pacific communities who have been historically disproportionately impacted by a widespread epidemic.
39. There will be social and economic impacts from continuing to pause QFT from greater Melbourne but this is expected to be limited compared to an introduction of COVID-19 into New Zealand and the potential for increased Alert Levels and the resulting economic and social costs.

### **Next steps**

40. Further review and advice on the QFT pause from greater Melbourne will be provided on Wednesday, 9 June 2021.
41. When considering the possible recommencement of QFT from greater Melbourne, factors that will be considered include:
  - i. Whether the spread of COVID-19 case(s) in some or all Australian states and territories has been controlled; and any residual response/travel limitations by individual states and territories;
  - ii. Whether the Australian Commonwealth Government or individual states and territories can detect COVID-19 cases through robust testing and surveillance;
  - iii. Whether the Australian Commonwealth Government or individual states and territories can manage COVID-19 cases through contact tracing and case management;
  - iv. Whether the Border controls are adequate for identifying and preventing transmission of COVID-19 and are proportionate to the risk (e.g. eligible travellers will have been in Australia for 14 days or more); and
  - v. Other relevant considerations have been met, including consistency of Australia's COVID-19 controls and decision-making between the state and territories and Commonwealth governments.

42. Additional measures proportionate to the risk, such as pre-departure testing (PDT) may be considered with any recommencement. In the case of PDT, a requirement for PDT would also need to factor in the timeframe for accessing PDT.

ENDS.

PROACTIVELY RELEASED

# 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

- Do the current legal Orders need amendments? Yes / No 'pause' legislation does not need amendment.
- DPMC Legal have confirmed approach from a legal perspective Yes / No
- Crown Law Office is addressing the legal factors of a green-light flight. PCO engaged to support with drafting legislation.
- For the extended pause – BORA considerations are satisfied provided concerted efforts are made to put in place and operationalise a managed return flight to NZ for travellers.

## 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. contract 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:



**Amber Bill,**  
Acting National Response Group Chair  
Date: 3 June 2021

Signed:

**Rebecca Kitteridge,**  
Acting National Response Leadership Team Chair  
Date:

**Risk Assessment template:  
Managing COVID-19 Situations in QFT Places**

**Thursday 3 June 2021**

**QFT Melbourne – Whittlesea Community Outbreak, Port Melbourne  
Workplace Outbreak and Arcare Maidstone Outbreak**

**Date and time of assessment: Thursday 3 June 2021 – 1000hrs**

**Public Health Advice Recommendations from Director of Public  
Health as at [1000 3 June 2021]:**

**Overall assessment and recommendations**

- Based on the info available, the public health risk from Greater Melbourne, Victoria, Australia for NZ is considered to be **medium** however has decreased since the last risk assessment completed on 27 May 2021. The restrictions in place in Victoria look to be effective as they intended to be. The public health risk from Regional Victoria, Australia for NZ is considered to be **low**.
- QFT Level Assessment, given the above assessment, the Director of Public Health recommends that the pause for Greater Melbourne region be **continued** until at least Wednesday 9 June and to be reviewed on Tuesday 8 June 2021.
- For Regional Victoria, it is recommended that they can travel to New Zealand provided they have had a PDT within 72 hours prior to departure and are able to travel to a QFT port without breaching any local government restrictions. (Note that this is a public health assessment only and we recognise that it may not be feasible from an operational perspective and is contingent on Victoria Government lifting restrictions for the region).
- It is recommended that those who are currently in another Australian state who were in Victoria between 20-25 May, but left Victoria between 25-27 May can travel to New Zealand provided that they have a PDT within 72 hours prior to departure and have not been at a location of interest in the last 14 days. This could be effective for PDT undertaken from now on as it would be at least 5 days since the last possible exposure. This group are currently subject to the pause which came into effect before Victoria's lockdown but their public health risk is now low and should be excluded from any pause extension.
- A further risk assessment (other than that planned for Tuesday 8 June) may be required if there are cases identified in other states outside of Victoria, or the situation in Victoria changes significantly.

**Existing communications messages**

- Those in New Zealand who have recently in the Greater Melbourne area are advised to be tested if they develop symptoms.
- Anyone in New Zealand who has been at any of the locations of interest at the specified times should continue to self-isolate and contact Healthline for advice on testing. This requires the appropriate legal authority to be in place, ie, a Section 70 notice for contacts in Tiers 1 and 2. (Australian terminology)
- Individuals in Australia who were at any of the locations of interest at the specified times are asked to follow Victoria health advice regarding isolation and testing and **MUST** not travel to New Zealand within 14 days of exposure.



- There should be reinforcement of messaging in New Zealand for everyone to use tracer app and get tested if symptomatic.



3/6/2021

#### Director-General of Health's Advice

Based on the above, my advice as the DG of Health is:

- Based on the info available, public health risk from Victoria, Australia for NZ is considered medium for Greater Melbourne and low for regional Victoria.
- Note that this recommendation may change as further information become available.
- QFT Level Assessment – given the above assessment, the Director of Public Health recommends continuation of the pause in QFT with Greater Melbourne at least until Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Any additional comments from DG:

As above. The outbreak appears well contained and the ongoing lockdown will reduce the risk further with each passing day.



3/6/2021

Director-General of Health

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## Situation Summary

### Cluster Summary

As at 1430hrs Wednesday 2 June 2021 there are 60 cases identified associated with the current QFT Melbourne outbreak. All 60 cases are within the Greater Melbourne area. Australian Officials have deemed the cases associated with this situation to be split into three outbreaks, the Whittlesea Community Outbreak (excluding the previous Wollert Community Case), Port Melbourne Workplace Outbreak and Arcare Maidstone Outbreak. There is also one case associated with the Arcare Maidstone Outbreak who also worked at BlueCross Western Gardens ARC (Aged Care Facility).

Almost all cases (see below for the exceptions) associated with the Whittlesea Community Outbreak and the Port Melbourne Outbreak are epidemiologically linked and all those cases that have had genomic sequencing have shown a genomic link to the original Wollert Community Case. The initial case identified associated with the Arcare Maidstone case is being investigated for the epidemiological link to other cases. They are an ARC worker who was tested on the day they developed symptoms on 28 May but worked the two preceding days. This case was vaccinated (1st dose) on 12 May and 34 of 110 staff have had 1st vaccination and 53 of 76 residents have had first vaccination.

Of all 60 cases in the outbreak;

- Earliest date a case was infectious while in the community was 11 May.
- Latest date a case was infectious while in the community was 31 May.
- First case was identified on 24 May and the latest case was identified on 2 June.

At midday on 24 May 2021 an Australian media report detailed two "likely positive cases" of COVID-19 in Melbourne's northern suburbs. At 1430 an AHPPC meeting, attended by ODPH, which established that the "likely positive cases" are confirmed cases identified in the Northern Suburbs region of Melbourne. The area where the cases reside is an adjacent suburb to the previous Wollert Community Case identified on 11 May 2021.

Of the additional cases identified since the initial two cases, most are considered to be family or workplace (ie close) contacts. There are also a small number of other close or casual plus contacts and a few casual contacts. Exception to this are the following for whom their exposure event is currently unknown:

- **The initial case in the Whittlesea Outbreak**
- The initial case associated with the Arcare Maidstone outbreak. They are an ARC worker who was tested on the day they developed symptoms on 28 May but worked the two preceding days. This case lives in West Melbourne.
- A case that attended similar locations of interest however at different times.
- A case that lives near the workplace of the initial Port Melbourne worker however has no clear epidemiological link.
- A family of four cases who went to NSW prior to the lockdown who live in Western Melbourne

### Locations of Interest

As at 0900hrs 3 June there are 370+ locations of interest identified which are associated with the outbreak. This is an increase from 329 on Tuesday 1 June 2021.

Among the locations of interest there are a number of high risk settings including:

- A number of bars/pubs especially between 2110hrs (EST) Saturday 22 May and Sunday 23 May
- An aged care facility where a case worked for 2 days while infectious (Arcare Maidstone)

## Source Investigation

Australia Officials advised on multiple strong positive wastewater testing from samples taken between 14 and 19 May in the Northern Suburbs of Melbourne of which is within catchment of Case 1's residence. Officials stated they are unsure if the positive result is due to the previous Wollert case or perhaps could be due to an intermediary case.

WGS results to date revealed the B.1.617.1 variant ( $\kappa$ ) which is genomically similar to the previous Wollert Community Case identified on 11 May 2021.

## Australia Response to Date

See Appendix 1 for a summary of State and Territory public health responses as at 1130hrs 27 May 2021.

**0830hrs (NZ time) 25 May 2021** - New South Wales and South Australia have public health measures in place in response for the geographical area of the Whittlesea LGA that includes the suburbs and rural localities of Beveridge, Donnybrook, Doreen, Eden Park, Epping, Humevale, Kinglake West, Lalor, Mernda, Mill Park, South Morang, Thomastown, Whittlesea, Wollert, Woodstock and Yan Yean. See appendix 1 showing the State and Territory public health responses as at 0830hrs 25 May 2021.

**1130hrs (NZ time) 25 May 2021** - Victoria health officials announced an increased level of restrictions for the Greater Melbourne region effective as of 1800hrs (NZ time) 25 May 2021 and to remain in place until 4 June 2021. These restrictions include limitations to gatherings (limit to five visitors at home per day and public gatherings limited to 30 people) and face mask use to be mandatory indoors. Melbourne residents are allowed to travel, however, if a Melbourne resident visits regional Victoria, the restrictions travel with them.

**1430hrs (NZ time) 2 June 2021** - Victoria health officials announced that they will extend the current lockdown in place for Greater Melbourne to continue for another 7 days therefore now due to cease at 2359 Thursday 10 June. Regional Victoria will have some of the current restrictions in place lifted at 2359 Thursday 3 June, the details of these lifted restrictions will be confirmed on Thursday 3 June.

## Previous NZ Risk Assessments

**2000hrs (NZ time) 24 May 2021** A Risk Assessment was completed which considered that the public health risk for New Zealand is low and recommended to not pause flights between Melbourne and New Zealand, and that people in Melbourne and New Zealand who were at the locations of interest to follow Victoria's public health advice. Consideration of public health measures for people in the geographical area of interest since 11 May 2021 was also recommended due to a possible intermediary case in the area. A S.70 is now in effect for travellers who have returned to New Zealand that that were in any of the locations of interest falling under the close contact/casual plus category.

**1400hrs (NZ time) 25 May 2021** - A Risk Assessment was completed which considered that the public health risk for New Zealand is low, however, due to the possibility of an as yet unidentified intermediary case with a link to the previous case identified on 11 May 2021 we remain cautious about the potential for undetected community transmission. It was recommended that a pause of QFT flights from Victoria to New Zealand to be effective from 2359hrs 25 May 2021 for 72 hours which was announced by the Minister Note that the commencement time for the pause was set by the Government at 2000hrs.

## NZ Public Health Measures to date

- A Section 70 notice for contacts in Tiers 1 and 2 in place from 24 May which is continuously updated in line with locations of interest being identified.
- As at 1000hrs 25 May, approximately 10,000 travellers who have arrived in New Zealand between 11 May and 24 May have been emailed by NITC advising to check the locations of interest and to call Healthline if they were at locations of interest for advice on testing and isolating. Also advised

travellers who were in the Whittlesea area to call Healthline and get a test. The advice for anyone from greater Melbourne is to watch for symptoms and get tested if symptoms develop.

On 27 May a further approximately 5,000 emails were sent to travellers arriving between 20 May – 25 May. Of these as at 0900 3 June:

- Of the 4,749 travellers (not including crew members), 2,733 (57.5%) have returned a negative test result. Of those not yet with a negative result, 511 have no result, 213 are exempt from testing, 1292 require no further action, and 21 are pending.
- Of the 370 crew members, 231 (62.4%) have returned a negative test result with 139 crew members with no result.
- All arrivals who are believed to be in New Zealand have been successfully contacted.
- Three casual contacts have self-identified by calling Healthline and all three have returned a negative test.

## Urgent interim response (30 mins – 6 hours)

### 1. Has NZ verified that there is a new case in a QFT partner community?

Yes. As at 1430hrs Wednesday 2 June 2021 there are 60 cases identified associated with the current QFT Melbourne outbreak this is an increase of 26 cases since last risk assessment was completed on 27 May and 6 new cases identified in prior 24 hours. The majority of cases identified being family or workplace contacts.

All 60 cases are within the Greater Melbourne area. Australian Officials have deemed the cases associated with this situation to be split into three outbreaks, the Whittlesea Community Outbreak (excluding the previous Wollert Community Case), Port Melbourne Workplace Outbreak and Arcare Maidstone Outbreak. There is also one case associated with the Arcare Maidstone Outbreak who also worked at BlueCross Western Gardens ARC (Aged Care Facility). The family of four that travelled to NSW that were announced today are yet to be categorized as investigations continue.

Almost all cases associated with the Whittlesea Community Outbreak and the Port Melbourne Outbreak are epidemiologically linked and all that have had WGS have been shown to be genomically linked. The initial case identified associated with the Arcare Maidstone case is being investigated for the link to other cases. They are an ARC worker who was tested on the day they developed symptoms on 28 May but worked the two preceding days. This case was vaccinated (1st dose) on 12 May and 34 of 110 staff have had 1st vaccination and 53 of 76 residents have had first vaccination.

### 2. Has the QFT partner jurisdiction (e.g. State or Territory) chosen to lock down a whole jurisdiction?

At 1300hrs (NZ time) 27 May a Stage 3 lockdown was announced for Victoria to commence from 2359 27 May until 2359 Thursday 3 June.

On 2 June 2021, Australian Officials have announced that they will extend the current lockdown in place for Greater Melbourne to continue for another 7 days therefore now due to cease at 2359 Thursday 10 June. Regional Victoria will have some of the current restrictions in place lifted at 2359 Thursday 3 June, the details of these lifted restrictions will be confirmed on Thursday 3 June.

## Considered response (e.g. over 1-3 days)

Table 1: Risk assessment table (to decide pause / suspension / recommencement)

Situation	Options	Comment
<i>Since the last risk assessment</i>	<i>[Select one option]</i>	<i>(including if unknown / not applicable)</i>
1. Is the number of new cases...	Increasing	As at 1430hrs Wednesday 2 June 2021 there are 60 cases identified associated with the current QFT Melbourne outbreak. The majority of cases identified being family or workplace contacts.
2. Has the number of locations of interest...	Increased	Locations of interest associated with the outbreak are continuing to increase. As at 0900hrs 3 June there are 370+ locations of interest.
3. Are the locations of interest...	Dispersed	<p>The locations of interest are dates between 11 May 2021 and 31 May 2021. The majority of the locations are in the Greater Melbourne region however a few locations have also been identified in Regional Melbourne and NSW 753km (8 hour drive) from the Victoria border and 207km (3 hour drive) from Sydney associated with a family of cases that went camping while potentially infectious prior to the Victoria lockdown was established.</p> <p>Among the locations of interest there are a number of high risk settings including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of bars/pubs between 2110hrs (EST) Saturday 22 May and Sunday 23 May</li> <li>• An aged care facility where a case worked for 2 days while infectious (Arcare Maidstone)</li> </ul>
4. How likely is it that cases can be linked epidemiologically?	Likely	<p>Most cases associated with the outbreak are epidemiologically linked and are mostly family or workplace contacts. However, there are a few cases that have not yet been epidemiologically linked including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initial case in the Whittlesea Outbreak</li> <li>• The initial case identified associated with the Arcare Maidstone case who</li> </ul>

Situation	Options	Comment
		<p>is being investigated for the link to other cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A case that attended similar locations of interest however at different times.</li> <li>• A case that lives near the workplace of the initial Port Melbourne worker however has no clear epidemiological link.</li> <li>• A family of cases who went to NSW prior to the lockdown who live in Western Melbourne</li> </ul>
<p>5. How likely is there to be widespread community transmission in the QFT partner jurisdiction?<sup>2</sup></p>	<p>Unlikely</p>	<p>Australian Officials have been reporting approximately 40,000+ tests completed each day in Melbourne.</p> <p>Australian Officials have been reporting approximately 20,000 vaccinations administered each day. In Melbourne.</p> <p>No unexplained wastewater positive test results – all positives noted are near positive cases.</p>
<p>6. How likely is the case(s) to have had contact with people who might travel to NZ?<sup>3</sup></p>	<p>Unlikely</p>	<p>There are increasing numbers of cases and increased number of locations of interest (and risk of those locations) being identified in Melbourne.</p> <p>Approximately 10,000 travellers who have arrived in New Zealand between 11 May and 24 May have been emailed by NITC.</p> <p>All arrivals between 20 May to 25 May are required to be tested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of the 4,749 travellers (not including crew members), 2,733 (57.5%) have returned a negative test result. Of those not yet with a negative result, 511 have no result, 213 are exempt from testing, 1292 require no further action, and 21 are pending.</li> <li>• Of the 370 crew members, 231 (62.4%) have returned a negative test result with 139 crew members with no result.</li> </ul>

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Situation	Options	Comment
		<p>An additional two flights have been identified which were incorrectly marked as high-risk flights (so were originally excluded). The denominator provided below may change as investigations continue.</p> <p>Three casual contacts have self-identified by calling Healthline and all three have returned a negative test.</p> <p>Current pause in flights has been in place since 25 May which has restricted arrivals to New Zealand.</p> <p>The restrictions imposed by the Victorian Government on 25 May and strengthened on 27 May will have substantially reduced the likelihood that New Zealanders currently in Victoria have been exposed to a case in the period since restrictions were imposed.</p>
<p><b>7. How likely is it that a source has been identified?</b></p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>WGS results have linked cases to a Wollert Community case previously identified on 11 May that was exposed to the virus in a MIQF in South Australia prior to flying to Victoria.</p> <p>There is a possible intermediary case between Wollert case and Cases 1 and 2 being considered. Case 17 is considered as a possibility to be the missing intermediary case between the previous Wollert Community Case and the current outbreak. The case returned a negative result on 24 May then a weakly positive result 25 May. They are currently asymptomatic however report experiencing symptoms from 19 May. Further investigations are underway.</p>
<p><b>8. How likely is it that known cases were infectious while in the community?<sup>4</sup></b></p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>Of all cases, dates infectious in the community are from 11 May – 31 May which is a total of 21 days.</p> <p>More recent cases are noted to have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spent less time in the community,</li> <li>• To be identified while in self-isolation</li> <li>• are noted to have short incubation periods (as short as 24 hours).</li> </ul>

Situation	Options	Comment
9. Are the new cases known to be a variant of concern? <sup>5</sup>	No	<p>The initial case of the Port Melbourne outbreak is considered by Australia Officials as a super-spreader case.</p> <p>There is a possible intermediary case between Wollert case and Cases 1 and 2 which could be Case 17.</p> <p>WGS of cases currently sequenced show variant B.1.617.1 (kappa) which is known to be more transmissible. This variant has been updated by the WHO to be classified as a variant of interest rather than a variant of concern.</p>

## Secondary questions/considerations:

- **What is New Zealand's current capacity for managing any affected travellers coming in (e.g. contact tracing, Healthline, testing, communications)? For example, is there another local NZ or QFT situation, or other event/circumstance that could impact the readiness and capacity for managing affected persons coming in? Are there any districts within New Zealand that would find it difficult to manage any cases or outbreaks?**

No current pressure on the demands due to limited cases in New Zealand who are all in MIQ. However, there are limitations for Waikato and Christchurch regions.

Waikato DHB are currently experiencing serious IT issues which will affect data collection and hospital operations, with no expected resolution date. This is an issue that is currently developing which has been estimated to have impacts for the foreseeable future. An NHCC EMT has been established to support the response. Contingency plans are in place for services such as testing.

Extreme flooding is currently being experienced in Canterbury which has closed roads and displaced people from their homes. As a result of this Queenstown are unable to transfer cases/contacts to Christchurch managed isolation/quarantine facilities if needed. Queenstown have limited accommodation if it is required however it is important to note that Queenstown's readiness may be impacted.

- **What public health measures are the state or territory putting into place?**

At 1130hrs (NZ time) 25 May, Victoria health officials announced an increased level of restrictions for the Greater Melbourne region effective as of 1800hrs (NZ time) 25 May 2021 and to remain in place until 4 June 2021. These restrictions include limitations to gatherings (limit to five visitors at home per day and public gatherings limited to 30 people) and face mask use to be mandatory indoors. Melbourne residents are allowed to travel, however, if a Melbourne resident visits regional Victoria, the restrictions travel with them.



At 1300hrs (NZ time) 27 May a lockdown was announced for Victoria to commence from 2359 27 May until 2359 Thursday 3 June.

On 2 June 2021, Australian Officials have announced that they will extend the current lockdown in place for Greater Melbourne to continue for another 7 days therefore now due to cease at 2359 Thursday 10 June. Regional Victoria will have some of the current restrictions in place lifted at 2359 Thursday 3 June, the details of these lifted restrictions will be confirmed on Thursday 3 June.

- **What are the border management responses of other states or territories?**

See Appendix 1 showing a table of the restrictions in place of other states and territories. Most states and territories are limiting travel from people from Victoria with a particular focus on those in the Whittlesea LA area to isolate and be tested.

## Recommended public health measures

Table 2: Measures/conditions for people to board a QFT flight (Exemption notice)

Measures	Ops effort*	Yes/No	Notes/operational implication
<b>10. Satisfy all health requirements imposed by authorities in country prior to travel</b>	L	Yes	All travellers that have been at a location of interest and are currently in New Zealand are to follow health requirements imposed by Victoria regarding testing and isolation.
<b>11. Depart for NZ no earlier than 14 days after last exposure event</b>	L	Yes	Travellers identified at Tier 1 locations of interest are required by health requirements imposed by Victoria to be isolated for 14 days.
<b>12. Pre-departure test – small geographic region</b>	M	No	For those who arrived in NZ after 00:01 on 1 June must have evidence of a negative Pre Departure Test (current within 72 hours prior to departure).
<b>13. Pre-departure test – State</b>	H	Yes	
<b>14. Pre-departure test – Country</b>	H	No	
<b>15. Pause/suspend</b>	H	Yes	Pause has been in place since 25 May.

Table 3: Section 11 measures/conditions for people in NZ (e.g. returned from partner jurisdiction)

Public Health Measures	Ops effort*	Yes/No	Notes
16. Identify with Healthline	M	Yes	Has been in place since 24 May.
17. Wear a mask in indoor spaces	L	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.
18. Test and self-isolate on arrival at accommodation / home	H	Yes	Applicable if a person has been at a location of interest, or in Victoria between 20-25 May.
19. Don't attend gatherings (as consistent with alert levels)	L	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.
20. Avoid vulnerable settings (e.g. aged care homes)	L	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.
21. Managed isolation on arrival in NZ	H	Yes	Managed isolation on arrival is a last resort only. Self-isolation at home is preferred and a medical officer of health can support alternative accommodation arrangements if required.

Table 4: Communications / additional public health measures (not legal requirements / complementary)

Measure / communication message	Ops effort*	Yes/No	Notes
22. Comply with public health advice in New Zealand	L	Yes	For example, refer to COVID-19.govt.nz, wash hands, face coverings on public transport
23. Avoid unnecessary travel	L	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.
24. Physical distancing: a. Duration of journey/flight and/or b. On arrival	H	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.
25. Restrict a food or drink service	M	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.
26. Do not visit a high-risk setting (e.g. hospital, care home) if been in a location of interest	L	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.
27. Get a test if you have been in the geographic area	L	Yes	For all in the Whitlesea area from 11 May regardless of symptoms and for those in the greater Melbourne area if symptomatic.
28. Restrict gathering sizes	L	No	Do not want to imply level restriction rules.

Measure / communication message	Ops effort*	Yes/No	Notes
29. Monitor symptoms, if symptomatic get tested	L	Yes	Has been in place since 24 May.

There are currently three groups of people in New Zealand who are implicated by the above public health measures. See below a list of those groups and which public health measure apply to them.

	Public Health Measures in Place
Those who were in the Greater Melbourne area between the 11 and 19 May who have been in a location of interest or in the Whittlesea area	To contact Healthline to register as a contact or having been in a geographic area and to receive advice on testing and isolation requirements. A S70 applies to those that have been in locations of interest.
Those who were in the Greater Melbourne area between the 11 and 19 May	For those who have not been at a location of interest, they are asked to watch for symptoms, contact Healthline for advice, and to be tested if they develop symptoms
Those who were in Greater Melbourne area between the 20 and 25 May	Will have been contacted by NITC to advise of the requirement under s70 to isolate and get a test (to remain isolated until returned a negative test result). Advised to call Healthline for any queries, unless they had a PDT within 72 hours prior to departure.
	For those who arrived in NZ after 00:01 on 1 June must have evidence of a negative Pre-Departure Test (current within 72 hours prior to departure).

There are currently two groups of people in Victoria who are implicated by public health measures. See below a list of those groups and which public health measure apply to them.

	Public Health Measures in Place
Those who were in the Greater Melbourne area between the 11 and 19 May	For those who have not been at a location of interest and are travelling from a port outside of Victoria they can travel to NZ as part of the QFT agreement.
	For those who were at a location of interest, are travelling from a port outside of Victoria and have met the local Health requirements – they are able to travel to NZ
	For those who are still in Victoria, due to the Victorian Government restrictions and New Zealand's pause, they are currently not able to travel to New Zealand.
Those who were in Victoria between the 20 and 25 May	For those travelling from a port outside of Victoria, they can travel to NZ with evidence of a negative Pre Departure Test (current to within 72 hours prior to departure) provided that they did not leave Victoria after the pause was in place (7.59 pm 25 May NZ time).

	For those who are still in Victoria, due to the Victorian Government restrictions and New Zealand's pause, they are currently not able to travel to New Zealand.
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- **Is it appropriate for NZ 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. This was part of QFT condition that there is an expectation for an individual to be able to shelter and place as required if QFT arrangements change.

- **Exemptions will usually be provided to certain classes of travellers (e.g. diplomats, military, returning aircrew), so we are asking the following public health questions:**
  - **Are there specific situations in which we are uncomfortable with air crew returning if they are operational aircrew?**
  - **Are there specific situations in which we are uncomfortable with crew of maritime vessels returning?**

A separate exemption notice is being developed for aircrew including aircrew members who were in Victoria but are now in other Australian states.

Crown Law / BORA considerations (particularly for longer pauses / suspensions)

- **Does the pause/suspension prevent New Zealanders from returning? If so, does the level of public health risk justify restricting New Zealanders' right to return (particularly consider welfare of NZ citizens if unable to return)?**

Yes, the pause does prevent New Zealanders from returning to NZ.

The lockdown in Victoria seems to have been effective as it was intended to be, and therefore the risk for people to return to New Zealand is low. Currently people in Victoria are unable to travel to the airport due to the restrictions in place in Victoria so therefore any managed return of travellers back to New Zealand would require consultation with Victoria Officials.

- **Is the period of the pause/suspension proportionate to the risk?**

Yes. While the pause is in line with restrictions being implemented in Victoria, Australia and other states and territories, the risk of importing COVID-19 into NZ from returning travellers from Victoria has reduced. This is due to the restrictions that the Victorian Government has had in place since 25 May, significantly reducing the likelihood that those returning to NZ from Victoria have been exposed to COVID-19 in the past 7 days. Given current Victorian Government restrictions the only option available in the short term is to continue to pause until such time as arrangements can be put in place to enable travellers to return safely.

- **Do the requirements of any managed return engage rights under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, and if so, are those requirements a justified limitation of those rights?**

Unknown

- **Will the settings be reviewed regularly to ensure the restrictions on the right to enter remain justified by the public health situation?**

Yes. Daily updates of the situation will be reviewed, and a formal review will commence on Wednesday 9 June 2021. After the AHPPC meeting and will be further review and finalised on Thursday 10 June.

#### Equity / Treaty considerations

- **Do the proposed measures impact disproportionately on certain groups (equity) and if so, is that reasonable?**

There is a balance for New Zealanders who are required to stay in Victoria, Australia and the protection of all population groups in New Zealand. As part of IMT we will engage with MFAT to look at any instances of hardship which can be supported.

- **Are the proposed measures consistent with the Crown's obligations to Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi?**

Yes

#### Operational considerations

- **Are we pausing? Or have we decided to defer the decision? If so, when (time/date) will the decision be made?**

Yes – a decision to pause was made on 25 May which is still in place. It is decided that this pause is to continue based on this risk assessment for the Greater Melbourne region, until such time as it is acceptable under Victorian Government restrictions for people to travel to the airport to fly to NZ.

For Regional Victoria, it is recommended that they can travel to New Zealand provided they have had a PDT within 72 hours prior to departure and are able to travel to a QFT port without breaching any local government restrictions. (Note that this is a public health assessment only and we recognise that it may not be feasible from an operational perspective, and is contingent on Victoria Government lifting restrictions for the region).

It is recommended that those who are currently in another Australian state who were in Victoria between 20-25 May, but left Victoria between 25-27 May can return provided that they have a PDT within 72 hours prior to departure and have not been at a location of interest in the last 14 days. This could be effective immediately.

- **What time will this come into effect (to minimise operational impacts)? [remember the start date and time have to be NZT and based on plane departure times]**

For the Greater Melbourne region, this is a continuation of the current pause in place.

- **What's the timing for our next review of the risk assessment?**

A formal review will commence on Tuesday 8th June 2021 and be finalised after the AHPPC meeting that day..

- **Are the relevant proposed public health measures all pre-drafted? If not, how much time do we need to draft additional conditions? (consult with PCO)**

Yes

## Appendix 1: State and Territory public health responses as at 1130hrs 27 May 2021

Text in black or red (new text) is public information from media/jurisdictional websites. Text in blue is from CHO's or their representatives and may not be public. The Local Government Area (LGA) has been described by Victoria as Whittlesea.

	Quarantine arrangements for travellers from Victoria prior to 24 May	Quarantine arrangements for travellers from Victoria from 24 May
ACT	<p>Restrictions for travellers who had been in Melbourne on or after 5 May lifted on 23 May.</p> <p>Travellers had been asked to visit the ACT COVID-19 areas of concern page and check the current list of exposure locations. Anyone who has been in the locations at the dates and times specified, had to follow the relevant directions and advice.</p> <p>Non-ACT residents who are already in the ACT must comply with the requirements for ACT residents above.</p> <p>Residents who are already in or entering the ACT and have been to one of the close contact exposure locations in Melbourne at the dates and times specified must immediately quarantine for 14 days since last attending the venue, call their Healthline and get tested regardless if symptoms are present.</p>	<p>ACT is likely to ask people who have been in exposure sites to quarantine and likely to recommend testing for those who have been in the LGA.</p> <p>Non-ACT residents who have been to an exposure site in Melbourne must not enter the ACT unless they obtain an exemption before arriving.</p> <p>Residents who are already in or entering the ACT and have been to one of the close contact exposure locations in Melbourne at the dates and times specified must immediately quarantine for 14 days since last attending the venue, call their Healthline and get tested regardless if symptoms are present.</p>
NSW	<p>A COVID-19 concerns notice has been in effect for Victoria since 6am Wednesday 12 May. Greater Melbourne has been identified as an affected area and there are places of high concern.</p> <p>Travellers must complete a travel declaration if entering NSW on or after 6am Wednesday 12 May and have been in Greater Melbourne local government areas in the previous 14 days. This has been extended to the Bendigo area.</p> <p>Anyone who has visited areas of concern will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.</p> <p>In addition, anyone who has been in the Greater Melbourne and Bendigo areas in the past 14 days since May 12 has been advised to avoid residential aged care or healthcare facilities "unless seeking treatment or for compassionate reasons," NSW Health said in a statement.</p>	<p>NSW is likely to continue the declaration process form for people who have been in Greater Melbourne to complete. Likely to contact people by text message who have been in the relevant areas (by LGA and/or suburbs) to test if any sign of symptoms.</p>

<p><b>NT</b></p>	<p>On 11 May, the NT Chief Health Officer declared quarantine and testing directions for people who have been to a number of COVID-19 public exposure sites in Victoria. The approach is aligned with the Victorian tier system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 1 (A): Anyone who arrives in the NT from 12.01am on 12 May who has visited any of the Tier 1 public exposure sites, as stipulated by Victorian health authorities, must enter mandatory supervised quarantine. They must remain in quarantine (unless to get tested) until the 14th day after they were in a Victorian Tier 1 public exposure site, regardless of whether they return a negative COVID-19 test.</li> <li>• Tier 1 (B): Anyone who arrived into the NT between 5 May and 12.00am on 12 May was required to get tested and undertake 14 days of quarantine in their home or at a suitable place.</li> <li>• Tier 2: Anyone who arrived into the NT since 5 May, must self-isolate, get a test and remain in self-quarantine until a negative is returned.</li> <li>• Tier 3: Anyone who arrived into the NT since 5 May, and until otherwise directed, must monitor symptoms and if any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate, get a test and remain in self-quarantine until a negative is returned.</li> </ul>	<p>Exposure sites would be in line with Victoria. Anyone arriving from the broader Whittlesea LGA will be required to test and isolate until receiving a negative test.</p> <p>The Northern Territory government had not declared Whittlesea as a hotspot on Tuesday night but did restrict travel from the exposure sites.</p> <p>Anyone who visited a Tier One site must get tested and quarantine for 14 days regardless of the result while travellers who were at a tier-two site can stop quarantining once they test negative.</p>
<p><b>QLD</b></p>	<p>Since May 11, travellers from Victoria who have been to any of the exposure venue at the relevant times must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• immediately travel by private transport directly to home or accommodation and quarantine</li> <li>• get tested at the earliest opportunity</li> <li>• complete the online contact tracing self-assessment.</li> </ul> <p>After completion of the contact tracing self-assessment, travellers will be contacted by Queensland Health.</p>	<p>Anyone in Queensland who has recently been in Melbourne, particularly those Northern suburbs in the last 14 days and has any symptoms should immediately come forward and get tested and isolate until receiving a negative result.</p> <p>From 1am on Wednesday, May 26, anyone arriving into Queensland who has been in the City of Whittlesea local government area in the last 14 days are unable to enter unless they have a valid exemption in which case they will enter MIQ.</p> <p>From 1am on Thursday, May 27, everyone arriving from Victoria will be required to complete a border pass</p> <p>Anyone of those arrivals who have been in the City of Whittlesea local government area since May 11 and are not a</p>

		Queensland resident will be turned away unless they have an exemption to enter the state. Queensland residents or those given an exemption to enter the state will go into hotel quarantine
<b>SA</b>	<p>People who arrived in South Australia before 12:23pm on 12 May 2021, who have been at a tier 1 and/or 2 Public Exposure Site at the date and time specified by Victoria are subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 test on day 1, 5, &amp; 13.</li> <li>• Quarantine as directed: a person must reside and remain, quarantined and segregated from other persons, at a place determined by an authorised officer for a period of 14 days after their arrival in South Australia</li> <li>• Mask in public: A person must wear a face mask (covering mouth and nose) at any time that they come into contact with the public for a period of 14 days after their arrival in South Australia.</li> </ul> <p>After 12:23pm on Wednesday 12 May 2021, all people including Essential Travellers and SA residents who have been at a Victorian exposure site listed on the Government of Victoria website are subject to Level 6 travel restrictions and not permitted to enter South Australia unless excepted.</p>	<p>SA is likely to cover the whole Whittlesea LGA, and is considering whether to require quarantine for 14 days, or if people will be not permitted entry into SA.</p> <p>South Australia yesterday tightened its restrictions for anyone who has visited Greater Melbourne in the last two weeks or any time after May 20. This group is now subject to Level 6 restrictions meaning they will not be able to enter SA.</p>
<b>TAS</b>	<p>Travellers who had spent time in a high-risk premises – as per Victorian exposure sites – at the times and dates listed before arriving in Tasmania are not permitted to enter Tasmania, unless approved as an Essential Traveller.</p> <p>People already in Tasmania who were in Victoria on or since Thursday 6 May are asked to check the below list of high-risk premises. Anyone who was at any of the sites at the specified dates and times should self-isolate immediately and call the Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738 for further advice.</p> <p>Anyone already in Tasmania having visited the council area should self-isolate until they test negative and travellers from Melbourne should monitor for symptoms.</p>	Tasmania has declared the City of Whittlesea a COVID-19 high-risk area, meaning anyone who has been there since May 6 "should not travel to Tasmania at this stage"
<b>VIC</b>	<p>Restrictions only on those who have attended an exposure site.</p> <p>Exposure sites can be found at the link above and are divided into tiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 1 - Get tested immediately and quarantine for 14 days from exposure</li> </ul>	<b>New locations will be added as exposure sites are identified by contact tracing, there are likely to be more Tier 1 sites.</b>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 2 - Get tested urgently and isolate until you have a negative result</li> <li>• Tier 3 - Monitor for symptoms</li> </ul>	
<b>WA</b>	<p>Anyone who has visited any of the exposure sites in Victoria during the relevant times should get tested immediately for COVID-19 and self-quarantine for 14 days from their date of exposure.</p> <p>This 14-day self-quarantine requirement applies irrespective of whether the exposure site is considered a Tier 1 or Tier 2 by Victoria Health.</p>	<p>From 6pm on May 25 all arrivals in WA from Victoria will be required to take a COVID-19 test and self-quarantine until they receive a result.</p> <p>New arrivals will not be allowed to use public transport until they have received their result.</p> <p>Additionally, anyone who had visited exposure sites in Victoria at the relevant times should get tested immediately for COVID-19 and quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure.</p>
<b>NZ</b>	<p>The NZ Ministry of Health has confirmed that the public health risk to New Zealand remains low following further discussions with Victoria state health officials.</p> <p>At this stage, the Ministry's recommendation is that Quarantine Free Travel between New Zealand and the state of Victoria can continue.</p>	<b>No change yet.</b>

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