



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE  
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET**  
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA



**BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD**



**NEW ZEALAND  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE**  
MANATŪ AORERE



# COVID-19 Response Weekly Report

13 August 2021

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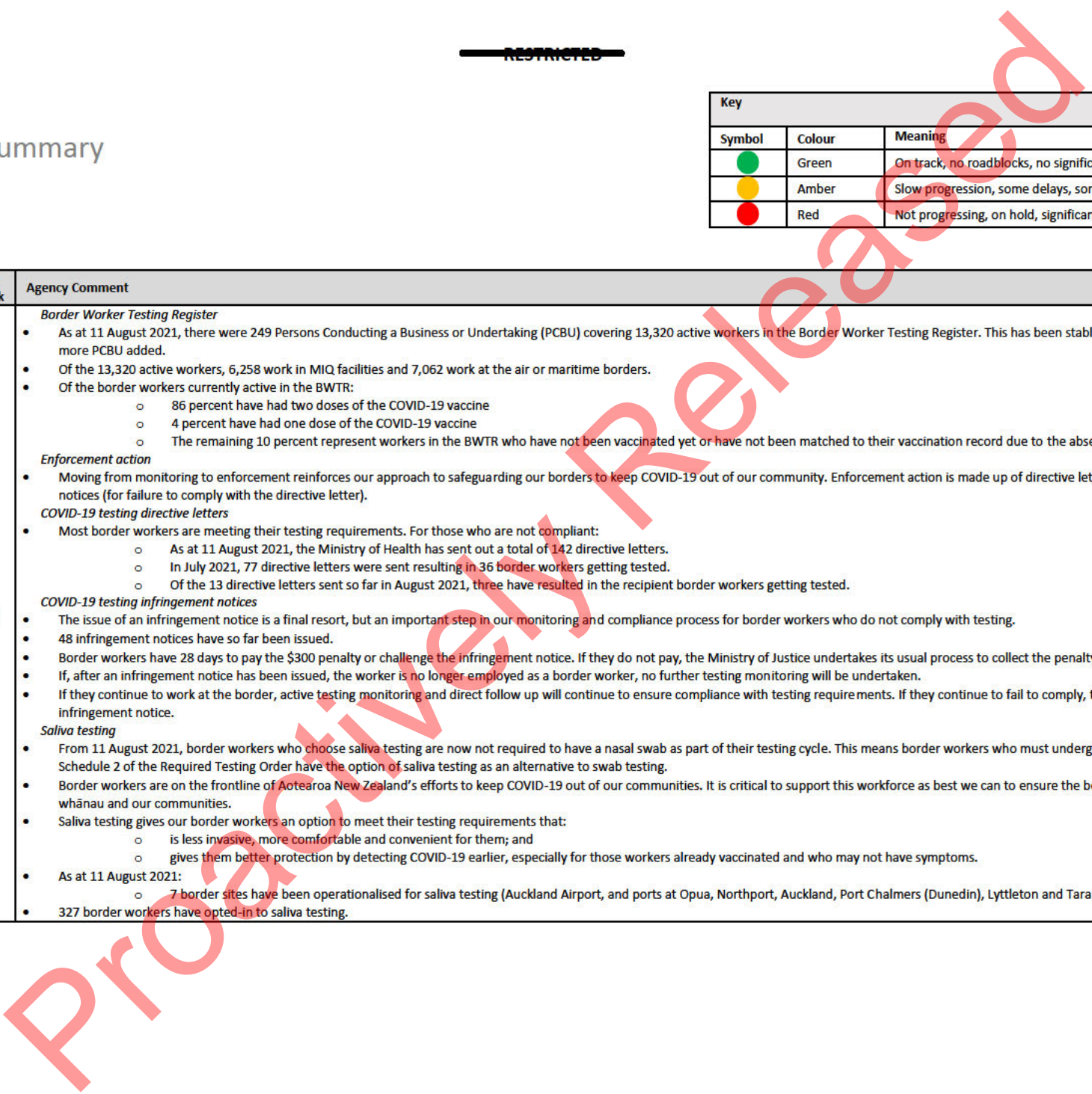
# 1. Status Summary

Key		
Symbol	Colour	Meaning
●	Green	On track, no roadblocks, no significant delays anticipated
●	Amber	Slow progression, some delays, some roadblocks present
●	Red	Not progressing, on hold, significant delays

## Border

Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
MoH	●	●	<p><b>Border Worker Testing Register</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As at 11 August 2021, there were 249 Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) covering 13,320 active workers in the Border Worker Testing Register. This has been stable over the last week with just one more PCBU added.</li> <li>Of the 13,320 active workers, 6,258 work in MIQ facilities and 7,062 work at the air or maritime borders.</li> <li>Of the border workers currently active in the BWTR:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>86 percent have had two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine</li> <li>4 percent have had one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine</li> <li>The remaining 10 percent represent workers in the BWTR who have not been vaccinated yet or have not been matched to their vaccination record due to the absence of NHI-matching in the CIR.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Enforcement action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moving from monitoring to enforcement reinforces our approach to safeguarding our borders to keep COVID-19 out of our community. Enforcement action is made up of directive letters (to comply) and infringement notices (for failure to comply with the directive letter).</li> </ul> <p><b>COVID-19 testing directive letters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most border workers are meeting their testing requirements. For those who are not compliant:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As at 11 August 2021, the Ministry of Health has sent out a total of 142 directive letters.</li> <li>In July 2021, 77 directive letters were sent resulting in 36 border workers getting tested.</li> <li>Of the 13 directive letters sent so far in August 2021, three have resulted in the recipient border workers getting tested.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>COVID-19 testing infringement notices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The issue of an infringement notice is a final resort, but an important step in our monitoring and compliance process for border workers who do not comply with testing.</li> <li>48 infringement notices have so far been issued.</li> <li>Border workers have 28 days to pay the \$300 penalty or challenge the infringement notice. If they do not pay, the Ministry of Justice undertakes its usual process to collect the penalty fee.</li> <li>If, after an infringement notice has been issued, the worker is no longer employed as a border worker, no further testing monitoring will be undertaken.</li> <li>If they continue to work at the border, active testing monitoring and direct follow up will continue to ensure compliance with testing requirements. If they continue to fail to comply, they will be issued with another infringement notice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Saliva testing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 11 August 2021, border workers who choose saliva testing are now not required to have a nasal swab as part of their testing cycle. This means border workers who must undergo testing for COVID-19 under Schedule 2 of the Required Testing Order have the option of saliva testing as an alternative to swab testing.</li> <li>Border workers are on the frontline of Aotearoa New Zealand's efforts to keep COVID-19 out of our communities. It is critical to support this workforce as best we can to ensure the best possible outcome for them, their whānau and our communities.</li> <li>Saliva testing gives our border workers an option to meet their testing requirements that:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is less invasive, more comfortable and convenient for them; and</li> <li>gives them better protection by detecting COVID-19 earlier, especially for those workers already vaccinated and who may not have symptoms.</li> </ul> </li> <li>As at 11 August 2021:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 border sites have been operationalised for saliva testing (Auckland Airport, and ports at Opua, Northport, Auckland, Port Chalmers (Dunedin), Lyttleton and Taranaki).</li> </ul> </li> <li>327 border workers have opted-in to saliva testing.</li> </ul>

Testing and vaccination of border workforce



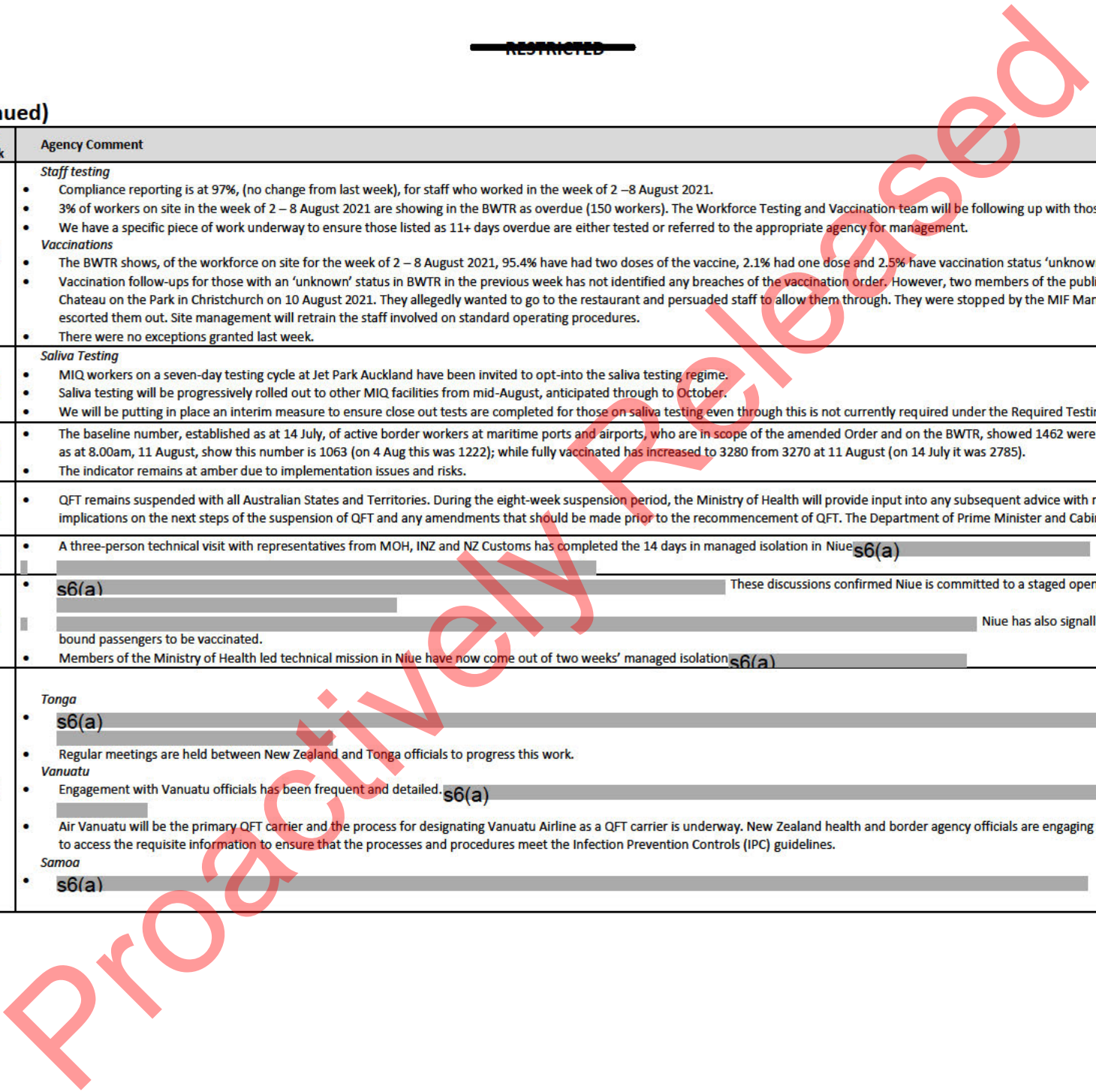
**Border (Continued)**

Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
MBIE	●	●	<p><i>Staff testing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance reporting is at 97%, (no change from last week), for staff who worked in the week of 2 –8 August 2021.</li> <li>3% of workers on site in the week of 2 – 8 August 2021 are showing in the BWTR as overdue (150 workers). The Workforce Testing and Vaccination team will be following up with those workers.</li> <li>We have a specific piece of work underway to ensure those listed as 11+ days overdue are either tested or referred to the appropriate agency for management.</li> </ul> <p><i>Vaccinations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The BWTR shows, of the workforce on site for the week of 2 – 8 August 2021, 95.4% have had two doses of the vaccine, 2.1% had one dose and 2.5% have vaccination status 'unknown'.</li> <li>Vaccination follow-ups for those with an 'unknown' status in BWTR in the previous week has not identified any breaches of the vaccination order. However, two members of the public were incorrectly let on site at the Chateau on the Park in Christchurch on 10 August 2021. They allegedly wanted to go to the restaurant and persuaded staff to allow them through. They were stopped by the MIF Manager who questioned the pair and escorted them out. Site management will retrain the staff involved on standard operating procedures.</li> <li>There were no exceptions granted last week.</li> </ul>
	●	●	<p><i>Saliva Testing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MIQ workers on a seven-day testing cycle at Jet Park Auckland have been invited to opt-into the saliva testing regime.</li> <li>Saliva testing will be progressively rolled out to other MIQ facilities from mid-August, anticipated through to October.</li> <li>We will be putting in place an interim measure to ensure close out tests are completed for those on saliva testing even through this is not currently required under the Required Testing Order.</li> </ul>
BEB	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The baseline number, established as at 14 July, of active border workers at maritime ports and airports, who are in scope of the amended Order and on the BWTR, showed 1462 were unvaccinated. BWTR data extracted as at 8.00am, 11 August, show this number is 1063 (on 4 Aug this was 1222); while fully vaccinated has increased to 3280 from 3270 at 11 August (on 14 July it was 2785).</li> <li>The indicator remains at amber due to implementation issues and risks.</li> </ul>
MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>QFT remains suspended with all Australian States and Territories. During the eight-week suspension period, the Ministry of Health will provide input into any subsequent advice with regard to further legislative implications on the next steps of the suspension of QFT and any amendments that should be made prior to the recommencement of QFT. The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is leading this work.</li> </ul>
MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A three-person technical visit with representatives from MOH, INZ and NZ Customs has completed the 14 days in managed isolation in Niue s6(a)</li> </ul>
MFAT	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>s6(a) These discussions confirmed Niue is committed to a staged opening of its borders, s6(b)(i)</li> <li>Niue has also signalled its intention to require all in-bound passengers to be vaccinated.</li> <li>Members of the Ministry of Health led technical mission in Niue have now come out of two weeks' managed isolation s6(a)</li> </ul>
MoH	●	●	<p><i>Tonga</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>s6(a)</li> <li>Regular meetings are held between New Zealand and Tonga officials to progress this work.</li> </ul> <p><i>Vanuatu</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with Vanuatu officials has been frequent and detailed. s6(a)</li> <li>Air Vanuatu will be the primary QFT carrier and the process for designating Vanuatu Airline as a QFT carrier is underway. New Zealand health and border agency officials are engaging with the airline and Vanuatu airports to access the requisite information to ensure that the processes and procedures meet the Infection Prevention Controls (IPC) guidelines.</li> </ul> <p><i>Samoa</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>s6(a)</li> </ul>

Two-way QFT with Australia

Two-way QFT Niue

Reopening new travel pathways - Pacific Islands



### Border (Continued)

Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
MFAT	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officials continue to progress discussions on one-way quarantine free travel from Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu to New Zealand.</li> <li>s6(b)(i)</li> <li>s6(a)</li> <li>Officials are seeking direction from Ministers on how to engage with Samoa in light of their arrangements allowing limited QFT entry from American Samoa and Tokelau; officials propose one-way QFT to New Zealand for travellers from Tokelau (a Realm country) via Samoa be progressed in tandem with QFT from Samoa.</li> <li>The paper to Cabinet on 23 August will seek approval of Arrangement texts and agreement in principle to commence one-way QFT from at least one country in September.</li> </ul>
MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarantine-free travel from all Australian states and territories was suspended from 2359 hrs Friday 23 July 2021 due to the worsening situation in Australia. The suspension will be for at least 8 weeks and will be reviewed in September 2021.</li> <li>On 22 July 2021, Minister Hipkins agreed to reclassify Indonesia as a Very High Risk (VHR) country.</li> </ul>

Country Risk Assessments

### Managed Isolation and Quarantine and Return to the Community

Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
MBIE	●	●	<p><i>Ventilation systems</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The total number of remediation proposals received to date is 23. A number of facilities have already commenced remediation work in advance of submitting their formal remediation proposal and have provided partial retest results.</li> <li>Remediation work at the Grand Mercure (Wellington) that commenced on 2 August is currently tracking ahead of schedule. This work is estimated to be completed around 30 September.</li> <li>Our independent HVAC engineer has reviewed and provided feedback on 19 of the remediation proposals received to date.</li> <li>The engineer is also analysing final re-test results received from facilities following the completion of remediation of entire wings or facilities (i.e. final test results), to assess whether MIQ preferred conditions have been achieved. The review of the re-test results for one facility was completed last week and an additional four are in progress.</li> <li>A further two remediation proposals were reviewed by the MIQs Ventilation Remediation Advisory Group (VRAG) last week bringing the total number reviewed to date to 18. One further proposal will be reviewed by VRAG this week.</li> <li>The first draft of a whole of portfolio schedule view for the ventilation remedial work has been prepared, showing impacts on overall room capacity, and this will be reviewed by the VRAG this week.</li> <li>1119 air filtration have been deployed to lifts and corridors in 23 facilities to date (74% complete). Approximately 260 units to be installed in the remaining eight facilities once MoH have secured the required funding.</li> </ul>
MBIE	●	●	<p><i>Renewing contracts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extended terms and conditions have been agreed with 22 facilities (the same as last week).</li> <li>We now have signed the legal contract for 16 facilities (previously 15) and a further 3 are currently out for signing.</li> <li>This indicator will remain amber while we finalise the extended terms and conditions with hotels.</li> <li>With the suspension of QFT with Australia we are retaining the Ramada on standby for an additional 4 weeks should there be a requirement to accept 501 deportees whilst the suspension is on.</li> </ul>

Place and conditions of stay

### Managed Isolation and Quarantine and Return to the Community (Continued)

Post-managed isolation processes	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
	MBIE	●	●	<p><i>Fees collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Testing of the new backlog solution has now been completed and should be in production over the coming days. We are planning to go live with the solution next week, commencing to email returnees from August 2020.</li> <li>Additional staff to deal with the expected increase in queries have been recruited and will be trained. We are planning to start slowly next week to provide an opportunity to address any issues identified before ramping up in the following weeks.</li> <li>The roll out of the 30 days payment terms is due to happen on 20 August. A communications plan is in place to assist with the change.</li> <li>Ongoing invoicing has slowed over the past fortnight awaiting a system upgrade (release 8) which will include incorporation of critical worker and critical health worker data (currently identified manually). Once the backlog solution goes live, work on the upgrade will commence.</li> <li>The proposal to use a hyperlink to process credit card payments was rejected by the CIO, with the risk being considered too high. Work is beginning on finding a suitable solution that will enable credit card receiving.</li> </ul> <p><i>Debt Recovery</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A further 30 invoices worth \$97k have been referred to Credit Consultants on Friday 30 July while an additional 110 invoices have been through a review ahead of being sent on to Credit Consultants.</li> <li>Of the 130 invoices worth \$429k sent to a debt collection agency, \$53k has been paid (or will be paid through instalment), \$3,575 has been credited due to an error and a further \$42k is currently being disputed by customers.</li> <li>Capacity in the debt management team is increasing as new staff start and begin training.</li> <li>This indicator will remain amber while working through the backlog of invoices and while we continue to make progress on debt recovery.</li> </ul>
	MBIE	●	●	<p><i>P2/N95 Mask Implementation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A joint MoH and MIQ paper was submitted to your office last week, providing implementation risks and issues being worked through and the revised timelines for fit checking and fit testing.</li> <li>MoH has completed zone assessments at each MIQF, confirming the areas that will require the use of a P2/N95 particulate respirator by non-health workers.</li> <li>Initial engagement sessions have been held with the impacted employer groups and unions – early feedback has highlighted a concern of staff retention if it is mandatory for all workers to wear a P2/N95 particulate respirator (especially in the security and hotel worker groups).</li> <li>Project team is currently drafting a consultation document, to be issued to employers and unions next week.</li> <li>MIQ is now determining the full business impact assessment and developing policies and processes for responding to workers who are unable to wear a successfully fit tested P2/N95 particulate respirator.</li> </ul>

### Community Protection

Case investigation, surveillance and testing	Agency	Last Week	This Week	
	MoH	●	●	<p><i>Surveillance Strategy and Testing Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Ministry of Health published a refresh of the COVID-19 Surveillance Strategy and the COVID-19 Testing Plan on 12 August 2021. Details are included in the body of the report.</li> <li>Operational changes include routine wastewater testing, pre-departure tests, and the use of saliva samples for testing of border workers.</li> </ul> <p><i>Next steps</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Ministry of Health has committed to updating the Surveillance Strategy on a 12-week cycle from now on.</li> </ul>

### Vaccination

Implementation and operation	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment on Status of Focus Area
	MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We continue to remain above our vaccination targets, with the most recent data showing that we are delivering at 103 percent against DHB plans as at 1 August 2021.</li> <li>10,388 vaccinators have completed vaccine training and 4,953 vaccinators have been active in the programme as of 3 August 2021. The milestone of 10,000 vaccinators completing vaccinator training was achieved last week. This has been a long-held objective of the Programme in order to meet the increased demand from the general population rollout.</li> <li>358,000 doses of Pfizer vaccine were delivered to New Zealand on 3 August 2021 as scheduled.</li> <li>Medsafe granted provisional approval for the AstraZeneca vaccine on 22 July 2021.</li> <li>Rollout to the first age band of Group 4 (those aged 60-64 year) began on 28 July 2021 alongside a targeted media campaign. Rollout to the next age band (55+) is expected to commence next week.</li> <li>The workplace vaccination pilot at Mainfreight officially began on 3 August 2021, marking the start of the workplace vaccination model. A total of 257 workplaces submitted expressions of interest to host workplace vaccinations. Applications are currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Health and DHBs.</li> <li>The first Mass Vaccination event took place from 30 July-1 August 2021 at Vodafone Events Centre in Manukau (South Auckland) and delivered 15,881 first doses. The event received positive media coverage and will now serve as an example of how mass vaccination events will work within a New Zealand context.</li> </ul>

### Resurgence Planning and Response

Resurgence planning including review of the response	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment on Status of Focus Area
	DPMC	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Response Plan (version 4) is being revised in line with the outcomes from the Delta workshop on 10 August, with agencies and DHB's now revising their operational response plans accordingly. Key policy work is underway to progress the systems clarification of Alert Level 4 under the COVID-19 Act 2020 and support system planning.</li> <li>The plan will also look to incorporate the Reconnecting NZ announcements and support changes in response planning and approaches as New Zealand implement the strategy.</li> </ul>
	MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update to version 4 of the resurgence plan has been completed, with amendments and process changes coming out of Delta variant working groups to be incorporated within the next 10 days.</li> </ul>
Readiness planning	DPMC	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The AOG Readiness Workshop to recalibrate for Delta was held 10 August. There was excellent participation and engagement from agencies. A summary A3 will be provided for CCB by 17 August. The workshop has resulted in agencies prioritising reviews of BCPs and other plans, with agency updates at the Senior Officials Group meeting on Wed 11 August, indicating significant activity across the system.</li> </ul>
QFT response	MFAT	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>s6(a)</li> </ul>
	DPMC	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Cook Islands QFT meeting will be held with key agencies within the next week to enhance current planning on the managed return of large numbers of New Zealand tourists to New Zealand when at Alert Level Four.</li> </ul>
	MBIE	●	●	<p><i>QFT Travel Pause</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressions of interest for tranche 3 closed on 3 August 2021. There were 462 eligible applications made up of 529 rooms and 621 people.</li> <li>The remaining MIAS vouchers that were not required for tranche 3 (9 August-22 August) were released this week.</li> <li>Planning is now underway around what to do post 22 August with NSW and Australia more generally. Advice has been provided to your office on possible options.</li> <li>We are working closely with our partner government agencies as well as the airlines to ensure we can respond to whatever option is chosen.</li> </ul>

## 2. COVID-19 Insights

### 2.1 Insight of Note Written by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

#### 2.1.1 Iceland COVID-19 Situation Update

The Insights and Reporting Team at DPMC's COVID-19 Group have been analysing the situation in Iceland in light of a recent increase in COVID-19 cases there. This insight is a summary of the situation, and explores challenges presented by the Delta variant, despite relatively high vaccination rates.

Iceland's COVID-19 strategy has previously helped to maintain a low number of COVID-19 cases over the course of the pandemic relative to other countries in Europe. Until the recent outbreak, the highest daily number of infections was 106 on 9 October 2020.<sup>1</sup>

The recent outbreak has, however, seen the highest daily case numbers since the pandemic began, with a peak of 158 cases on 31 July 2021.<sup>2</sup> This has started to place a strain on the nation's health service.<sup>3</sup> There are currently 1,384 active COVID-19 cases and 24 people in hospital as a result of COVID-19 infection.<sup>4 5</sup> Genome sequencing suggests that almost all cases in the latest COVID-19 wave have been infected with the Delta variant (99% of sequenced samples were found to be the variant).<sup>6</sup>

Deputy Chief Epidemiologist, Kamilla Josefsdottir, gave a public address in which she warned that the country's contact tracing system would become impossible to operate if the rate of infection continued to increase.<sup>7</sup> Director of the National University Hospital, Pall Matthiasson, also pointed out the challenge to the health care system, with emergency wards usually running at 95% - 105% of available capacity. Additional bed capacity has had to be created to cope with the new demand, with a new facility opening near the National Hospital.<sup>8</sup>

The latest COVID-19 wave has come despite every resident over the age of 16 having been offered the vaccine by mid-July.<sup>9</sup> Seventy-five percent of the population are fully vaccinated, and 81% have received at least one dose,<sup>10</sup> with AstraZeneca, Janssen, Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines all approved for use in Iceland. Of those testing positive for COVID-19 between 09 July 2021 and 08 August 2021, 68% were fully vaccinated, 2% were partially vaccinated, and 30% were unvaccinated.<sup>11</sup> The previous wave of cases peaked on 12 October, with deaths between 16 October and 29 December totalling 16. There have been no deaths so far during this wave of the virus. Iceland is now preparing to vaccinate 12-15 year olds with the Pfizer vaccine in order to limit the spread of COVID-19.<sup>12</sup>

Border measures have remained broadly unchanged during the recent outbreak. Travellers without a vaccination certificate, or proof of prior infection, are not permitted to travel to Iceland, unless they are from a European Economic Area/European Free Trade Association<sup>13</sup> country, or one of a list of exempted countries, which includes New Zealand.<sup>14</sup> Fourteen days must have elapsed since full vaccination, the certificate must be written in one of a number of specified languages and contain certain details such as traveller information, and name of issuer, for the certificate to be valid. Only vaccines approved by the European Medicines Agency or World Health Organization are accepted. All unvaccinated travellers permitted to enter Iceland are also required to undergo testing upon arrival, and quarantine for five days before taking a further test.<sup>15</sup>

A requirement that has been introduced during the recent wave of infection is that all travellers, regardless of vaccination status, must present a PCR test, or negative antigen test, taken no more than 72 hours before departure.<sup>16</sup> This will be in force until 15 August, when they will undergo their next periodic review.<sup>17</sup>

Domestic restrictions were last updated on 25 July 2021 and include: limiting gatherings to under 200 people, which applies to grocery stores, cultural events and ceremonies amongst others; social distancing of 1 metre, including at work; and the wearing of facemasks where social distancing is not possible. Spectators at sporting events, plays, cinemas and concerts are also required to wear masks. Restaurants serving alcohol can have up to 100 guests in each area and guests must register their details on arrival. Alcohol can only be served to seated guests and all guests must have left the premises by midnight. Other restrictions apply to specific locations such as museums, swimming pools and camping grounds. These restrictions will apply until 13 August 2021, when they will be next reviewed.<sup>18</sup>

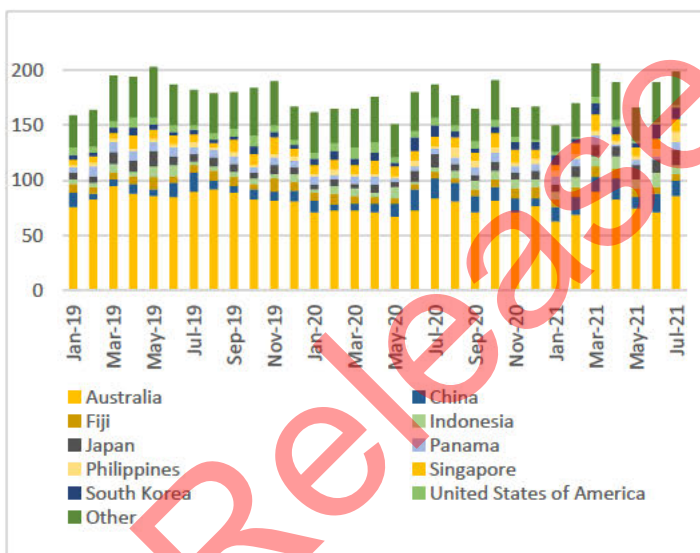


### 2.1.2 Maritime Vessel Arrivals Into New Zealand

For the period of 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, a total of 1,269 commercial ships arrived in New Zealand. This is a similar number of vessels to the same period in 2019 and 2020, and the vessels have come from similar countries as previous years. Arrivals of ships to New Zealand in the month of July followed a similar distribution to that observed in previous months. The most common origins for these ships over the first seven months of 2021 were as follows:

- Australia: 537 vessels (42%)
- China: 102 vessels (8%)
- Japan: 74 vessels (6%)
- Indonesia: 65 vessels (5%)
- Singapore: 65 vessels (5%)
- South Korea: 57 vessels (4%)
- Fiji: 55 vessels (4%)
- Panama: 41 vessels (3%)
- Philippines: 35 vessels (3%)
- United States: 23 vessels (2%)

**Figure 1: Number of Ships Arriving by Origin Every Month – 1 January 2019 to 31 July 2021**



### 2.1.3 Maritime Crew Arrivals and Departures

Over the period of 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, a total of 689 foreign crew members have arrived into NZ by air and signed onto vessels (including 146 in July). From 1 January 2021 to 21 July 2021, 495 foreign crew, signed off vessels and departed NZ by air (including 96 in July).

**Figure 2: Number of Foreign Crew Signed On And Off Vessels by Month – 1 January 2019 to 31 July 2021**



*Thank you to the New Zealand Customs Service, the Ministry of Health, and the National Assessments Bureau for contributions to these insights sections.*

## 2.2 Insight of Note Written by the Ministry of Health

### 2.2.1 COVID-19 International Perspectives: 3 August 2021

The number of global daily new COVID-19 cases increased by just under 20 percent in the fortnight to 31 July 2021, to a 7-day average of approximately 590,000 new cases per day.<sup>19</sup> In a briefing on 30 July 2021, WHO DG Ghebreyesus highlighted that the ongoing surge is likely being driven by the Delta variant, which has now been detected in at least 132 countries.<sup>20</sup> He also highlighted that testing rates in low-income countries are less than 2 percent of those recorded in high-income countries.<sup>21</sup> To date, just over half of countries globally have fully vaccinated 10% of their population and less than a quarter of countries have fully vaccinated 40 percent.<sup>22</sup>

The following summary includes situation updates from United States of America (USA), Fiji and India. COVID-19 cases from the USA, Fiji and India have been detected recently at the border. There continues to be a large volume of arrivals from the USA into New Zealand, and in the past week, the USA has reported the greatest number of daily new COVID-19 cases globally.<sup>23</sup> Fiji also has one of the highest numbers of daily COVID-19 cases per million globally.<sup>24</sup> Given that New Zealand is currently providing additional support to Fiji in the current outbreak, this has also been included as a country case-study. Daily COVID-19 cases in India continue to plateau<sup>1</sup>, and this is contextually relevant to New Zealand given its “very high-risk” status and has also been included in this summary.

#### USA

- The 7-day rolling average of cases in the United States increased by almost 150 percent in the past 14 days and by over 500 percent over the month of July 2021, to almost 80,000 average daily cases.<sup>25</sup>
- In the last 30 days, Delta made up approximately 75 percent of sequenced cases.<sup>26</sup>
- As at 1 August 2021, the seven-day average of tests is 1.8 tests per 1,000 population.<sup>27</sup> The 7-day average test positivity is 9.4 percent and in several states is between 20-25 percent,<sup>28</sup> indicating that cases are likely to be significantly underestimated.
- As at 29 July 2021, 57 percent of the total U.S. population have received at least one dose of the vaccine (70 percent of adults) and 50 percent have been fully vaccinated (61 percent of adults), primarily with Pfizer and Moderna.<sup>29</sup> There is significant variation in coverage between states.<sup>30</sup>

Although most states are reporting increasing cases, the latest surge of cases in the USA has been driven largely by severe outbreaks in California, Louisiana, Florida, Missouri, Texas and Georgia.<sup>31</sup> Many states with low vaccination rates have been hit hard by the latest case surge.<sup>32</sup> COVID-19 restrictions within the US have been largely relaxed, with some exceptions particularly around interstate travel.<sup>33</sup> CDC has recently revised mask wearing guidance and now recommends those who are fully vaccinated to wear masks indoors in high-risk settings<sup>34</sup>. There remain wide-ranging travel bans on those travelling from several countries, including India, China and Brazil.<sup>35</sup>

#### Fiji

- New daily COVID-19 cases reported in Fiji have risen again after a decline last week, the 7-day rolling average of cases is 1,159 as at 01 August 2021.<sup>36</sup>
- As at 2 August 2021, there have been 252 confirmed deaths due to COVID-19 in country in this outbreak, the 7-day rolling average of deaths is declining, to approximately 8 from 13 one-week prior.<sup>37</sup> This decline is attributed in part to improved care pathways for high-risk individuals.
- There are currently 307 COVID-19 patients admitted to hospitals across Fiji.<sup>38</sup>
- As at 2 August 2021, the 7-day average of tests was 3.7 tests per 1,000 population and test positivity is 31.8%<sup>39</sup>, well above the WHO limit of 5 percent that indicates comprehensive surveillance of COVID-19.
- As at 2 August 2021, approximately 83.7 percent of the eligible population have received at least one vaccine dose and 25.9 percent are fully vaccinated<sup>40</sup>.

While most cases have been reported in the Central Division, case numbers continue to increase in the Western Division, these divisions make up Viti Levu, the largest island in Fiji.<sup>41</sup> There are no current active cases in the Northern and Eastern Divisions.<sup>42</sup>

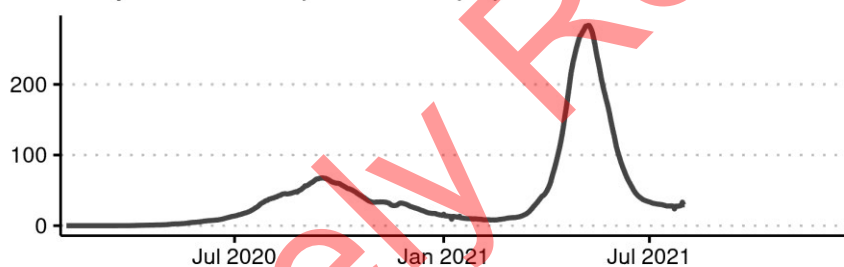
The Fijian government is continuing to resist calls for a full lockdown. Currently, all passengers departing Fiji are required to obtain a negative pre-departure test and to isolate between testing and departure to their planned destination.<sup>43</sup>

## India

- Since peak of cases in early May 2021 where almost 400,000 were being reported daily, there has been a rapid decline in new cases.<sup>44</sup> As at 01 August 2021, the 7-day average of daily new cases have plateaued since the start of July 2021 to just over 40,000 per day.<sup>45</sup>
- Death rates have also declined, to a 7-day average of 544 daily deaths from over 40,000 at the peak.<sup>46</sup>
- A recent sero-survey by the Indian Council of Medical research found that two-thirds of those tested at the end of June 2021 across India had antibodies to COVID-19.<sup>47</sup>
- As at 29 July 2021, the 7-day average of tests was 1.2 tests per 1,000 people and the 7-day average test positivity nationally is 2.4 percent.<sup>48</sup>
- The COVID-19 vaccination rollout has been steadily picking up speed in India. Approximately 7.5 percent of the population are fully vaccinated, and an additional 19 percent have received one vaccine as of 1 August 2021.<sup>49</sup>

### COVID-19 cases in India

Daily new cases per million population



Source: Our World in Data, values are weekly rolling means

Regionally, 28 of 35 states in India are now meeting the WHO 5 percent test positivity threshold, though there are still 7 states who's testing positivity ranges from 5 to 19 percent, this is reported to be most pronounced in rural areas.<sup>50</sup> India is utilising both nasopharyngeal PCR and rapid antigen testing.<sup>51</sup>

A range of containment strategies within different regions of India are now being lifted. However, some states with a significant number of active cases have increased restrictions. Most new cases are being reported in the state of Kerala, where around 40 percent of India's current active cases have been reported and testing positivity rate is 12 percent.<sup>52</sup> A two-day lockdown was introduced on 31 July 2021 to allow public health measures to be implemented.<sup>53</sup> Maharashtra is also experiencing increased cases, with almost 20 percent of total active cases, though test positivity is only 3.3 percent.<sup>54</sup> Level 3 lockdown has remained in place in most districts of Maharashtra since April 2021.

#### 2.2.2 Behavioural Insights

Looking into where the public is accessing critical information on COVID-19 updates and policy, official sources are still the biggest influencer. However, DPMC Sentiment Research<sup>55</sup> indicates a decline in the influence of the Ministry of Health and Health Officials since May 2021. This may stem from fewer people seeking COVID-19 information from public sources: In May 2021, 41 percent found information on the COVID-19 website as opposed to 35 percent in July 2021. This may be a result of COVID fatigue, especially when paired with details on adherence to infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, low national testing rates despite higher prevalence of cold and flu symptoms, and COVID App data. Respondents to DPMC Sentiment research indicated that while around the same number of New Zealanders are still adhering to IPC measures, people

feel less happy doing so when compared with numbers in May 2021. COVID App scanning and registrations continue to decrease and national community testing rates have risen slightly but not in all regions despite the heightened risk presented by the Delta variant and recent near misses from international visitors, mariners, and sick people. COVID fatigue might be a factor in driving these sentiments and consequent behaviours or a general complacency due to the long period of time since the last community outbreak.

Another factor that will help mitigate risk is the vaccine rollout. In particular, DPMC communications indicate that mass vaccination continues to receive positive feedback with communities calling for more mass vaccination events. While there has been a lot of criticism in the media about the roll out, Healthline continues to receive positive feedback for the momentum of vaccines being administered and specific clinics involved in vaccine rollout. Following this, there remains underlying hesitancy towards vaccines driven by comments that they do not actually work. Kiwis are also concerned about their fellow citizens adhering to the phased rollout, specifically, the number of people who “look under 65” at vaccination centres. Following insights into adherence to IPC measures (above), New Zealanders generally remain largely happy to do their part; however, there is concern that others may not have the same attitude.

Proactively Released

### 3. Ministry of Health



#### 3.1 Items to Note/Updates

##### 3.1.1 COVID-19 critical pharmacies fund

This item updates you on the use and expiry of the COVID-19 critical pharmacies fund.

When the COVID-19 Level 4 lockdown was announced in 2020, the community pharmacy sector raised concerns that a significant number of community pharmacies were likely to struggle financially and be forced to close.

In response, Cabinet approved an \$18 million COVID-19 critical pharmacies fund (the Fund) to support critical pharmacies experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 [CAB-19-MIN-0219.12]. It aimed to ensure continued supply of medicines and advice where closure of a pharmacy would have had a significant impact on access to crucial services for communities that had no other provider available.

The Fund has met these objectives, with six pharmacies having met the funding criteria and receiving support totalling \$463,061. This process was led by DHBs with the community pharmacies in their region. The Fund closed on 30 June 2021 with the \$17,536,939 unused funds returned to the Crown.

A range of other financial support was also available to all pharmacies alongside the Fund, including:

- a funding package of \$15 million that was paid out in April 2020 to support pharmacies with costs incurred in responding to COVID-19
- access to the Government's COVID-19 financial support for businesses
- the Government's wage subsidy schemes.

##### 3.1.2 COVID-19 community pharmacy locum relief fund

This item updates you on the use and expiry of the COVID-19 community pharmacy locum relief fund.

In 2020, the Ministry of Health allocated \$1.7 million to a COVID-19 community pharmacy locum relief fund (the Locum Fund) allocated from the \$30 million COVID-19 Health Response funding. The purpose of the Locum Fund was to support community pharmacies that were experiencing stress related to their frontline responding to the COVID-19 Level 4 lockdown.

The Locum Fund was administered by the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand from 2 October 2020 to 30 June 2021 and provided relief from workload pressures for frontline pharmacy staff by paying for locum support.

The Locum Fund was allocated in three tranches to enable equitable access to relief to as many pharmacies as possible.

Approximately 26 percent of community pharmacies have received support (nearly 300 out of 1,100) from across all 20 DHBs. Points to note include:

- The hours funded equate to approximately 410 fulltime weeks for pharmacists and approximately 243 fulltime weeks for technicians as time off work.
- The Locum Fund was under subscribed, with only two-thirds of the available funding used. Uptake was restricted by the limited availability of locum staff (pharmacists and technicians) who were able to travel to provide locum cover, particularly in rural areas.
- A third of the Locum Fund (\$574,435) has been returned to the Ministry's Health Workforce COVID-19 response allocation to be reprioritised.

### 3.1.3 Establishment of COVID-19 National Outbreak Response Team

The National Investigation and Tracing Centre (NITC) provided advice to your office on 21 June 2021 that the timelines for the formal establishment of the COVID-19 National Outbreak Response Team (NORT) was extended to allow for comprehensive engagement across a range of agencies and groups (including public health units, district health boards (DHBs) and unions). This update advises you that the NORT has now been established.

#### **Background**

The NORT was designed to support the lead Public Health Unit (PHU) in its case investigation and contact tracing activity, by enabling access to additional PHU staff from other regions during a community outbreak.

A total of 66 PHU and Ministry of Health staff have joined NORT. NORT members will be placed in a pool. In the event of an outbreak, the PHU leading the outbreak will engage with NITC and work through the skillset that is required to support their staff. NORT will then be activated. NORT members who have the required skillset will be physically deployed to the lead PHU within 24 to 48 hours. The NITC and all remaining PHUs will provide wrap-around virtual support to NORT.

The NORT work programme has been widely consulted on and is supported by DHBs, PHUs and Union Partners. All work and deployment arrangements for NORT have now been confirmed.

#### **Considerations**

The NORT will be initially established for six months (July to December 2021) and will then be reviewed. It is anticipated that as people's professional and personal situations change, NORT members may choose to leave the pool. Equally, new recruits to PHUs and the Ministry of Health may express their interest to join NORT.

#### **Next steps**

Planning for a further training programme for NORT members has commenced. The NITC will continue to provide updates on NORT, as required.

## 3.2 Policy/Programme Updates

### 3.2.1 Surveillance Strategy and Testing Plan

The Ministry of Health published a refresh of the COVID-19 Surveillance Strategy and the COVID-19 Testing Plan before the Thursday *Reconnecting New Zealanders* event.

The release was low-key: key stakeholders were contacted only to alert them to the publication. The draft had input from public health units, the COVID-19 Continuous Review Improvement and Advice Group, and the COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group. A steering group for the refresh included the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, public health units, ESR, and the Ministry of Health.

The current COVID-19 Surveillance Strategy and the Testing Plan were drafted in late 2020, and published in January 2021. Since then, the vaccination programme has been launched, international travel has increased, and variants of concern have emerged in many countries. Operational changes include routine wastewater testing, pre-departure tests, and the use of saliva samples for testing of border workers.

The main changes from the current COVID-19 Surveillance Strategy and Testing Plan are:

- the addition of a sixth surveillance objective to support *Reconnecting New Zealanders*.
- expanding the scope of the Testing Plan to include the pre-departure and other COVID-19 testing done overseas.

- changes to the 'equity objective' to highlight partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and to separate that from the more general issues of supporting the health of different populations.
- updates to reflect that surveillance is now based on direct reporting of laboratory test results to a National Repository database, rather than on existing influenza surveillance systems.
- "road-maps" for important technologies such as wastewater testing, sero-surveillance, and PCR of saliva samples.

### 3.2.2 COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme

As at 11.59 pm on 10 August 2021, 2,293,301 vaccinations have been delivered, including 846,406 people who are fully vaccinated. Of those fully vaccinated, nine percent are Māori, six percent are Pasifika, and 16 percent are Asian.

127,160 Māori have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, which represents nine percent of the total population who have received their first dose as at 20 July 2021.

341 sites were active as at 10 August 2021.

The production plan for the next seven days is for 296,088 doses across New Zealand.

#### **Workforce**

As at 10 August 2021, 10,786 vaccinators have completed COVID-19 vaccinator training and 5,462 vaccinators have actively vaccinated in the programme so far.

#### **Group 4 rollout**

Invitations to the second cohort of Group 4 (those aged 55 to 59) began on 6 August 2021. Invitations to the third cohort (those aged 50 to 54) are expected to open this week.

#### **Book My Vaccine**

As of 10 August 2021, Book My Vaccine holds 1,015,941 future bookings at 336 sites. The opening of Book My Vaccine was successful with over 200,000 thousand visits to the website and positive media coverage of the system.

#### **Supply**

The expected Pfizer delivery of 388,440 doses arrived on 8 August 2021. s9(2)(b)(ii)

#### **Equity**

Health Services Utilisation data is now being used to track the vaccine uptake for Māori and Pacific people giving a more accurate representation of vaccine delivery performance by age-group across DHBs.

As of 1 August 2021, Māori over 60 years nationally have a first dose uptake rate of 600 per 1000; Pacific have a first dose vaccine uptake rate of 605 per 1000. This compares with 600 per 1000 for non-Māori non-Pacific. This data indicates equitable delivery of the Programme to Māori and Pacific populations over 60 years.

DHBs are taking a flexible approach that depends on local needs. These approaches include offering vaccinations to everyone aged 16 and over when offering vaccinations in remote rural communities, implementing a whānau-centred approach for Māori and Pasifika, and providing the option to receive a vaccination at marae, churches, community centres and mobile outreach locations.

The programme is now actively monitoring the vaccinations for more than 35,000 disabled people who either receive disability support services from the Ministry of Health or are long-term ACC clients.

Approximately 30.4 percent of disabled New Zealanders have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Work is underway with DHBs to set up weekly reporting to improve visibility of plans regarding

disability specific sites, clinics and events, as well as engagement with providers (e.g. residential, home and community, supported living). DHBs are working to ensure all providers offer their clients their first vaccine dose by 31 August 2021.

#### **Workplace rollout**

The onset of the workplace vaccination pilot at Mainfreight was a success with 167 doses delivered at its Auckland site on 3 August 2021. There was also a large uptake of the opportunity for staff to book in their whānau for vaccination on 7 August 2021.

Fonterra completed its wet-run on 10 August 2021 and began its rollout on 11 August 2021.

The Warehouse group and Fisher & Paykel Healthcare are expected to begin pilots in August 2021.

The Ministry of Health is currently reviewing over 250 expressions of interest from other workplaces.

#### **Requests for confirmation of vaccination status**

As of 6 August 2021, the Ministry of Health's website now includes a webform so that members of the public can request a letter confirming their vaccination status by providing their personal details. This automated process will speed up the processing time for these requests. Additional temporary staff have also been brought in to clear the backlog.

#### **General practice and pharmacy rollout**

Primary health organisations (PHOs) continue to be onboarded onto the system, with over 90 additional sites expected to be onboarded this week.

The Ministry of Health is working with DHBs and PHOs to standardise the collection of onboarding data and to put in place systems that can accurately forecast the go-live dates of primary care vaccination sites. This will serve to provide an improved view of forward capacity.

#### **Rollout of the vaccine to Polynesia**

On 3 August 2021, the 100,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines resold from Spain were delivered to Fiji. The resale and delivery of the vaccine was facilitated and funded by New Zealand. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

The Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau are expecting to complete their vaccination rollout by the week of 23 August 2021. The Realm is looking to follow New Zealand's position on the vaccination of 12 to 15-year-olds; the Ministry of Health continues to work closely with these countries to plan for the potential next phase of their vaccine rollout of youth.

Samoa, Tonga and Fiji have formally requested from New Zealand access to the Pfizer vaccine for their 12 to 17-year olds. We are expecting to begin planning activities with Samoa and Tonga the week commencing 9 August 2021; the first planning meeting with Fiji is scheduled for 16 August 2021.

s6(a)



### 3.3 Technical Advisory Group: Update

The COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CVTAG) met on 3 August 2021 and discussed:

- Myocarditis
- an extended dosing interval for Pfizer
- the decision to use Pfizer for 12 to 15-year-olds and priority groups
- considerations for purchasing for New Zealand’s future vaccine portfolio
- MMR/Influenza coadministration with Pfizer.

The next CVTAG meeting is on 17 August 2021, and an update will be provided in a future Weekly Report.

The COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group did not meet in the week beginning 2 August 2021. The next meeting is scheduled for 20 August 2021, and an update will be provided in a future Weekly Report.

### 3.4 Upcoming Communications Issues and Activities

As at 9 August 2021

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement
9 August 2021	Testing of the Rio De LaPlata vessel off the coast of Tauranga has confirmed a number of crew are positive for COVID-19. All port workers have been contacted for testing.	Ministry of Health	PR, media interviews, web content	Optional
9 August 2021 ongoing	Crew from the Mattina vessel continue to be monitored.	Customs / Ministry of Health	PR, health advice	Optional
9 August 2021 ongoing	Quarantine free travel (QFT) between Australia and New Zealand is suspended. Health advice and Locations of interest (S70s) updates for New Zealand travellers in NSW, Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland.	Ministry of Health	Web content	No
12 August 2021	Reconnecting New Zealanders to the World - forum and panel discussion, including the Director-General of Health.	DPMC/PMO/ Ministry of Health	Questions and answers, key messages, media interviews	No
12 August 2021	Updated COVID-19 Elimination Strategy: the continuing role of the Elimination Strategy	Ministry of Health	Web content	Optional
13 August 2021	Deputy Director-General Data and Digital in the Ministry of Health, Shayne Hunter, attending hui at Ngongotahā to report back on results and outcomes of the Bluetooth-enabled contact tracing card trialled in the community in late 2020. The card will not be implemented more widely.	Ministry of Health	Talking points Proactive release of trial reports following hui	No

### 3.5 Upcoming Publication

Title	Date	Context	ELT contact
Publication: COVID-19 Outbreak Response Toolkit for Aged Residential Care (ARC)	End of August 2021	This Toolkit supports ARC providers to prepare, respond to, and review an outbreak of COVID-19 in their facility.	Clare Perry, Deputy Director-General, Health System Improvement and Innovation, 027 278 4106

## 4. Managed Isolation and Quarantine Weekly Report

### 4.1 Top Items to Note

#### 4.1.1 QFT Travel Pause and NSW Outbreak

- Tranche 1 and 2 are now complete, with all returnees from tranche 1 having departed MIQ and all returnees from tranche 2 now in MIQ. We are now focused on supporting the returnees for tranche 3 into MIQ safely.
- For tranche 3, there were 462 eligible applications made up of 529 rooms and 621 people. There were 332 ineligible applications made up of 387 rooms and 528 people.
- Thirty vouchers were set aside for MFAT to access in case of consular emergencies. We are in regular contact with MFAT to ensure the number of rooms is appropriate.
- As per the advice in briefing NSW-011, earlier this week we released the remaining vouchers not required for tranche 3 (during the period 9 August-22 August). These vouchers were made available on MIAS and were all taken within three minutes of release.
- We have provided your Office with options for the next phase of this process around the NSW response and planning for how we bring Australia back into MIAS (briefing 2122-0450 refers). This includes the resumption of red flights and the ability for people in Australia to access the Emergency Allocation process.

#### 4.1.2 In-Facility Transmission at the Jet Park Quarantine Facility

- On Friday 8 August, a notification was received of a possible in-facility transmission at Jet Park, Auckland.
- ARPHS has carried out an investigation and identified the probable cause of transmission was due to doors in rooms opposite being opened at the same time to collect meals. It was confirmed no other returning travellers would have been exposed and staff were wearing the required PPE. As a result of this investigation:
  - There has been an immediate change to food delivery and health check procedures at Jet Park to eliminate episodes of synchronous door opening; and
  - Jet Park will utilise the current limited occupancy to ensure returnees are spread out in the facility as much as practicable.
- The MIQ TAG has also considered this investigation and recommended that MOH and MIQ:
  - Will produce principles based recommendations to both reduce the number of occurrences of door opening, and where possible eliminate synchronous door opening (for all MIFs in the portfolio); and
  - Will explore the placement of in-room filtration units in all quarantine rooms nationally.
- We are undertaking an operational assessment of the response to this situation and whether the relevant SOPs and processes were followed and whether any changes should be made as a result of this situation.
- All of this advice will be considered together and we will update you on the final course of action once agreed.

### 4.2 Operational update

#### 4.2.1 Capacity Update

As at 1pm, 10 August, 2021, there is currently no availability on MIAS.

- As at 10th August, a total of 30,778 rooms since early March have been released for the period of June through to the end of Nov 2021.
- From early March to present, 107,165 returnees have secured a date to return home during the period of March through to the end of November 2021.

- Returnees from over 180 countries have successfully secured a voucher to travel during this period.

We are currently under significant pressure with extremely high levels of demand. Over the period of April-June 2021, the average daily number of unique users on the Managed Isolation Allocation System was approximately 5,000. This number has increased to approximately 20,000 from late July to August 2021. Several established social media sites have pages that are publicly reporting the exact date and time when vouchers are released.

Last week, we re-released approximately 400 rooms for August that were unused from the tranche three of New South Wales managed returns. Each release of between 20-60 rooms was booked within three minutes, with between 500-1,100 concurrent users on the site at the time of voucher release. We have observed that users tend to secure any date as they become available and then decide later if they can make the date work, resulting in many rooms being regularly re-released back into circulation.

#### 4.2.2 Retaining Day 0/1 Room Restrictions

Since early January this year, the majority of people undertaking managed isolation or quarantine have not been authorised to depart their rooms to undertake activities such as access fresh air, until a negative result has been received from their day 0/1 test, which can take up to 72 hours.

We indicated that we would retain the day 0/1 room restrictions on a temporary basis until the reviews of the Pre-Departure testing regime and ventilation at MIQ facilities were complete [2021-2426 refers].

Given the possible human rights impacts of the room restrictions, we have chosen to revisit the policy and seek updated public health advice before the ventilation review was complete.

On the basis of that public health advice, we have chosen to retain day 0/1 room restrictions. Public health advice considers that retaining the room restrictions is an appropriate strategy for managed transmission risk for the time being, despite the imposition that the restrictions have on individuals.

This is largely due to two considerations:

- Improved understanding of the significant risk of aerosol transmission, with an increased recognition of this mode of transmission in confined spaces that are poorly ventilated – as per many of the MIQ facilities.
- The emergence of more infectious variants (e.g. Delta variant), with infected individuals that are often asymptomatic or with fleeting symptoms and unusual symptoms.

These risks are still relevant, despite the new mitigation strategies introduced in recent months, including but not limited to staff vaccination, the ending of Managed Isolation Walks and operational changes to reduce movement outside of rooms.

Officials will revisit the policy again in three months' time to establish if there is any new evidence.

#### 4.2.3 Departmental Consultation on New Zealand Police Cabinet Paper

This Cabinet paper outlines the pressure that deployment to MIQ and Auckland Airport is having on frontline Police services and their ability to deliver on the government target of strengthening frontline delivery through an additional 1,800 staff by 30 June 2023. The paper proposes three options to address this:

1. Police withdraw from MIQF and return to a 'response model' (except for Auckland airport and deportees, where a 24/7 presence would be maintained);
2. Maintain a reduced Police MIQF presence (1 or 2 shifts per day) supported by additional funding for increased recruitment numbers of 120 to 160 FTE;
3. Maintain Police's current MIQF presence supported by additional funding for increased recruitment numbers of 240 FTE (preferred option).

We strongly endorse the preferred option (maintain Police's current MIQ presence supported by additional funding for increased recruitment numbers) and have provided Police with comments on the paper. We do not support a reduced Police presence in MIQF facilities (options 1 and 2).

24/7 Police presence at MIQFs is essential to the continued success of the MIQ operating model. Police are currently the only staff at MIQFs with the full suite of enforcement powers, including the ability to enter rooms if necessary and the ability to use force.

To have a period each day where there could be an immediate response to a situation needing either entry to a room or to physically stop someone from leaving the facility, would present significant risk to the safety of returnees and MIQF staff, and increase the potential for a COVID-19 related incident or outbreak.

Any future government decisions about the level of NZDF's involvement in MIQ will make Police's role in supporting compliance and safety at MIQFs even more critical. Although NZDF do not have the same powers as Police, there is an increased perception of authority and security that comes from their presence, and if both NZDF and Police were to have a reduced role in MIQ, there would be risks to manage in terms of potential increased non-compliance and returnees' perception of the rules and their enforcement.

The proposals in this paper also have implications for the COVID-19 Public Health Response Amendment Bill, which seeks to introduce a power enabling the Chief Executive of MBIE to make rules for the purpose of ensuring the effective and orderly operation of MIQFs.

It is proposed that the contravention of a rule constitutes an infringement offence. Infringement offences are intended to provide a swift and proportionate response to high-volume, low-level offending. Currently constables and Aviation Security Officers are the only ones with any enforcement powers in MIQFs.

We are also looking to introduce infringement offences for contravention of MIQ requirements, as set out in the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Isolation and Quarantine) Order 2020. Reduced Police presence in MIQ may impede the effective operationalisation of these regimes. Having less Police on site to attend to matters as they arise may undermine their administrative efficiency.

4.2.4 Vaccination of frontline staff update

- For workers on site for the week 2-8 August 2021, BWTR shows 95.4% had two doses of the vaccine, 2.1% had one dose, and the remaining 2.5% (124 workers) had vaccine status 'unknown'.
- Of the 124 workers with an 'unknown' vaccination status, 60 still require an NHI match. The Workforce Testing team is investigating the remaining 64 workers to confirm vaccination status.
- Vaccination assurance follow-ups for those with an 'unknown' status in BWTR in the previous week did not identify any instances of breaches to the vaccination order. However, as mentioned in the status summary, a breach occurred where two members of the public were allowed on-site. Remedial training is occurring with staff involved in this incident.
- Of the 29 workers who were NHI-matched but showing vaccination status 'unknown' in the 26 July - 1 August 2021 Weekly report:
  - 16 have been confirmed as compliant with the vaccine order;
  - 10 are compliant but have been passed to MOH for investigation as potential NHI issues;
  - 3 workers have been contacted and we are awaiting a response;

4.2.5 Staff testing update – compliance statistics for 2 – 8 August 2021

- Reporting from BWTR shows that 5,002 people undertook work in our facilities last week and the table below shows how many of those workers were compliant with the Testing Order, overdue for a test, or still need to be NHI-matched.

Workers on site 2 –8 August 2021	Total	Percentage of total NHI-matched workers on site
Compliant NHI-matched workers	4,792	97%
Overdue NHI-matched workers	150	3%
Need NHI-match	60	
Workers on site	5,002	

- Of the 150 overdue, 87 of those are less than 4 days overdue, 44 are 4-10 days overdue and 19 are 11+ days overdue. The Workforce Testing and Vaccination team will be following up with these workers to make sure they get tested as required.
- Of the 60 that still need an NHI-match, 31 were created in BWTR in the last 7 days.
- 22 workers were previously reported as '11+ days overdue' in the report for the week 26 July – 1 August 2021. We have confirmed 13 of them have been swabbed, two others are compliant but have been referred to MOH due to a possible NHI-matching issue, five have been instructed to be swabbed, one has been contacted and we are awaiting a response, and one has been escalated to MOH due to ongoing compliance issues.
- For those more historic 11+ overdue workers, this has reduced by another 112 workers to 222 still outstanding. This has come down from 836 records on 7 July 2021. The focus will remain on this cohort until we close this group out.

#### 4.2.6 Saliva Testing

- MIQ workers on a seven-day testing cycle at Jet Park Auckland have been invited to opt-into the saliva testing regime. Saliva testing will then be progressively rolled out to other MIQ facilities from mid-August and throughout September.
- The phased roll out schedule takes into account the additional demand facilities are under with NSW returnees while being able to apply the learning from the initial roll outs and enable uptake of the regime by MIQ workers.
- The Required Testing Order for saliva testing does not require a close out test once someone finishes work in MIQ but workers will be asked to do a close out test three days after their last attendance at work. This is strongly recommended in the testing guidance and FAQs which are provided to PCBUs and employees who opt in to saliva testing.
- We will actively monitor the completion of close out tests for those MIQF workers who have opted-in to saliva testing. While these workers will be recorded as compliant in BWTR, we want to ensure they are getting a final close out test if they leave MIQ employment. We will provide feedback to the Ministry of Health as it considers future changes to the RTO as part of the Review to be undertaken in September.

#### 4.2.7 Ombudsman update

We received five Ombudsman notifications this week. We are currently responding to:

- five information requests – emergency allocations;
- one final report – managed isolation extension of stay;
- two fee waiver investigations;
- one Ombudsman letter – which requests MBIE reconsider its response to final opinion (your office has also received a copy of this letter);

#### OPCAT

- An OPCAT inspection took place at the Grand Millennium Auckland, Tuesday 10 August.
- An OPCAT inspection took place at the Holiday Inn Auckland, Wednesday 11 August.
- Both of these inspections were announced however the OPCAT is due to commence unannounced inspections thereafter.

We received the final report for The Ramada (currently decommissioned) Wednesday 4th August and our response is due Wednesday 18th August.

### 4.3 Large Group Arrivals Update

- We are working through the implications of the recent RSE and QFT announcements, including how to manage this, ensure our stakeholders are kept informed and the additional implications this has for the MIQ system of potentially managing additional groups. A briefing (2122-0423) on these matters was provided to you on 6 August 2021.

Summary of approved group arrivals as at 10 August 2021 (to December 2021).

- In the next few weeks we will get confirmation of September demand for the Construction Accord and will be providing you with advice on the future of this allocation.
- Significant wellbeing support is being provided to the Olympians following the sudden death of Olivia Podmore.
- We are working with MPI and with the fishing companies to ensure that they are aware of the requirements of the border exemption. There has been a reluctance from fishing companies to release MIAS vouchers that cannot be used due to the lack of a border exemption.

Group	Date of Arrival	Allocation Approved	Final number of rooms allocated	Comments
RSE	7 Aug 2021 (Flight 3)	150	116 (148 people)	The third cohort of 148 RSE workers arrived on 7 August 2021. 150 RSE workers are confirmed for flight four. Working through the implications of decision to potentially continue RSEs through September plus one cohort in November, in addition to mariners and the significant number of groups arriving in the next few months. Note that this has significant ramifications for the Pasifika Trust who are providing wellbeing services for RSE workers.
	24 Aug 2021 (Flight 4)	150	116 (150 people)	
Construction Accord	Aug 2021	60	15 (19 people)	Construction Accord did not take up the allocation in June or July.
	Sep 2021	60	TBC	
	Early Nov	60	TBC	
	Early Dec	60	TBC	
Netball – English Roses	27 Aug 2021	30	25 (TBC)	IPC have approved the off-site SMIF (Sports managed isolation facility) for off-site training.  Challenges have arisen now that QFT with Australia has been paused as some of the team were expected to arrive from Australia. These complexities are being explored to further understand the group requirements and the impact of the QFT pause.  The Ministry of Health exemption to train briefing will be submitted to your office this week.
Refugees – Intake 2	30 Jul 2021	21	11 (21 people)	Total arrivals for Intake 2 has decreased to 106 people. Minors arriving on 13 and 23 Aug. Interpreters and legal guardians will receive briefings to ensure their safety and wellbeing.
	5 Aug 2021	37	20 (37 people)	
	7 Aug 2021	8	4 (8 people)	
	10 Aug 2021	15	10 (15 people)	
	13 Aug 2021	5	3 (5 people)	
	23 Aug 2021	2	2 (2 people)	
	27 Aug 2021	17	9 (17 people)	
	TBC	1	1 (people)	
	6-19 Sep 2021	116	TBC	
16-31 Oct	111	TBC		
Late Dec	108	TBC		
Returning Olympic Athletes (3 cohorts)	2 Aug 2021	~184	163 (168 people)	Cohort Three arrived on 10 August. There have been a number of compliance issues that have been dealt with directly by the RIQ with NZOC and SportNZ. For example, returnees not social distancing, taking recordings in the common areas and posting this on social media, including footage of themselves incorrectly wearing a mask or not wearing a mask at all.
	8 Aug 2021	~170	113 (114 people)	
	10 Aug 2021	~170	145 (148 people)	
Paralympic athletes	Sep 2021	100	5	There are 73 returnees who have booked their spaces via the online public system in addition to the 5 using the group allocation.  Returnees include athletes, management and support staff.  Detailed planning is underway to ensure those with increased needs are well cared for in MIQ, including those who have booked MIAS vouchers.
Fishers	Sep 2021	191	TBC	Planning is underway for fishers arriving Sept to Nov. Note that this relates to the 450 BATM class fishers under the border exception.  160 people into Christchurch (100 + 60), plus approx. 31 Ukraine fishers into Auckland

Group	Date of Arrival	Allocation Approved	Final number of rooms allocated	Comments
	Oct 2021	191	TBC	160 people into Christchurch (100 + 60), plus approx. 31 Ukraine fishers into Auckland
	Early Nov	68	TBC	68 people into Christchurch
NZTE	Early Nov	25	TBC	Allocation for exporters.
	Early Dec	25	TBC	
EXPO	Oct	72	TBC	
	Late Nov	80	TBC	
All Blacks	Late Nov	65	TBC	Standard returnees – not requiring training exemption.
Black Ferns	Late Nov	65	TBC	Standard returnees – not requiring training exemption.
BlackCaps	Late Nov	20	TBC	Standard returnees – not requiring training exemption.
NZDF	Early Dec	76	TBC	
Cricket BlackCaps & Bangladesh	Early Dec	68	TBC	Will be seeking a training exemption.
Antarctic Programme	17 Sep	200	200	These arrivals are for the combined US Antarctic Programme (USAP) as well as the Italian, French, German and Korean programme.
	18 Sep	39	39	
	21 Sep	1	1	
	27 Sep	145	145	
	28 Sep	145	145	
	4 Oct	46	46	
	6 Oct	17	17	
	9 Oct	10	10	
	10 Oct	10	10	
	11 Oct	202	202	
	18 Oct	42	42	
	25 Oct	20	20	
	29 Oct	3	3	
	Early Nov	39	TBC	
	Late Nov	189	TBC	
	Late Dec	65	TBC	

#### 4.3.1 Time Sensitive Travel

Last week we reported that 99 TST allocations had been approved for travellers arriving in September and October. An additional 96 TST allocations have been confirmed for use by rural contractors, taking the total allocations for this time period to 195.

#### 4.3.2 English Roses Netball Team

- There are a number of challenges that Netball England and Netball New Zealand are working through due to five players needing to travel from Australia to Christchurch. The likely travel plan is for these players to travel to Singapore to meet the rest of the players who are travelling from the UK, and to travel into Christchurch together.
- As a result of having players travelling from Australia and little confirmed information regarding their travel plans, the Ministry of Health is taking a high-risk approach to the group and their request for an exemption to train.

### 4.4 Upcoming Communications Issues and Activities

As at 11 August 2021

Date	Activity	Lead Agency	Comms Material	Ministerial Involvement Y/N
July-October	US Antarctic Program	MIQ	Reactive communications	N
10 August	Last of the 485 Olympians returning via MIQ in CHCH	MIQ	Reactive communications	N
11 August	Saliva testing available to border workers	MIQ/MoH/Customs	Reactive communications	Y at 1pm media stand up
16 August (week of)	Groups information released on MIQ website	MIQ	Proactive communications	N

Date	Activity	Lead Agency	Comms Material	Ministerial Involvement Y/N
20 August	Shorter payment of MIQ invoices begins – moved from 90 to 30 days	MIQ	Info released on MIQ website 10 August	N
August (TBC)	Rapid Review of Border Worker Testing – Phase One (report for BEB)	MIQ	Proactive communications	N
22 August	Update on QFT	MoH/Ministers	Proactive communications	Y
3 September	Maori King opens ISO paintings exhibition in Hamilton	MIQ	Proactive communications	
September (TBC)	Release of Ministers Weekly reports for Feb, March and April	DPMC	Responds to several OIAs	N

## 4.5 Fees

### 4.5.1 Invoicing

The table below shows the number of invoices issued up to 8 August 2021.

Invoices have various repayment terms depending on whether they are a sports group (10 days), critical worker (30 days) or standard returnee/maritime crew/aircrew (90 days). \$5m in payments received for the week is due to receipting being delayed due to the financial year end the previous week.

Grouping	Invoices issued (net of credit notes)	Paid	Issued not due	Issued overdue	Invoices issued (\$)	Paid (\$)	Issued not due (\$)	Issued overdue (\$)	90+ days overdue	90+ days overdue (\$)
Groups <sup>1</sup>	3,074	929	2139	6	\$33,231,384	20,710,579	11,976,719	544,086	0	\$0
Maritime	392	263	105	24	\$1,900,708	\$1,231,206	\$598,988	\$70,515	15	\$31,322
Aircrew	204	144	3	57	\$1,088,210	\$817,379	\$15,057	\$255,773	4	\$53,197
Other	21,039	11242	6715	3083	\$71,791,761	\$41,221,563	\$20,726,260	\$9,843,938	1309	\$4,285,383
Total	24,709	12,578	8,962	3,170	\$108,012,063	\$63,980,728	\$33,317,024	\$10,714,312	1,328	\$4,369,902

<sup>1</sup>Please note that this previously only included large groups. However going forward, this now includes critical workers and critical health workers.

Note: The '90+ days Overdue' column represents the number of invoices from the 'Issued overdue' column that have been outstanding for 90+ day.

### 4.5.2 Weekly Average Invoicing and Debt Recovery %

The table below reflects the weekly average of invoicing from 11 August 2020.

Recent Weeks	Average invoicing per week (\$)
Past week	2,453,829
2-4 weeks	2,109,360
5-8 weeks	5,056,123
9+ weeks	1,603,013

### 4.5.3 Waivers

The table below breaks down the waiver application information between 11 August 2020 and 8th August 2021.



Please note that the Fee Waiver team have been temporarily redeployed to support the processing of a significant increase in Emergency Allocation requests. One person is still undertaking a triage function and forwarding relevant enquires to the appropriate department(s).

We are currently recruiting for additional resources, and the waiver team will recommence processing fee waiver applications once additional staffing is on board, or capacity allows.

Waiver applications received	In progress	Total completed	Total financial hardship applications	Total special circumstances applications	Approved waiver applications		Declined waiver applications	
					Financial Hardship	Special Circumstances	Financial Hardship	Special Circumstances
8893	2489	6403	816	5588	87	4807	729	781

#### 4.6 Emergency Allocation Applications

4310 applications have been processed since 30 October 2020.

371 applications were received in the week ending 08 August 2021 and 242 applications were processed.

From the applications processed in the week ending 08 August 2021, 44% of the applications were approved.

Emergency Allocation Applications	Weekly Totals 26 July-2021 to 08 August 2021	Year to Date Totals 30 Oct 2020 to 08 Aug 2021
Approved	106	2330
Declined	136	1980
Applications processed	242	4310

\* These figures only include completed applications, with all supporting evidence, which were received within the required timeframes, which have been decided by a decision marker.

Total Rooms Approved Under Emergency Allocation	112
Rooms Allocated in MIAS	97
Cancelled by the applicant	0
Awaiting flight details or MIAS registrations from the applicants to complete the room allocation process	15

#### 4.7 Resolutions Update

Data from the Complaints and Feedback Customer Management System for the week 3 August to 9 August 2021 is as follows:

Week 27 July to 2 August	Received	Active Cases	Resolved
Complaints	231	31	245
Improvements	5	0	5
Compliments	5	0	5
Queries	13		13
Ombudsman	9	6	5
Parliamentary/OIA	1	0	1
Other	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>274</b>

The average number of complaints received each week since the start of MIQ is 124. For the last four weeks the average is 276 per week.

This week we have received 264 new cases and have resolved 274 cases.

We continue to respond to a high number of complaints which required more than one response to support them with their current situation. These complaints are difficult to manage as we are unable to provide the resolution that they are seeking – a voucher for their planned travel to New Zealand.

## 5. Border Executive Board Report



### 5.1 Key Issues Being Considered

#### 5.1.1 Border Executive Board meeting

Last week the Border Executive Board:

- Endorsed the four priorities for its finance workstream: collective investments; financial sustainability of the border sector; cost recovery of border charges; and sustainability of the Border Executive Board secretariat. This work stream is led by Customs.
- Considered work on addressing the recommendations from the independent review of border worker testing phase 1 (MIQ). Phase 2 of this review (the aviation and maritime sectors) has commenced and will be expanded to consider vaccination as well as testing. The review will assess the arrangements and make recommendations for any improvements, with the key questions being:
  - Are the workers who are required to be tested, being tested?
  - Are the workers who are required to be vaccinated if they carry out certain work, vaccinated?
- Considered the Managed Isolation and Quarantine quarterly update, including emerging risks and assurance activity.

#### 5.1.2 Very high-risk countries

Agencies have continued to convene weekly to consider the implementation of risk mitigation measures for travellers from very high-risk countries. Of focus this week has been the designation of Fiji and Indonesia as very high-risk countries (with additional travel restrictions applying from 11.59pm on Sunday 15 August).

Next week you are expected to receive advice on whether India, Pakistan, Brazil and Papua New Guinea could be reclassified as high risk (rather than very high risk).

#### 5.1.3 Travel health declaration system

Work continued this week on preparing the business case to support a funding request through the CRRF. A Treasury-led business case clinic was held on Thursday, with a second one planned for Monday (16 August).

The business case itself is expected to be considered by Cabinet in September.

#### 5.1.4 Border worker vaccinations

The number of unvaccinated border workers continues to reduce; as at 0800hrs on 11 August, the BWTR showed that 1063 active border workers at maritime ports and airports, who are in scope of the amended Vaccinations Order and on the BWTR, were unvaccinated (down from 1222 on 4 August, and 1462 when the baseline number was established on 14 July). The number of fully vaccinated workers has increased slightly to 3280.

As expected, given the anticipatory nature of the Vaccinations Order, there has been an overall increase in individual workers in the BWTR. Agencies continue to support PCBUs to assess their workforce against the scope of the amended Vaccinations Order.

Guidance clarifying the descriptor 'carrying out work on or around affected ships' is close to being finalised. (This is referred to in schedule 2 of the Vaccinations Order that sets out the groups of affected persons).

Information about the economic exemption to the Vaccinations Order has been published on the Ministry of Transport website. PCBUs can apply for an exemption for a border worker who is not vaccinated and where removing the worker from the role would result in a significant disruption to essential supply chains. Any applications will be assessed by a multi-agency panel, with a recommendation being made by the Chair of the Border Executive Board to you, as Minister for COVID-19 Response, to decide if an exemption should be granted.

The deadlines for vaccinations for those affected by the amendment Order are close of 26 August 2021 for State service workers and close of 30 September 2021 for everyone else. Both groups are required to have their second dose no later than 35 days after these dates.

DHBs with major ports in their regions are actively working to improve vaccination rates. Examples of the range of initiatives underway include: additional pop-up vaccination sites at flexible times that align with shipping schedules and workers' shifts; mobile vaccination teams at ports; vaccination events; education sessions involving nurses and other health professionals to ensure workers have reliable, up to date information; outreach sites offering testing as well as vaccinations; and easier booking processes for workers and their families.

Face-to-face meetings with port employers and unions are continuing, including visits to the ports of Taranaki, Gisborne, Timaru.

At his fortnightly COVID-19 meeting with maritime sector chief executives on 11 August 2021, the Secretary of Transport asked participants about barriers to vaccination for their workforces.

Bay of Plenty/Port of Tauranga - For the Bay of Plenty DHB, as of 11 August 2021, the BWTR shows 235 port border workers have been fully vaccinated, 33 have had one dose, and 249 are still to be vaccinated.

The local public health unit will be working closely with Port of Tauranga and companies employing port workers to improve vaccination access to those not currently vaccinated. The local public health service will have staff on-site to provide vaccinations to port staff from 16 August for the next two weeks.

Health officials held two information sessions with port workers on 12 August 2021 with clinicians available to answer questions. Public health staff have been engaging in multiple hui and Q+ A sessions at the port since March and will continue to encourage staff to get vaccinated until 30 September 2021.

## 6. New Zealand Customs Service Weekly Report



### 6.1 Items to Note/Updates

#### 6.1.1 Maritime

##### Container Vessel Rio De La Plata

- NZ Customs was advised by the Australian Border Force (2000hrs 4 August 2021) that the pilot who had boarded the Rio Del La Plata at the Great Barrier Reef, Australia had tested positive for COVID-19. The vessel proceeded to Sydney on 25 July 2021 and was granted pratique.
- The vessel departed Sydney on 27 July 2021 and arrived in Tauranga on 3 August 2021 where it anchored offshore before berthing at Tauranga Port with twenty-one crew on board at 1800hrs 4 August 2021.
- NZ Customs advised the Bay of Plenty DHB of the information it had received from the Australian Border force and all work on the vessel was stopped.
- At 0905hrs 5 August 2021, Bay of Plenty DHB advised that it had received further information about the crew on the Rio Del La Plata allowing it to enable a risk assessment of the vessel. It was returned to the status of "normal" and there is no additional risk.
- Vessel departed Tauranga 1407hrs 7 August 2021 and was due to arrive at Napier on 2200hrs 9 August 2021.
- Port of Napier had requested testing of crew before vessel's arrival in Napier. Testing was undertaken and the results received after vessel's departure - 11 of the 21 crew tested positive for COVID-19. (Three of the staff who were identified as acute include the s9(2)(a) ).
- The vessel put to anchor off the coast of Tauranga awaiting the serology results of the testing which were delivered at 1800hrs on 9 August.
- After consulting with its owners, the vessel departed New Zealand on 10 August 2021.

##### Container Vessel Mattina (South Port, Bluff)

- The vessel remains at the original berth in Bluff.
- Six crew on board have recovered while the other seven on board still have symptoms
- The four crew who were in the Sudima (MIQ) in Christchurch were released on 8 August 2021 and relocated to a hotel in Invercargill.
- The Captain transferred from isolation at Southland Hospital to a hotel on 10 August 2021 as he has recovered.
- The three crew at Southland Hospital are being moved to a hospital house for isolation while the crew member who went later to a Christchurch isolation facility is expected to be clear by 18 August 2021.
- More testing of all crew on board is expected in the next few days.
- It is expected that the cook and the culinary specialist will be well enough to resume cooking on board again in the next day or two.
- Southern DHB provided 'deep clean' guidance and equipment to the vessel on 11 August 2021. It is expected the deep clean will take place in the next few days which should allow the recovered crew to board again.
- Southern DHB has advised that it is working towards 17 or 18 August 2021 as a possible date that vessel could receive health clearance.
- Customs is facilitating an interagency workshop on 13 August 2021 to ensure there are no issues with vessel's entry to other NZ ports once health clearance has been granted for the vessel to depart Bluff.

6.1.2 Pre-Departure Testing

s6(c)



6.1.3 Passenger Numbers – Cook Islands



Proactively Released

## 7. COVID-19 Chief Executives Board

### 7.1 Items to Note/Updates

The COVID-19 Chief Executives' Board (CCB) did not meet this week. The next meeting for the CCB will be on 17 August and we will provide you with an update after that meeting.

## 8. COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group

### 8.1 Items to Note/Updates

The COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group met on 10 August. The Group members attended the Reconnecting New Zealanders public forum on 12 August. Sir Brian Roche and Rob Fyfe were members of the panel at the public forum and took part in the discussion.

Members of the Group have had several meetings during the week. These include meetings with Te Rōpū Whakakaupapa Urutā (National Māori Pandemic Group), the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to discuss future Managed Isolation and Quarantine, the Health Transition Unit, and Customs to discuss the Travel Health Pass and border sprints work. The Group also provided input into the agenda for the Delta scenario workshop hosted by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on 10 August.

## 9. Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group

### 9.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group did not meet this week. The next meeting for the Group will be on 25 August. This is due to the Reconnecting New Zealanders public forum which was held on 12 August. The Group's latest report was released this week which discusses the Group's scientific perspective on several questions posed by Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall, Associate Minister for Health, for the country's response to COVID-19. The report provides the Group's strategic public health recommendations on the elimination strategy, what a phased reopening of the country's borders could look like and recommendations on the timing for this reopening strategy.

## 10. Business Leaders Forum

### 10.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Business Leaders' Forum met with the Prime Minister on 10 August. The focus of this meeting was to discuss key messages for the Reconnecting New Zealanders forum. The business community also discussed the employer-based vaccination pilot and highlighted concerns with uptake being lower than expected. The Forum members and the Prime Minister discussed the importance of emphasising the need to get vaccinated to mitigate the risk of future lockdowns, as well as the need to get vaccinated to protect those who cannot. This is particularly important messaging for younger people who may feel they do not need the vaccination as they are lower risk.

## 11. Government Modelling Group

### 11.1 Items to Note/Updates

Updates will be provided in a future weekly report.

Proactively Released

## 12. Upcoming Cabinet Papers

Title	Agency	Committee	Date Expected	Key Contact	Purpose of Paper
s9(2)(f)(iv)					

## 13. Appendix

### Weekly Updates on Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) at the Border from the Ministry of Health

	Audit summary	Audit high-risk findings, and actions taken to remedy	Incidents/Reviews	IPC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Operations Frameworks and guidance documents
Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities (MIQFs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactive release document of IPC Audit 4 findings in final stages of completion</li> <li>IPC Audit 5 scheduled to commence 23 August 2021</li> </ul>			
Airports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IPC Assurance Review Reports released for circulation to relevant stakeholders</li> <li>Progress reporting of recommendations nearing completion</li> </ul>			Draft v1.3 of the IPC guidance for the air border for green and red zones will be presented to the COG and sub-TAG groups in the coming week. Further feedback has been received on the Health Operations Framework for the green and red zones and the Border Operations team continues to work through it.
Maritime/Ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial IPC Reviews at five ports completed</li> <li>Review reports in draft</li> <li>Briefing of Port visit observations with COVID-19 Border Operations completed</li> <li>Four largest Maritime Ports to be reviewed quarterly. Smaller Ports to be rotated each quarter</li> </ul>			No change to the PPE – IPC document which is currently posted on Maritime New Zealand’s website.



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- <sup>3</sup> NZHerald. Covid 19 coronavirus: Iceland deals with growing Delta problem. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/covid-19-coronavirus-iceland-deals-with-growing-delta-problem/POBMY237SUXMD46PHFEZ3OU2BA/> - Accessed 10 August 2021
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