



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI



**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

22 April 2022

Contents

1. Status Summary 2

2. COVID-19 Insights 6

 2.1 Insight of Note Written by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 6

3. Ministry of Health 10

 3.1 Policy/Programme Updates 10

4. Managed Isolation and Quarantine Weekly Report 16

 4.1 Items to Note/Updates 16

 4.2 Operational Update 17

 4.3 Ombudsman Complaints 19

 4.4 Upcoming Communications Issues and Activities 19

 4.5 Invoicing 20

 4.6 Group Arrivals Update 21

5. The Border Executive Board Report 22

 5.1 Key Issues Being Considered 22

6. New Zealand Customs Service Weekly Report 24

 6.1 Items to Note/Updates 24

7. COVID-19 Chief Executives Board 25

 7.1 Items to Note/Updates 25

8. COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group 25

 8.1 Items to Note/Updates 25

9. Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group 25

 9.1 Items to Note/Updates 25

10. Business Leaders Forum 25

 10.1 Items to Note/Updates 25

11. Community Panel 25

 11.1 Items to Note/Updates 25

12. Government Modelling Group 25

 12.1 Items to Note/Updates 25

13. Upcoming Cabinet Papers 26

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
Reconnecting New Zealanders	MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 12 April 2022, step 3 of Reconnecting New Zealand reopening for Australians commenced. As agreed by Cabinet, visa-waiver travellers and existing holders of valid visitor visas will commence from 11.59pm 1 May 2022. The Ministry of Health and the Border Executive Board (BEB) are progressing work on ensuring the maritime border settings are in alignment with evolving public health settings. Amendments to the Maritime Border Order and the Testing Order are being drafted by the Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) for Tranche 1 of this work to reflect suitable alignments as a result of recent changes to the Air Border Order, following further consultation by officials.
	BEB	N/A	●	<p>Air border implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 3.1 has been achieved, which allows Australian citizens and permanent residents arriving from anywhere in the world to enter New Zealand from 11.59 pm Tuesday 12 April 2022. Planning is underway for step 3.2 which allows visa-waiver travellers and existing holders of valid visitor visas (both onshore and offshore) to enter New Zealand from 11.59 pm Sunday 1 May 2022. Planning for steps 4-5 are underway and awaiting confirmation whether dates will be provided moving forward. Planning and working towards system improvements is underway to ensure smooth closure of Air border implementation programme and transition into BAU.
	BEB	N/A	●	<p>Maritime border programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice was provided to you on Friday 14 April around reopening to foreign vessels with an earlier re-opening option of 1 June. Planning is underway to deliver operational readiness, engagement, communication and legislative changes for a 1 June re-opening. There is a risk that the Ministry of Health has limited capacity to provide advice on public health settings for maritime balanced against other priorities.
Testing and vaccination of border workforce	MBIE	●	●	<p>Staff Testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Health have updated their systems so that border workers' self-declared RAT results are now pulled from My Covid Record into the Border Worker Testing Register (BWTR). Compliance reporting is at 61 percent (down 2 percent from last week) for staff who worked in the week of 11-17 April 2022. Uploading RAT results in My Covid Record is causing challenges for some workers, resulting in the appearance of low testing compliance. MOH are working with PCBUs and ICT to identify solution options. MBIE MIQ continue to monitor and liaise with employers, to remind their workers to log all RAT results (positive and negative,) so MBIE MIQ have the best view of workers' compliance. <p>Vaccinations and boosters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BWTR shows, of the workforce on site for the week of 11-17 April 2022, 99.3 percent have had two doses of the vaccine, 0 percent had one dose and 0.7 percent have vaccination status 'unknown'. Of the workers on site the week of 11-17 April 2022, seven workers (0.6 percent) were showing in the BWTR as overdue for a booster. The workforce testing and vaccination team will investigate those to identify whether they are breaches of the Vaccination Order or a result of something else (e.g., data error etc.) Vaccination assurance follow-ups for those with an 'unknown' status in the BWTR on site between 4-10 April 2022 did not identify any breaches of the Vaccination Order. However, follow ups regarding boosters identified four workers who were on site who should have had a booster.
	MFAT	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Samoan Cabinet has decided to suspend seasonal worker flights from 1 May while the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour (MCIL) reviews seasonal work schemes in New Zealand and Australia. s6(a) Planned flights in April will go ahead as scheduled, enabling a 24 April RSE flight to proceed. This decision was announced by MCIL on 13 April. While this is a disruption, industry will be able to source employees from elsewhere in the Pacific s6(a) The exchange of letters with the Cook Islands to suspend the QFT Arrangement and update understandings has now been completed and signed by foreign secretaries from both governments. Major changes to Vanuatu's COVID-19 management restrictions were announced on 8 April, including that it is looking to re-open international borders from 1 July and has called on the private sector to get ready to re-start tourism. Vanuatu officials met with MFAT on 20 April to discuss this. MFAT indicated New Zealand is supportive of Vanuatu safely reopening and that we propose to suspend the one-way QFT Arrangement. Further engagement with New Zealand agencies will take place to support Vanuatu's planning. Further changes to Vanuatu's border settings are being considered by its Ministers.
Reopening new travel pathways - Pacific Islands				

Isolation and Quarantine

	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
Self - Isolation	Managed Isolation	MBIE	●	<p><i>MIQ Readiness Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBIE MIQ are undertaking readiness planning to ensure that MIQ can be reactivated, if necessary, in the medium-term, before the establishment of the National Quarantine Capability (NQC). • As part of readiness planning, MBIE MIQ are exploring commercial arrangements for the retention of key services s9(2)(ba)(i) • MBIE MIQ expect to complete the first version of readiness planning by the end of May 2022. <p><i>Decommissioning Planning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four tranche one facilities were handed back on 14 April. The 'make good' work will continue. 'Make good' claims cover the wear and tear that the hotel has sustained whilst being an MIQ, that is outside the 'normal' wear and tear they would expect to occur in a facility. • The next group of 17 facilities are planned for hand back on 29 April. • One facility is on track for hand back on 1 May, with three for hand back on 13 May. • The hand back of a facility means it is formally decommissioned and MBIE no longer has any role in its operation. • 'Make good' claims are in negotiation. The MIQ Commercial Team are negotiating with each facility based on an inventory submitted by hotels (and has been reviewed by relevant MBIE parties).
		MOH	●	●

Community Protection

	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
Surveillance and Testing	Contact Tracing	MOH	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Health's national target of 90 percent of New Zealanders being able to access a rapid antigen test (RAT) access point within a 20-minute drive has been met. 96.5 percent of the overall population is within this catchment area, and 95.4 percent of Māori are within this area, highlighting the good access across the majority of Aotearoa New Zealand under the current model. • Overall demand for RATs is at a steady state, with most RAT distribution channels resupplying. • On 11 April 2022, the Ministry of Health received 23,330 RAT results compared with 18,818 on 4 April 2022.
		MOH	N/A	●
Technology Updates	Care in the Community	MOH	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No update.
		MOH	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No update.

Vaccination

Agency	Last Week	This Week	
Implementation and operation MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As at 11.59 pm on 19 April 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11,016,865 vaccinations have been delivered. - 3,976,935 people are fully vaccinated. - As at 11:59pm on 19 April 2022, 2,615,407 booster doses have been administered. - 71 percent of people eligible for a booster have received a booster. - 96 percent of the eligible 12 years and over population have now received at least one dose, and 95 percent are now fully vaccinated. - 260,586 Pfizer Paediatric first doses have been administered, with 54 percent of children aged 5-to-11-years having received their first dose of vaccine. 106,060 Paediatric second doses, 22 percent of this population, have been administered. - Nineteen DHBs have reached 90 percent fully vaccinated. Nine DHBs (Waitemata, Auckland, MidCentral, Wairarapa, Capital & Coast, Hutt Valley, Canterbury, South Canterbury, and Southern) have also achieved 90 percent fully vaccinated for Māori. • Booster doses for 16- and 17-year-olds became available on 7 April 2022 via walk-in clinics and 14 April 2022 through Book My Vaccine. • DHB and provider led sprint events continue across the motu. • Planned vaccination activities continue in kura across the motu in reduced numbers due to the school holidays. • Rollout of influenza vaccinations continues at pace. • As at 11.59pm on 18 April 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 373,871 doses of influenza vaccine have been administered. - 253,789 doses have been administered to people aged 65 and older (29.1 percent of the total eligible group). • An interim process to enable pharmacist vaccinators and provisional vaccinators to request authorisation to administer the influenza vaccine to those aged three and over went live on 19 April 2022. <p>Booster uptake and achieving equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine DHBs (Auckland, Waitemata, Midcentral, Wairarapa, Capital & Coast, Hutt Valley, Canterbury, South Canterbury and Southern) have achieved the 90 percent fully vaccinated milestone for Māori. • Positive cases and isolating household contacts continue to impact vaccination rates across the motu. With the recommended wait time for those who have been infected at 3 months, it is expected booster and paediatric vaccination rates will remain low throughout Quarter Two. • DHBs have worked to ensure that capacity was available across the motu through the Easter and ANZAC day public holidays. • Vaccinations rates for disabled people supported by the Ministry of Health's Disability Support Services, are on par with or higher than general population rates. • Panel assessments of applicants for the \$2-million Mental Health and Addiction Peer Support funding have concluded. Due diligence checks are underway for those applicants who have been selected to move to the next stage of the funding process. <p>Boosters for 12-to-17-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boosters for 16 and 17-year-olds commenced on 7 April 2022 for walk-in sites and bookings through Book My Vaccine became available from 14 April 2022. • This cohort has been impacted by the Omicron outbreak, with at least 35 percent testing positive for COVID-19 in the three months preceding 8 April 2022. • Activity is underway to identify opportunities to advise this age group to get their boosters, including communication to schools, communities and individuals, and direct reminders. Media campaigns promoting boosters to this cohort commence this week. • A booster dose is particularly recommended for 16 and 17-year-olds who are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 symptoms and hospitalisation. • Medsafe has received some data from Pfizer for booster doses for the 12-to-15-year-old age group, however, they are currently waiting for Pfizer to submit further information. Once Medsafe receives this additional information, it will be reviewed as a priority. <p>5-11-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHBs continue to work alongside local councils, Iwi, Pasifika and a range of community groups. Coordination with MSD and Ministry of Education remains a constant. • The programme is working with Māori Health Providers (MHPs) and engaging with kura/kohanga within their regions to co-design a 5-to-11-year-old vaccination plan for their rohe. • Sprint events and outreach vaccination clinics held on, or near, school grounds continue to remove access barriers and drive uptake of paediatric doses. • The number of school-based clinics will reduce over the Easter school holidays but are planned to recommence in term two.

System Readiness & Planning

Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment on Status of Focus Area
MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 20 April 2022, the Ministry of Health had 47.7 million RATs stock on hand. Approximately 0.4 million RATs have been dispatched from the warehouse in the last 7 days, noting that no dispatches occurred over the Easter period.The Ministry of Health continues to build its stocks of RATs with additional delivery confirmations happening each day. As at 20 April 2022, there were 59.5 million RATs on order to the end of June 2022, with confirmed deliveries of 24.8 million to the end of June 2022.Overall demand for RATs into the system is at a steady state, with most channels now resupplying based on usage.Demand for RATs under the close contract exemption scheme (CCES) is minimal, on average the Ministry receives six requests a day. An increasing number of these requests originating in the South Island.There are currently 13 RAT devices approved for sale, supply and use in New Zealand. Further devices are currently being evaluated.
DPMC	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AoG Ops Forum is reducing in need and will suspend meetings from 22 April and be postured to restart should a new situation develop.System wide work continues to understand actions and responsibilities across agencies should travellers become unwell with COVID-19 while in New Zealand.Data collation of workforce absenteeism during the Omicron outbreak is being undertaken.The final Interim Variant Response Plan has now been issued.
MOH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Ministry of Health is revising its Testing Plan in preparation for the post-peak Omicron response and is receiving updates on progress. Ministers Hipkins and Verrall are due to report back to Cabinet on the updated testing and surveillance plans on 9 May 2022. The revised Testing Plan will inform the delivery of PCR capacity needs to support the Surveillance, Variant and Winter strategies. The Plan will be reviewed periodically for evolving needs and innovations.

Health Supply Chain
Planning for Next Phase

Proactively Released

2. COVID-19 Insights

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

2.1.1 Indicators of CBD Activity in New Zealand

Introduction

1. The Insights and Reporting Team in DPMC's COVID-19 Group have analysed several indicators of activity in Central Business Districts (CBD's), comparing the first quarters of 2020, 2021, and 2022, in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. The report covers card spend,¹ cell phone activity,² foot, and bicycle traffic, as well as public transportation. A summary of indicators and a growth outlook is also provided for each CBD, followed by a brief canvas of international CBD trends from two cities overseas.
2. CBD activity in the three cities analysed has been increasing since the peak of the Omicron outbreak, though remains well below baseline levels. While the Auckland CBD experienced significant disruptions to activity in early 2022, there has been a moderate rise in levels of card spend and mobile activity in the post-Omicron peak period. Activity in the Wellington CBD is recovering moderately fast, with public transport possibly reaching 2021 levels by May 2022. Though Christchurch CBD activity saw the lowest amount of disruption in proportion to the other two cities in early 2022, evidence indicates that the post-Omicron peak recovery rate is slowest of the three CBD's. While these indicators provide indications of activity across these three CBD's, they are not exhaustive measurements. Additional data around the proportion of those living in each CBD versus those who visit will likely provide further insights around growth rates across CBD's. Further consideration should also be given to better quantify the degree to which pandemic restrictions have impacted New Zealand CBD activity, including whether CBD activity was already declining in the pre-pandemic period.
3. Preliminary reporting from major cities in Canada and Australia indicates that financial and social activity in CBD's has recently increased following respective Omicron outbreaks, in some cases faster than expected. It is a realistic possibility that New Zealand CBD's will follow this trend, particularly as the nation continues to adapt to living with COVID-19 in the community, and the country reopens its borders to international tourism.

Auckland CBD – Across all of the cities analysed, the Auckland CBD had the greatest reduction in financial and social activity compared to prior to the pandemic. All indicators measured from the first quarter of 2022 are operating well below pre-pandemic baselines. Auckland also had the greatest reduction in activity as a proportion between the first quarter of 2020, and the recent Omicron outbreak, compared to other CBD's. Auckland CBD activity in early 2022 under the Community Protection Framework (CPF) is also significantly lower than the pre-Delta period in early 2021, despite two restrictive lockdowns under the Alert Level system in February and March 2021. Activity in the Auckland CBD has been increasing since the Omicron peak at a steady to moderate rate.

4. Worldline EFTPOS³ data shows card spend on retail and hospitality is down in the Auckland CBD, with spend from the first quarter of 2022 at \$139.4mil, down 40 percent (\$91mil) from the same period in 2020 and 32 percent (\$63.9 mil) from 2021.¹ Daily card activity has also remained at a consistent baseline level since the onset of the Omicron outbreak in early 2022. This is likely due to the less restrictive CPF allowing for greater activity to take place during an outbreak, as compared to the disruptions observed from outbreaks under the Alert Level system.
5. The Auckland city-centre faced the largest decline in retail and hospitality card transaction numbers, as a proportion, compared to Wellington and Christchurch.² Hospitality and retail transactions from the first quarter of 2022 in the Auckland CBD are at 3.1 million, and have declined by 54 percent (down 3.5 million) compared to pre-pandemic levels in the same period of 2020, and are down 40 percent (down 2 million)

¹ The term 'card spend' is used to describe the Worldline EFTPOS combined totals for retail and hospitality spending in the CBD.

² The term 'cell phone activity' is used to describe aggregated data of anonymised mobile phone pings (calls, SMS messages, network service pings) sent to cell-towers in a particular area throughout the day. This data allows for hourly and daily estimates on the flow of population numbers across CBD's.

³ Worldline EFTPOS, formerly Paymark, is New Zealand's largest EFTPOS carrier.

compared to the same period in 2021.³ Hospitality and retail spend in the Auckland CBD is slowly increasing since the peak of the Omicron outbreak in late-March 2022, with indications showing the rate is slightly higher than Wellington and Christchurch.⁴

6. While levels of mobile phone activity in the Auckland CBD from the first quarter of 2022 have been slowly increasing since the Omicron peak, mobile phone activity overall is still significantly below both pre-pandemic rates in 2020, as well as levels from 2021.⁵ Disruption to normal levels of mobile activity were also the highest, as a proportion, in Auckland in comparison to Wellington and Christchurch CBD's. Despite this, Auckland CBD has had the biggest percentage increase in mobile activity in March 2022 when compared with the other two cities, suggesting a faster rate of increased activity in the area more broadly.⁶
7. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic⁴ levels have increased from January to March 2022, under the CPF. This activity is well below the same period in 2021 and 2020. Stations monitoring bike and pedestrian levels around the Auckland CBD in the first quarter of 2022 show a total of 416,618 counts, a decrease in activity of 33 percent (down 200,666) compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2020, and a decrease of 18 percent (down 90,764) compared to 2021.⁷
8. Public transport patronage levels declined significantly across the Auckland region in the first quarter of 2022, when compared with the last two years. While this data is not confined to the CBD, the reduction in overall public transport usage does provide an indicator for travel into and out of the CBD, particularly given recent surveys showing that patronage declines are predominantly coming from CBD routes.⁸ Public transport patronage in the first quarter of 2022 in Auckland is roughly one-half (49 percent) of pre-pandemic levels in 2020 and is roughly two-thirds (31 percent) from 2021 levels. Despite lower levels in 2022, rates of patronage have been increasing steadily since the Omicron peak in late-March, growing 7.9 percent between the week of 28 March and 4 April.⁹

Wellington CBD – The Wellington CBD faced far greater disruption to financial and social activity in the first quarter of 2022 during the onset of the Omicron outbreak, compared to the same period from 2020 and 2021. All indicators in 2022 show that levels of activity in Wellington are substantially below comparable pre-pandemic and pre-Delta baselines. However, the decrease was not as significant, as a proportion, as the decrease in the Auckland CBD. Early indications suggest that Wellington CBD activity in the post-Omicron peak period are recovering at a moderate rate, with public transport levels possibly reaching 2021 levels by May 2022.

9. Worldline EFTPOS data shows that while hospitality and retail in the Wellington CBD were operating at near normal levels in 2021, the Omicron outbreak in 2022 significantly impacted card activity. Daily tracking of card activity since the Omicron peak indicates that retail and hospitality activity levels in Wellington CBD are slowly increasing.¹⁰ Data shows that the number of card transactions for retail and hospitality in the Wellington CBD was at 4.9 million, and only decreased by 3 percent (down 159,662) in the first quarter of 2021, compared to pre-pandemic activity in 2020. Card spend during this period in 2021 was actually 1 percent (\$923k) higher than in the same quarter of 2020.¹¹ By contrast, the onset of the Omicron outbreak during the first quarter of 2022 shows a total of 3.3 million retail and hospitality card transactions in the Wellington city-centre, decreasing by 35 and 34 percent from 2020 and 2021, respectively. Card spend in 2022 also declined to \$124.1mil, down 20 percent (\$34.2mil) compared to levels in 2020, and 23 percent (\$35mil) compared to levels in 2021.¹²
10. Levels of mobile activity in the Wellington CBD following the Omicron peak have been slowly increasing, though are doing so at a slower rate compared Auckland. Mobile activity from the first quarter of 2022 in the Wellington CBD is below pre-pandemic and 2021 levels.¹³
11. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic levels from January to March 2022 are below pre-pandemic and 2021 levels for the same period.¹⁴ Bike and pedestrian activity in the first quarter of 2022 shows 280,874 counts, a

⁴ This data was sourced through the Waka Kotahi QLIK application, which counts the number of cyclists and pedestrians along select routes in the CBD of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. While not an exhaustive measurement tool, the application does provide an indicator of activity more generally.

decrease of 32 percent (down 132,467) from pre-pandemic levels in 2019,⁵ and a decline of 20 percent (down 71,767) from the first quarter of 2021.¹⁵

12. While public transport patronage levels in Wellington from the first quarter of 2022 have declined from prior periods, the city is seeing the fastest increase in transport uptake since the Omicron peak.¹⁶ Public transport use from January to March 2022 was 30 and 28 percent below 2020 and 2021 levels, respectively. Since the Omicron peak by late-March, however, levels of public transportation are increasing, showing a rise of 8.5 percent the week of 28 March to 4 April.¹⁷ This rate suggests that 2022 public transport use may match 2021 levels by mid-May.

Christchurch CBD – The Christchurch CBD consistently experienced the lowest amount of disruption to financial and social activity across all of the indicators, compared to the CBD's in Wellington and Auckland. Christchurch has also seen the slowest increase in indicator activity in the following the Omicron peak, including card spend, public transport, and mobility data. Given the later peak of COVID-19 cases in the South Island and Christchurch area, it is possible that activity in the Christchurch CBD may take slightly longer to return to pre-Delta baselines than the other cities analysed.

13. Worldline EFTPOS data shows the Christchurch CBD faced the smallest declines around retail and hospitality card activity at the start of 2022, as a proportion, compared to Auckland and Wellington.¹⁸ Transaction levels for retail and hospitality in the Christchurch CBD in the first quarter of 2022 declined to 1.9 million, a decrease of 20 percent compared to 2020 levels (down 481, 877), and a decrease of 24 percent (down 612,218) to 2021.¹⁹ Despite sizable differences in transaction levels, the difference of retail and hospitality card spend is far less in 2022, currently \$84.5mil, down 6 percent (\$5mil) compared to 2020 and 12 percent (\$11.8mil) compared to 2021.²⁰ Daily tracking of card activity shows that levels of spend and transactions in the Christchurch CBD retail and hospitality sectors since the onset of the Omicron outbreak have remained consistent, showing the lowest amount of disruption across all of the cities analysed.²¹

14. Disruption to normal levels of mobile activity in early 2022 were the lowest in the Christchurch CBD, as a proportion, compared to Wellington and Auckland.²² Though the rate of mobile activity has been gradually increasing in Christchurch since the Omicron peak in mid-March 2022, this has been at a slower rate than Auckland. While data shows that mobile activity in the Christchurch CBD from January 2022 was higher than pre-pandemic and 2021 levels, generally the activity rate in February and March 2022 remained lower than levels seen in the same period for 2020 and 2021.²³ This initial increase in January 2022 compared to earlier periods is possibly the result of an increase in residential apartments and medium density housing around the Christchurch CBD, potentially causing higher activity compared to the 2020 and 2021 baselines.²⁴

15. While 2022 Christchurch CBD pedestrian and bike activity levels are still below pre-pandemic and 2021 numbers, this difference is significantly smaller in proportion, than the differences observed in Wellington and Auckland CBD's. Bike and pedestrian activity in the first quarter of 2022 shows a count of 1.03 million, a decrease of 10 percent compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2020, and a decrease of 7 percent compared to the same period in 2021.²⁵

16. Although Christchurch had the smallest decline in 2022 public transportation levels compared to earlier periods, the city has seen the slowest uptake in patronage since the Omicron peak compared to the other cities analysed.²⁶ Christchurch public transport use from January to March 2022 were 28 percent and 15 percent below 2020 and 2021 levels, respectively.²⁷ Since the Omicron peak in March 2022, levels of public transportation have seen the slowest increase, with a rise of only 4.5 percent in the week of 28 March and 4 April.²⁸

International Trends – Toronto, Canada and Sydney, Australia

17. Data tracking the economic recovery of Toronto, Canada shows that financial and social activity in the downtown financial district and wider metropolitan area have increased in the post-Omicron peak period between January and February 2022. While the volume of weekday workers and visitors in the centrally located financial district are still considerably below pre-pandemic levels from 2019, they have shown record rates of growth since January 2022.²⁹ In-person consumer spending in the metropolitan area,

⁵ Data from 2019 was used to establish a pre-pandemic baseline. This is due to data from 2020 showing artificially low numbers due to ongoing construction in January and February along one of the main routes where activity is counted in Wellington.

though similarly well below pre-pandemic levels, also showed a sharp increase by the end of January 2022 following a steep decline by the end of 2021 due to Omicron restrictions.³⁰ These trends are expected to gradually continue with the partial return of many city-centre workers to the office, and the reintroduction of large-scale sporting events to the city centre.^{31 32}

18. In Sydney, Australia, data similarly suggests that while social and financial activity in the CBD is below pre-pandemic levels from 2019, activity since the start of 2022 has been increasing. Reporting from the Commonwealth Bank saw increases in retail sales, pub and bar spend, and transportation in the CBD in the first weeks of March 2022.³³ Office occupancy levels in the Sydney CBD increased to 41 percent in March 2022, an increase of 23 percent from the month prior.³⁴ Sydney is also experiencing a surge in demand for larger, better quality office space in the CBD.³⁵

Thank you to the following teams that assisted with this report: the Ministry of Transport, the Treasury New Zealand, Waka Kotahi, Statistics New Zealand, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

Proactively Released

3. Ministry of Health

3.1 Policy/Programme Updates

3.1.1 Release of the Disability Rights Commissioner's inquiry report on the current experiences of disabled people and their whānau during the Omicron outbreak

This item updates you on the pending release of the Disability Rights Commissioner, Paula Tesoriero's, report of the first phase of the Human Rights Commission's inquiry into the current experiences of tāngata whaikaha Māori, disabled people, and their whānau during the Omicron outbreak.

The Commissioner indicated that there will be two phases to the inquiry. The first phase is a thematic analysis based on the experiences of tāngata whaikaha Māori, disabled people and their families during the current outbreak. The Commissioner has indicated the first phase report will be publicly released the week of 18 April 2022.

The inquiry report covers many of the issues relating to the Omicron response the disabled community has previously raised with government agencies. There is good alignment between the recommendations in the report and work already delivered or underway by government agencies.

A preliminary draft was provided to the Ministry of Health and other relevant government agencies on 14 April 2022 and representatives from the Ministries of Health and Social Development, ACC and the Department of the Prime Minister. Cabinet met with Paula Tesoriero the following day. This meeting was constructive and all agencies consider the report a thorough and thoughtful analysis of the issues experienced by disabled people during the COVID-19 pandemic, and most acutely with the emergence of Omicron.

The summary themes of the report raise concerns with communications, staying safe during the pandemic, support to isolate safely, disruption to disability support services, unavailable health services, and the lack of support in education settings.

The recommendations are organised into four domains, mainly directed at government agencies:

- taking immediate action;
- preparing for the continued responses to COVID-19;
- designing systems and policies for disability inclusiveness;
- transforming society's cultural assumptions about disability.

The Ministry of Health has provided your office with key messages to respond to any media interest following the release of the report.

Next steps

The Ministry of Health is working with the relevant government agencies on the response to the report. As a first step, the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) is coordinating a cross-agency response to reviewing and responding to the report's recommendations. The Ministry of Health has contributed to this response.

3.1.2 Health system preparedness programme: update

This item provides an update on the Health System Preparedness Programme (HSPP).

COVID-19 Care in the Community

Disability

The Ministry of Health hosted the first People's Group meeting on 11 April 2022. This was an open session designed for disabled people, their whānau and carers to receive the latest information and guidance on alternative pathways for preparing for and responding to COVID-19. Sign language interpreters attended, and a recording of the session is available for sharing with disabled people's networks.

Over 30 people attended the first session, feedback from attendees was positive, and they advised that information the Ministry of Health supplied was informative. It is expected that more people will attend the next meeting scheduled for 5 May 2022.

COVID-19 Information for Disabled People

The disability sector has told us that COVID-19 information for disabled people can be difficult to find. The Ministry of Health, alongside the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and other cross-government agencies, has consolidated support details and resources for disabled people on one page in the Unite Against COVID-19 website. This work included a stocktake of available information, identification of information gaps, and redevelopment of a broad range of up-to-date information. The web page provides practical details on testing, recording test results, what to do if your carer gets COVID-19, how to access welfare support, as well as key information on preparing and keeping safe. This information is monitored and updated as appropriate when changes occur.

Data and Digital

On 12 April 2022, the self-isolation calculator was released. This calculator populates a self-isolation end date based on the date that a person developed symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19.

The calculator addresses ongoing confusion by people on what date they can leave self-isolation.

Clinical – Therapeutics update

New Zealand's supply of Paxlovid™ is currently exceeding requirements. There are 1,032 courses readily available for pharmacies to order, with 24,030 courses in reserve. Pharmac is working on a distribution arrangement with Onelink to act as the wholesaler for hospitals now that more stock is available. The Ministry of Health will soon move to a more business-as-usual approach to ordering for pharmacies once more usage data is gathered by the Ministry. Pharmacies will then be able to order on an 'as required' basis direct from ProPharma.

The Ministry of Health has begun work on reviewing the access criteria for Paxlovid™. The Ministry of Health met with Pharmac on 12 April 2022 to determine access criteria changes, including widening the access scope in response to low demand. There have been no access issues identified to date. Discussion between the Ministry of Health and Pharmac are ongoing.

Communication material to raise awareness and improve timely access to COVID-19 therapeutics is currently being developed. This includes distribution of information to disabled people, disability and older people's organisations, kaupapa Māori providers, immunocompromised individuals, and primary care providers.

Future Modelling of Care in the Community

The Ministry of Health is hosting a workshop with health and social sector officials on 22 April 2022 to discuss the future model for Care in the Community and develop a proposed framework which will be shared with our partners for their input and feedback.

3.1.3 Increasing accessibility of COVID-19 Therapeutics in the Community

This item advises you of the Ministry of Health intent to open a formal joint consultation between the Pharmacy Council and Nursing Council New Zealand, on adding the proposed COVID-19 medicines to the respective prescribers list. This process is in accordance with the requirement of the Director-General to consult with people or organisations that may be affected by a change to the specified prescription medicines before making a legal change by Gazette notice as specified in section 105E(2) of the Medicines Act 1981.

Oral COVID-19 therapeutics in the community have become available for use in New Zealand to reduce the severity of illness and reduce the risk of hospitalisation for those who have a higher risk of becoming unwell. Nirmatrelvir and Ritonavir (Paxlovid™) are currently Medsafe approved and available. Molnupiravir (Lagervrio®) is not yet approved, but imminent approval is anticipated.

The prescribed medicine should be taken as soon as possible after a diagnosis of COVID-19 has been made and within five days of symptoms onset. Pharmacist prescribers and registered nurse prescribers are well positioned to ensure equitable and early access to oral COVID-19 treatment for their local community.

Next steps

The Ministry of Health is working with the Pharmacy Council and Nursing Council to prepare documents to include in the four-week public consultation process. Documentation is expected to be ready for DG approval by end of week (April 22). The Minister will be informed as to when the consultation goes live and updated thereafter on the outcome of the consultation.

3.1.4 National Immunisation Programme

COVID-19 Vaccinations

As at 11.59pm on 19 April 2022:

- 11,016,865 vaccinations have been delivered, including 4,026,254 first doses, 3,976,935 second doses, 31,622 third primary doses, and 2,615,865 booster doses;
- 260,586 paediatric first doses have been administered to 5-to-11-year-old children; 54 percent of this population have received their first dose. 106,060 paediatric second doses have been administered, which is 22 percent of this population;
- 72.7 percent of people aged 18 years and older who are eligible for a booster dose have received it. This is 0.7 percent higher than last week;
- 86 percent of the eligible population five years and older have received at least one dose. 82 percent of this population are fully vaccinated;
- 507 vaccination sites were active on 12 April 2022.

Driving uptake

Nine DHBs have now reached 90 percent fully vaccinated for Māori, with West Coast DHB fewer than 100 doses from achieving this milestone. All DHBs have achieved at least 90 percent first doses and nineteen DHBs have achieved at least 90 percent fully vaccinated for their populations over the age of 12. Northland DHB is 3,261 doses from reaching the 90 percent fully vaccinated milestone as at 11.59pm 19 April 2022.

Positive cases and isolating household contacts continue to impact vaccination rates across the motu. Given the recommended wait time of 90 days for those who have been infected with COVID-19, it is expected that booster and paediatric vaccination rates will be lower throughout quarter two.

DHBs ensured that capacity was available across the motu through the Easter public holiday period. In general, capacity with DHBs is shifting from large vaccination sites to small community sites, as well as transitioning to outreach models to support the delivery of the COVID-19 Vaccine. DHBs and vaccination providers are also looking to leverage the outreach and mobile vaccine services developed through the COVID-19 vaccination programme to provide services and influenza vaccinations to harder-to-reach communities.

DHB and provider led sprint events continue across the motu. The programme continues to support sprint events through facilitation and the removal of roadblocks identified by providers and DHBs.

Boosters

As at 19 April 2022, 2,615,407 people aged 18 years and older have received a booster dose. This represents 72.7 percent of the 3,587,654 people who are currently eligible for a booster. A total of 25,112 people became eligible to receive a booster dose in the week to 19 April 2022.

Boosters for 12-to-17-year-olds

As at 19 April 2022, 3,908 16- and 17-year-olds have received a booster dose. This represents 6.1 percent of the 63,317 eligible people in this age group.

Boosters for rangatahi aged between 12 and 17 years old commenced on 7 April 2022 for walk-in sites and bookings through Book My Vaccine became available from 14 April 2022. This cohort has been impacted by the Omicron outbreak, with at least 35 percent testing positive for COVID-19 in the three months preceding 8 April 2022.

A booster dose is particularly recommended for those aged 16 to 17 years-old who are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 symptoms and hospitalisation.

Communications channels have been updated with revised messaging and activity is underway to identify opportunities to advise this age group to get their boosters, including communication to schools, communities and individuals, and direct reminders. Media campaigns promoting boosters to this cohort commence the week beginning 19 April 2022.

Fourth doses

The Ministry of Health's policy and operational teams are working on potential operational, and implementation approaches to enable fourth doses for the recommended groups. A further update will be provided in next week's report.

5-to-11-year-olds

54 percent of children aged 5-to-11-years-old have either booked or received their first dose as at 11.59pm on 19 April 2022.

To date, 35 percent of eligible tamariki Māori aged 5-to-11-years have been partially vaccinated, equal to last week. 47 percent of Pacific children aged 5-to-11-years have been partially vaccinated, equal to last week.

Across the motu, sprint events and outreach vaccination clinics held on, or near, school grounds continue to remove access barriers and drive uptake of paediatric doses. The number of school-based clinics has reduced for the Easter school holidays but are planned to recommence in term two.

All DHBs are working closely with Māori health providers, Iwi collectives and Pacific Island community connectors to develop further strategies for improving participation of schools and whānau to increase the uptake of vaccines among 5-to-11-year-olds.

The programme is working with Māori Health Providers (MHPs) and engaging with kura/kohanga within their regions to co-design a 5-to-11-year-old vaccination plan for their rohe.

Equity

Vaccination rates have slowed down for all ethnic groups. Booster uptake for Māori is 57 percent and booster uptake for Pacific people is 59 percent, compared to 72.7 percent for the total eligible population.

Pacific People

The Ministry of Health continues to engage with the smaller regions to provide support to DHBs and Pacific health providers to improve vaccination rates for Pacific people. This includes facilitating discussions with the Pacific providers and DHBs to better understand needs and challenges.

Disability and mental health

Vaccination rates for disabled people supported by Disability Support Services (DSS) and ACC continue to track well, with vaccination rates similar to the vaccination rates of the general population.

The \$2 million Peer Support fund has generated a good level of interest, with 41 applications for funding received. Panel assessments for the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Peer Support funding have concluded. Due diligence checks are underway for those applicants who are considered to have met the evaluation criteria and have been selected to move to the next stage of the funding process.

2022 Influenza vaccine rollout

The Influenza Immunisation Programme commenced on 1 April 2022.

As at 11.59pm on 18 April 2022 there were 373,871 influenza vaccinations administered.

DHBs and non-traditional vaccination providers are working through options to offer influenza vaccinations to their eligible populations. Most providers are looking to leverage the outreach and mobile vaccination services developed through the COVID-19 vaccination programme to provide services to harder to reach communities.

An interim process to enable pharmacist vaccinators and provisional vaccinators to request authorisation to administer the influenza vaccine to those aged three and over went live on 19 April 2022. Increasing the number of vaccinators will support timely access to flu vaccinations for high-risk eligible populations. s9(2)(g)(i)

3.1.5 Technical Advisory Group: update

COVID-19 TAG

The COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group (COVID-19 TAG) did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled on 20 May 2022.

CV TAG

The COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CV TAG) did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled on 26 April 2022.

Therapeutics TAG

The COVID-19 Therapeutics Technical Advisory Group (Therapeutics TAG) did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled on 22 April 2022.

CT TAG

The COVID-19 Testing Technical Advisory Group (CT TAG) did not meet in this week, with no future meeting scheduled as of yet.

3.1.6 Upcoming communications issues and activities

As at 19 April 2022:

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement
27 April 2022	Face mask exemption process	MoH	Key messages, FAQs and press release	Yes
5 May 2022	Publicity World Hand Hygiene Day	MoH/Health Quality and Safety Commission	Social, website, press release	TBC
Ongoing	Omicron community outbreak: daily communications and support for the health sector and public, including cases in a number of regions across the country. Updated health advice, rollout of rapid antigen tests (RATs) as main diagnostic tool.	MoH DPMC	Talking points, key messages, communications, website, stakeholder communications	Optional
Ongoing	Testing: who to test / where to test/ record results on My Covid Record/Traveller requirements messaging	MoH DPMC MBIE	Key messages, website, stakeholder communications	No

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4. Managed Isolation and Quarantine Weekly Report

4.1 Items to Note/Updates

4.1.1 Transition and Decommissioning

Four tranche one facilities were handed back on 14 April. Other aspects of decommissioning are either completed or on track to be completed in time.

Facility (by region)	Tranche	Current occupancy	Current phase	Staff on site within last 7 days	Decommissioned (Hand-back date)	Facility RAG status
Auckland						
Crowne Plaza	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Four Points	One	Empty	Decommissioning		14/4/22	
Grand Mercure	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Grand Millenium	One	Empty	Decommissioning		14/4/22	
Novotel/Ibis Ellerslie	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Sebel	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
SO/	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Stamford	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Pullman	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Sudima Airport	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Rydges	One	Empty	Decommissioning		14/4/22	
Naumi (Afghan/refugees)	Two	Empty	Decommissioning	71	13/5/22	
M Social s9(2)(b)(ii)	Two	Empty	Decommissioning	96	29/4/22	
Novotel Airport (mariners)	Two	Empty	Decommissioning	0	13/5/22	
Ramada (deportees)	Two	Empty	Decommissioning		1/5/22	
Jet Park	Core facility	Occupied (12 pax)	N/A core facility	210	N/A	N/A
Holiday Inn	Core facility	Occupied (14 pax)	N/A core facility	179	N/A	N/A
Waipuna Auckland	Core facility	Occupied (25 pax)	N/A core facility	172	N/A	N/A
Hamilton						
Distinction	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Ibis Tainui	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Amohia (Jet Park)	Three	Occupied	Active	89	30/6/22	
Rotorua						
Sudima	Three	Unoccupied	Active	123	30/6/22	
Rydges	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Ibis	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Wellington						
Grand Mercure	Three	Unoccupied	Active	64	30/6/22	
Christchurch						
Chateau on the Park	One	Empty	Decommissioning		14/4/22	
Crowne Plaza	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Distinction	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Sudima Airport	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
Novotel Airport	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	
The Elms	Two	Empty	Decommissioning		13/5/22	
Commodore	Core facility	Occupied (4 pax)	N/A core facility	115	N/A	N/A
Totals:		243 pax		1,119 staff (down 197 from last week)		

4.1.2 Workforce

A rapid reduction in the MIQ workforce has taken place over the past two months. A significant workforce change process is now underway for remaining MBIE-employed staff to fulfil good faith and legislated employment obligations.

As at 31 March 2022 there were 235 FTE employed by MBIE in the MIQ National Office, this had reduced to 185.3 by 19 April, and is expected to reduce to 171.3 by 1 May 2022. This includes confirmed resignations where staff are working out their notice period.

An aide memoire [2122-4105] will be sent to your Office on 22 April 2022, with a further update on the MIQ National Office workforce transition.

4.2 Operational Update

4.2.1 Exemptions Function Removed from Customer Portal on 21 April

Changes to the Maritime Border Order to remove the current isolation requirements for people arriving in New Zealand by sea are currently being progressed by the Ministry of Health. When these come into effect, this will mean that there are no longer any border arrivals required to enter MIQ on arrival to New Zealand.

Unless Medical Officers of Health exercise their s70 powers to require people to go into MIQ (which is unlikely), the only people entering MIQ in the future will be community cases and border arrivals that elect to stay in MIQ and that are authorised to do so by a delegate of the CE MBIE, including quota refugees, Afghanistan arrivals, and Pacific Island crew, until 30 June [2122-3075 refers]. MIQ will also continue to authorise maritime crew to enter MIQ until 31 May 2022 to help these groups transition to new border settings.

As of 15 April, community cases must now consent to isolating in MIQ (rather than be required to be there), following amendments to the Self-Isolation Order you signed last week.

In the absence of any travellers being required to enter MIQ, MBIE removed the MIQ exemptions function from the customer portal on 21 April. While the Isolation and Quarantine Order will continue to reference exemptions from MIQ (temporary and early release), there is no practical reason to have an exemptions function under current border settings. Note that travellers that are authorised to enter MIQ can leave at any time as they are in MIQ by agreement.

4.2.2 Omicron Outbreak – Ongoing Support

MIQ has six facilities across New Zealand designated as Managed Isolation and Quarantine facilities. One of these is empty, and due to be de-designated shortly. These facilities provide support to community cases (including close contacts) who are unable to safely isolate at home, as well as refugees, evacuees, and mariners. Some air crews are also using MIQ facilities.

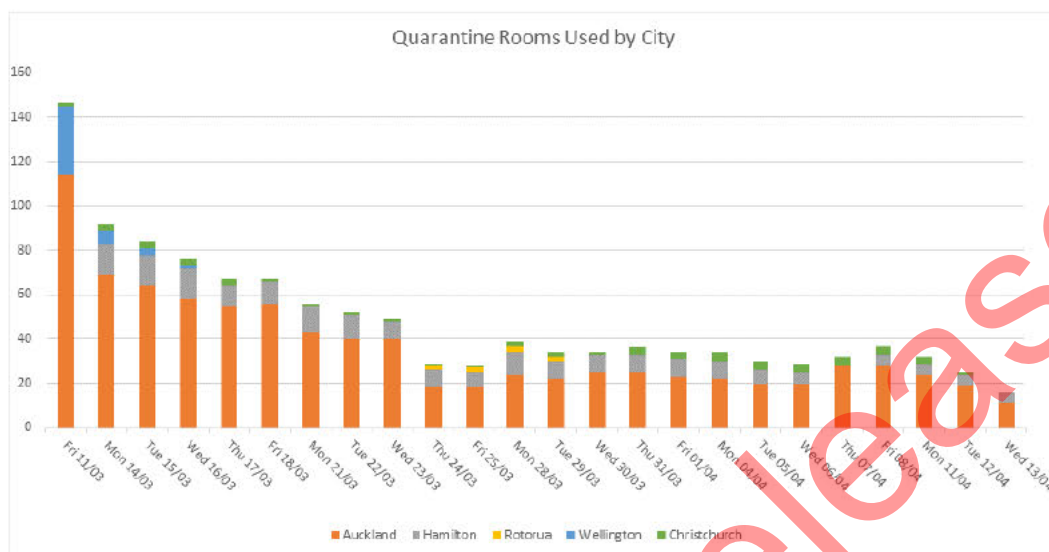
4.2.3 Current Occupancy

As at 21 April 2022 there were 65 people in Managed Isolation and Quarantine.

Total PAX in MIQ:	Community cases:	Mariners/Air Crew:	Evacuees/Refugees:
65	19	9	37

The below graph displays the number of quarantine rooms used for community cases across the MIQ network, broken down by city. Data is currently collected for this reporting on weekdays only.

Overall quarantine usage remains low and with a slight downward trend. This likely reflecting the overall movement in national case numbers.



4.2.4 Vaccination of Frontline Staff (including booster information)

For workers on site for the week 11-17 April 2022, the BWTR shows that 99.3 percent had two doses of the vaccine, 0 percent had one dose and the remaining 0.7 percent (eight workers) had vaccine status 'unknown'.

Of the eight workers with an 'unknown' vaccination status, one still requires an NHI match. The Workforce Testing Team is investigating the remaining seven workers, to confirm their vaccination status.

Vaccination assurance follow-ups for those with an 'unknown' status in the BWTR, on site between 4-10 April 2022, did not identify any breaches of the Vaccination Order. Of the four workers between 4-10 April 2022 who were NHI-matched but showing vaccination status 'unknown', all workers have been confirmed as being compliant with the Vaccination Order.

For workers on site for the week 11-17 April 2022 with regards to booster shots:

Workers on site 11 Apr – 17 Apr 2022	Has received a booster	Overdue for booster	Eligible in coming months	Under 18	Unknown*	Total
	1,064 (95.1%)	7 (0.6%)	42 (3.8%)	5 (0.4%)	1 (0.1%)	1,119

The Workforce Testing and Vaccination team will investigate the seven workers showing as overdue for a booster to check if they were breaches of the Vaccination Order or if there was another reason for that (e.g., a data error).

Of the eight workers who were on site between 4-10 April who appeared to be overdue for a booster (in breach of the Vaccination Order), follow-ups identified four workers who were on site who should have had a booster. In these cases, MBIE MIQ notify management at the facility so they can make sure security staff understand the booster entry requirements. The other workers were identified as data errors, had a medical exemption due to recent recovery from Covid, or were on site last week but not on the days after they were due for a booster.

*The 'unknowns' will likely have their vaccine status updated in due course when they are NHI matched, or any vaccine data issues are sorted.

4.2.5 Staff Testing

The Ministry of Health have updated their systems so that border workers' RAT results are now pulled from My Covid Record into the BWTR.

Reporting from the BWTR shows that 1,119 people undertook work in MBIE facilities last week. The table below shows how many of those workers were either compliant with the Testing Order, were overdue for a test, or still needed to be NHI-matched.

	Workers on site 11-17 April 2022	Percentage of total NHI-matched workers on site
Compliant NHI-matched workers	678	61%
Overdue NHI-matched workers	440	39%
Need NHI-match	1	
Workers on site	1,119	

4.3 Ombudsman Complaints

MBIE are currently managing 87 cases, with 63 of those being preliminary enquiries.

Of the 17 active cases:

- one concerns MIAS;
- five concern emergency allocations;
- three concern exemptions from managed isolation;
- three concern undue financial hardship;
- one concerns access to fresh air in a facility;
- three concern MIQ facilities and;
- s9(2)(ba)(i)

MBIE closed one case in the week ending 11 April 2022.

4.3.1 Self-initiated investigation

s9(2)(ba)(i)

This information has been collated and must be provided to the Office of the Ombudsman by 22 April.

4.4 Upcoming Communications Issues and Activities

As at 19 April 2022:

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement Y/N
20 April TBC	Proactive release of original glide path/future of MIQ documents	MIQ	Reactive comms	Y
20 April TBC	Governance review of MIQ proactive release	MIQ	Reactive comms	N
April TBC	Judicial Review of Grounded Kiwis case	MIQ	May get just a few hours' notice. Have 28 days to consider and appeal.	N
1 May TBC	LAMP Trial with Air NZ	MIQ	Proactive comms with Air NZ	Y – Minister Verrall

4.5 Invoicing

The table below shows the number of invoices issued up to 17 April 2022.

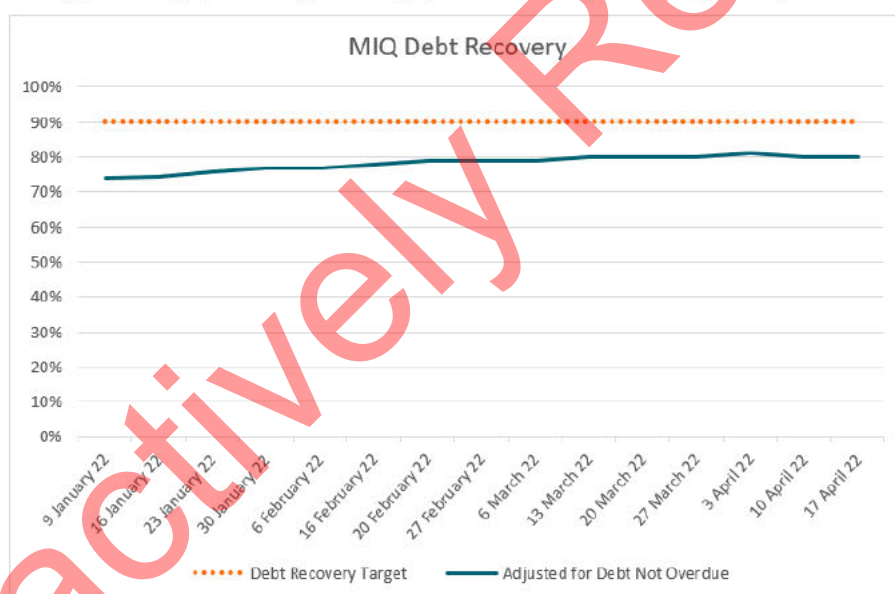
Grouping	Invoices issued (net of credit notes)	Paid	Issued not due	Issued over due	Invoices issued (\$)	Paid (\$)	Issued not due (\$)	Issued overdue (\$)	90+ days over due	90+ days overdue (\$)
Groups /Temp Visa	9,790	6,590	1,208	1,992	\$74,815,670	\$62,072,120	\$3,715,613	\$9,027,937	1,291	\$6,955,362
Maritime	769	616	52	101	\$3,531,826	\$3,100,852	\$87,518	\$343,456	26	\$107,272
Aircrew	313	259	27	27	\$4,655,088	\$2,496,815	\$949,608	\$1,208,664	10	\$116,494
Other	40,392	25,644	4,957	9,791	\$123,007,991	\$86,123,349	\$9,584,147	\$27,300,495	5,908	\$19,198,025
Total	51,264	33,109	6,244	11,911	\$206,010,574	\$153,793,136	\$14,336,887	\$37,880,552	7,235	\$26,377,154
Percentage	100%	64.5%	12.1%	23.2%	100%	74.6%	6.9%	18.3%	14% of invoices issued	13% of \$ value of invoices

4.5.1 Fees Collection

Invoicing is up to the point where returnees left MIQ from 10-17 January 2022. MBIE MIQ are currently ten weeks behind our normal processing timeframes after moving from 14 day stays to seven and 10 day stays in MIQ, which resulted in more people going through MIQ. The increased workload is expected to continue until MBIE finish processing February invoices.

4.5.2 Debt Recovery

The debt recovery percentage, factoring in all repayments to date, is tracking at 80 percent.



Of the now 2,287 invoices worth \$7.821m sent to a debt collection agency:

- \$2.3m has been paid (or is being paid through instalment);
- \$1.326m is currently awaiting information from customers or has been credited due to an error;
- A further \$3.005m (this includes the no address/gone overseas category and passive collection) requires more detailed tracing;
- \$579k currently have waiver applications under assessment;
- The remaining \$611k of debt continues to be a work in progress.

4.5.3 Fee Waivers

All Waiver Applications Received	Received and not progressed	Total Completed	Approved Waiver Applications			Declined Waiver Applications		
			Financial Hardship	Special Circumstances	BOTH	Financial Hardship	Special Circumstances	BOTH
17,019	2,811	11,987	92	8,048	64	1,507	1,946	330

4.5.4 Reducing the Fee Waiver backlog

At the end of 2021 MBIE reported on the backlog of fee waiver applications:

- The number of new applications received from 10 April to 17 April 2022 is 160;
- The net reduction in applications from 13 December 2021 to 17 April 2022 is 2,866;
- The net decrease (weekly) in applications from 10 April to 17 April 2022 is 289.

Status	Backlog at 13 Dec 2021	New Applications Received since 13 Dec 2021	Backlog at 17 April 2022
Processing or to be processed	3,979	3,776	2,021
Waiting for Customer	1,108		200
Total	5,087	3,776	2,221

4.6 Group Arrivals Update

Summary of approved group arrivals as of 19 April 2022 (to end June 2022).

Group	Date of Arrival	Allocation Approved	Final number of rooms allocated	Comments
Refugee Quota	11 – 17 Apr	15	6 (15 pax)	One refugee volunteered to leave MIQ early. The Refugee Centre is forecasting arrivals of 45 pax (30 rooms) per fortnight until end of June 2022. They are confident they will meet their target of 800 refugees for the fiscal year 21/22.
	18 – 24 Apr	18	7 (18 pax)	
	25 Apr – 1 May	31	13 (31 pax)	
	Apr tbc	18	8 (18 pax)	
	May tbc	90	45 (90 pax)	
	June tbc	90	45 (90 pax)	
Afghanistan Arrivals	11 – 17 Apr	23	11 (23 pax)	MFAT estimates 91 left to move out of Afghanistan by 30 April. From 1 May an estimated 58 pax will remain in Afghanistan who MFAT will struggle to move out due to the complexity of their cases.
	18-24 Apr tbc	41	19 (41 pax) tbc	
	25-30 Apr tbc	27	12 (27 pax) tbc	

5. The Border Executive Board Report



5.1 Key Issues Being Considered

The BEB met on 20 April 2022 and considered the following items:

New Zealand Traveller Declaration

The Board received the monthly project update on the New Zealand Traveller Declaration. Discussion confirmed that operations have been tracking well since go live on 31 March, handling the increasing volume of passengers and providing feedback and support to passengers to improve the acceptance rate of documentation.

From 16 April 2022, an enhancement that integrates the New Zealand Traveller Declaration system with eGates was implemented at Wellington and Christchurch international airports. This allows travellers who do not require manual checking of their submitted documents to exit via the eGates rather than their Traveller Declaration being scanned by a Customs Officer. This change will enable passengers who have been issued with the NZTD pass to use the eGates in the same way as they did prior to the closing of the New Zealand border, freeing up Customs staff and considerably speeding up processing arriving passengers.

To date the eGates have worked smoothly, with the exception of those passengers traveling on code share flights. A fix has been tested to address the code share issue and this will be trialled at Christchurch International Airport today. If successful, the fix will be extended to Auckland airport on April 22.

With Tranche one of NZTD moving into business as usual, the programme is now widening its focus towards Tranches two and three, continuing to collaborate with the other border agencies to ensure system opportunities and agency requirements are scoped thoroughly.

Reconnecting New Zealanders – Air Border Implementation

The Board received an update on implementation of the Reconnecting New Zealanders and the most recent step change of Australian citizens and permanent residents arriving from anywhere in the world from 11.59 pm Tuesday 12 April 2022 (“Step 3.1”). Airport operations have largely been well managed, accommodating the increasing passenger numbers from the step change as well as Easter and school holidays travellers.

Agencies continue to work collaboratively across government and with the aviation sector towards the 1 May 2022 (“Step 3.2”) reopening and planning through to Step 5.

As border operations transition towards “business as usual” the Air Border Implementation programme, whilst implementing and planning for next steps, is also shifting its focus to improvement work to streamline and improve some of the processes that had been implemented to keep pace with the frequent changes. The team are working to improve cohesion across the system and enable a programme closure that delivers a smooth transition to BAU. The programme will also actively contribute to pieces of work around future air border environments including, “Enduring border settings”, being led by DPMC and Ministry of Health and Future Health at the border strategy work led by Ministry of Health.

The next meeting is 27 April 2022 and the agenda will focus on strategic objectives for 2022/23 and the border sector strategy development work programme.

5.1.2 Maritime Border Programme

Your comments on Tranche two, stage one (advice on *Reopening for Foreign Vessels*) have been received, with work currently underway with the Ministry of Health, who will provide further advice to you by Friday 22 April that will sit alongside advice about vaccination and testing for the aviation border.

Ministry of Health led Tranche one amendments, removing isolation requirements at the maritime border, remain under consideration in light of operational implications

The Maritime Border Programme will start planning with agencies and stakeholders to be ready for any ships that arrive from 1 June. The New Zealand Traveller Declaration will not be available for maritime passengers until later in 2022 but manual operational work- arounds through winter when arrival volumes should be low should pose no issues. At this stage, agencies are expecting the first large cruise ships (with 2,000-5,000 arriving passengers) from October 2022.

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6. New Zealand Customs Service Weekly Report



6.1 Items to Note/Updates

6.1.1 New Zealand Traveller Declaration System

The New Zealand Traveller Declaration systems and processes are operating as designed and no major issues were identified over the Easter period.

Statistics as at 10.00am on 20 April 2022 since go-live on 25 March 2022:

- 143,291 New Zealand Traveller Declarations started;
- 89,082 New Zealand Traveller Declarations submitted;
- 82,291 Traveller Passes issued;
- 6,652 New Zealand Traveller Declarations rejected. Note, most of these rejections relate to travellers submitting their New Zealand Traveller Declaration before uploading their pre-departure test, or their pre-departure test not meeting the 24 to 48-hour validity rule or being a recognised test in terms of the health rules;
- 425,732 visitors to the New Zealand Traveller Declaration website;
- 10,429 calls received through the Contact Centre with an average wait time of 0.19 seconds.

6.1.2 Compliance Checking at the Border

As part of Reconnecting New Zealanders, the COVID-19 Public Health Response Air Border 2021 came into force on 28 February 2022. Customs staff undertake compliance checks for all travellers at the border. There are now different requirements placed on travellers based on their citizenship and the countries they have travelled to within 14 days of beginning their journey to New Zealand.

Customs continues to check all passengers on arrival for evidence of pre-departure testing or exemption, and vaccination verification or exemption. Travellers who do not provide the required evidence may incur an infringement offence fee between \$500 and \$4,000 depending on the nature of the offence. New Zealand citizens who do not provide the required evidence of vaccination status will be referred to Ministry of Health officials for further intervention.

For the period 12 to 18 April 2022 (both dates inclusive), a total of 30,158 passengers travelled to Aotearoa New Zealand. Of this number, 60 were considered to not meet the requirements for air travel to Aotearoa New Zealand:

- 13 travellers were issued warning letters, and 47 travellers have been issued with an infringement offence fee for not meeting pre-departure testing requirements;
- no travellers have been issued with an infringement offence fee for not meeting vaccination verification requirements, and no travellers have been referred to Ministry of Health for further intervention.

7. COVID-19 Chief Executives Board

7.1 Items to Note/Updates

The COVID-19 Chief Executives Board did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled on Tuesday 3 May 2022.

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 did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday 26 April 2022.

9. Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group

9.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group held its most recent meeting on Wednesday 20 April 2022. Discussions centred on reviewing the COVID-19 Variant Plan, under development by the Ministry of Health. Members also exchanged initial reflections on the future role and operations of the Group beyond the expiry of its current terms of reference on 30 June 2022.

10. Business Leaders Forum

10.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Business Leaders Forum did not meet this week, and does not currently have a date for its next meeting.

11. Community Panel

11.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Community Panel did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 4 May 2022.

12. Government Modelling Group

12.1 Items to Note/Updates

There are no updates from the Government Modelling Group this week. Future updates will be provided where significant.

13. Upcoming Cabinet Papers

s9(2)(f)(iv)



Proactively Released

COVID-19 Insights References

- ¹ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ² Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ³ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ⁴ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ⁵ Statistics NZ, Bespoke request: Activity in NZ CBDs – Not peer-reviewed, not official statistics. Received 13 April 2022.
- ⁶ Statistics NZ, Bespoke request: Activity in NZ CBDs – Not peer-reviewed, not official statistics. Received 13 April 2022.
- ⁷ Waka Kotahi – NZ Transport Agency, Main CBD bicycle and pedestrian counts 12-4-2022. Received 12 April 2022.
- ⁸ Waka Kotahi – Survey Insight – Destination of most recent journey, Auckland, Christchurch, and Wellington Residents. Received 14 April 2022.
- ⁹ Waka Kotahi – Weekly public transportation patronage information for main urban centres. Received 13 April 2022.
- ¹⁰ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ¹¹ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ¹² Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ¹³ Statistics NZ, Bespoke request: Activity in NZ CBDs – Not peer-reviewed, not official statistics. Received 13 April 2022.
- ¹⁴ Waka Kotahi – NZ Transport Agency, Main CBD bicycle and pedestrian counts 12-4-2022. Received 12 April 2022.
- ¹⁵ Waka Kotahi – NZ Transport Agency, Main CBD bicycle and pedestrian counts 12-4-2022. Received 12 April 2022.
- ¹⁶ Waka Kotahi – Weekly public transportation patronage information for main urban centres. Received 13 April 2022.
- ¹⁷ Waka Kotahi – Weekly public transportation patronage information for main urban centres. Received 13 April 2022.
- ¹⁸ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ¹⁹ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ²⁰ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ²¹ Marketview NZ – CBD Spend (Mar Qrts 2020-2022) Wordline Spend and Transaction Data. Received 14 April 2022.
- ²² Statistics NZ, Bespoke request: Activity in NZ CBDs – Not peer-reviewed, not official statistics. Received 13 April 2022.
- ²³ Statistics NZ, Bespoke request: Activity in NZ CBDs – Not peer-reviewed, not official statistics. Received 13 April 2022.
- ²⁴ Statistics NZ, Bespoke request: Activity in NZ CBDs – Not peer-reviewed, not official statistics. Received 13 April 2022.
- ²⁵ Waka Kotahi – NZ Transport Agency, Main CBD bicycle and pedestrian counts 12-4-2022. Received 12 April 2022.
- ²⁶ Waka Kotahi – Weekly public transportation patronage information for main urban centres. Received 13 April 2022.
- ²⁷ Waka Kotahi – Weekly public transportation patronage information for main urban centres. Received 13 April 2022.
- ²⁸ Waka Kotahi – Weekly public transportation patronage information for main urban centres. Received 13 April 2022.
- ²⁹ Toronto Region Board of Trade. Toronto Recovery Tracker. <https://supportbusiness.bot.com/ready-toronto/recovery-tracker-charts/>. Accessed 19 April 2022.
- ³⁰ Toronto Region Board of Trade. Toronto Recovery Tracker. <https://supportbusiness.bot.com/ready-toronto/recovery-tracker-charts/>. Accessed 19 April 2022.
- ³¹ CBC News. Big shift back to in-person office work expected this month in Toronto as COVID-19 restrictions lift. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/big-shift-back-to-in-person-office-work-expected-this-month-in-toronto-as-covid-19-restrictions-lift-1.6367912>. Accessed 19 April 2022.
- ³² Global News. Toronto business hopeful as stadiums fill up for first time since pandemic. <https://globalnews.ca/news/8748775/toronto-businesses-hopeful-leafs-jays-raptors-stadium-fill-up/>. Accessed 19 April 2022.
- ³³ Commonwealth Bank Newsroom. Sydney and Melbourne CBDs getting back to business. <https://www.commbank.com.au/articles/newsroom/2022/03/Sydney-Melbourne-CBDs-business.html>. Accessed 19 April 2022.
- ³⁴ Business News Australia. Encouraging signs: CBD office occupancy levels make a strong recovery. <https://www.businessnewsaustralia.com/articles/cbd-office-occupancy-makes-a-strong-recovery.html>. Accessed 19 April 2022.
- ³⁵ Asia Property Awards. Sydney & Melbourne CBDs experience a surge in demand for office space. <https://www.asiapropertyawards.com/en/sydney-melbourne-cbds-experience-a-surge-in-demand-for-office-space/>. Accessed 19 April 2022.