



Aide-Memoire

RECONNECTING NEW ZEALANDERS READINESS FOR STEPS

To	Rt Hon. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister Hon. Chris Hipkins, Minister for COVID-19 Response	Report No	DPMC-2021/22-1765
From	Cheryl Barnes, DCE, COVID-19 Group, DPMC	Date	23/03/2022

Purpose

1. This Aide-Memoire provides an update on the status of system readiness to go live with the next steps of Reconnecting New Zealanders.

Background

2. This report provides updates on readiness for: (1) The New Zealand Traveller Declaration (NZTD) release; (2) Step 3.1 - more border exceptions for critical workforces, students, sports/events, and Australian citizens from 11.59pm on 12 April; and (3) Step 3.2 – visa waiver travellers and existing visa holders from 11.59pm on 01 May. Appendix A provides an overview summarising the Reconnecting New Zealanders (RNZ) steps, settings, and pathways.
3. Attached to this Aide Memoire is a readiness report dated 23 March 2022.

Comment

Numbers and airline update

4. Since Step 1 of Reconnecting New Zealanders, at 11.59pm on Sunday 27 February, just over 46,000 people have arrived in New Zealand. This averages approximately 2,000 people per day. Around 28,500 of these are from Australia, 4,000 from Pacific Islands and 13,500 from the rest of the world. We also note an upward trend in numbers, with the seven-day rolling average being over 2300 per day.

Readiness

5. This report has an overall Green rating, with activities remaining on track for the current steps included in the report.
6. With the regulatory changes relating to unvaccinated New Zealanders no longer being required to enter MIQ coming into effect at 11.59pm on Friday 18 March, teams across Customs, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and Health agencies welcomed the seven impacted travellers over the weekend with no major issues reported. 33 eligible travellers were also released from MIQ.
7. Overall system readiness for this change was achieved on Sunday as planned meaning that the change is now embedded in working practices and communications materials.

8. This Friday (25 March) sees a staggered launch of the NZTD system. The NZTD is the traveller health declaration system designed to collect COVID-19 related health and travel information from travellers, supporting higher traveller volumes and stronger risk management as New Zealand re-opens its borders. The launch this week includes a targeted deployment of the new technology, a new helpdesk, and global changes to business processes for border agencies and the aviation sector.
9. To enable a smooth transition to the NZTD, the current declaration system Nau Mai Rā will continue to be available for travellers to use until 11:59pm 31 March. At this time, the NZTD will become the only approved and available system for travellers to make a traveller declaration and receive a traveller pass.
10. As usual before a significant change, a number of key readiness aspects remain in progress, including finalised communications and the actual cutover of systems. A final launch decision will be made by the Comptroller of Customs on 24 March and the Minister for COVID-19 Response will receive a further update on NZTD readiness on Thursday from Customs.
11. We continue to monitor the operational pain points the teams are experiencing. These are not impacting readiness and are included here for awareness:
 - a. **Eligible travellers with New Zealand citizens** - there is no systemic way to identify non-New Zealand nationals, partners and children that are eligible to travel to New Zealand with a New Zealander; it must be completed at the airport. *Update: Manual eligibility assessments continue to be completed via a combination of Airport Liaison Officer (AFO) and check-in staff intervention.*
 - b. **Nau Mai Rā (NMR) completion rates** – Latest estimates show an increase from 14% to 16% of travellers are failing to complete NMR declarations. *Update: Non-completion rates continue to put pressure on the Border teams. Customs and Immigration (via Airport Liaison Officers (ALOs)) continue their interventions with travellers. The NZTD launch communications will provide an opportunity to re-educate travellers on the mandatory requirements to travel to New Zealand.*
 - c. **Declarations under NZTD** - With the implementation of the NZTD it is vital that eligible travellers who have not fully completed their NZTD are able to board their flight. *Update: There will be three NZTD traveller pass options available by 31 March: NZTD traveller pass issued by the system; NZTD conditional traveller pass with checked health documentation; paper-based declaration with checked health documentation.*
12. In summary, Agencies remain confident that they are on track to deliver to the upcoming steps.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that you **note** the contents of this aide-memoire.

Cheryl Barnes

Cheryl Barnes
Deputy Chief Executive
COVID-19 Group

Date: 23/03/2022

NOTED

Rt Hon. Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister

Date: / /

NOTED

Hon. Chris Hipkins,
Minister for COVID-19 Response

Date: / /

Cc: COVID-19 Chief Executives Board (with regular meeting papers), COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group

Attachment A Readiness report dated 23 March



Appendix A: RNZ Timeline summary

Reconnecting New Zealanders: Summary Overview (19 March 2022)

DRAFT

Entry pathways

Travellers will enter using one of four entry pathways – only three of these are in use today:



Quarantine Free Travel – entry without quarantine or isolation for eligible travellers from some Pacific Countries



Testing on arrival – entry without quarantine or isolation for eligible travellers with testing before departure and after arrival (on day 0/1 and 5/6)



Managed Isolation and Quarantine – full MIQ for other travellers – small number of exceptional travellers are allowed to use MIQ (e.g. refugees, Antarctic survey team, Air Crew). These individuals can leave MIQ at any time.

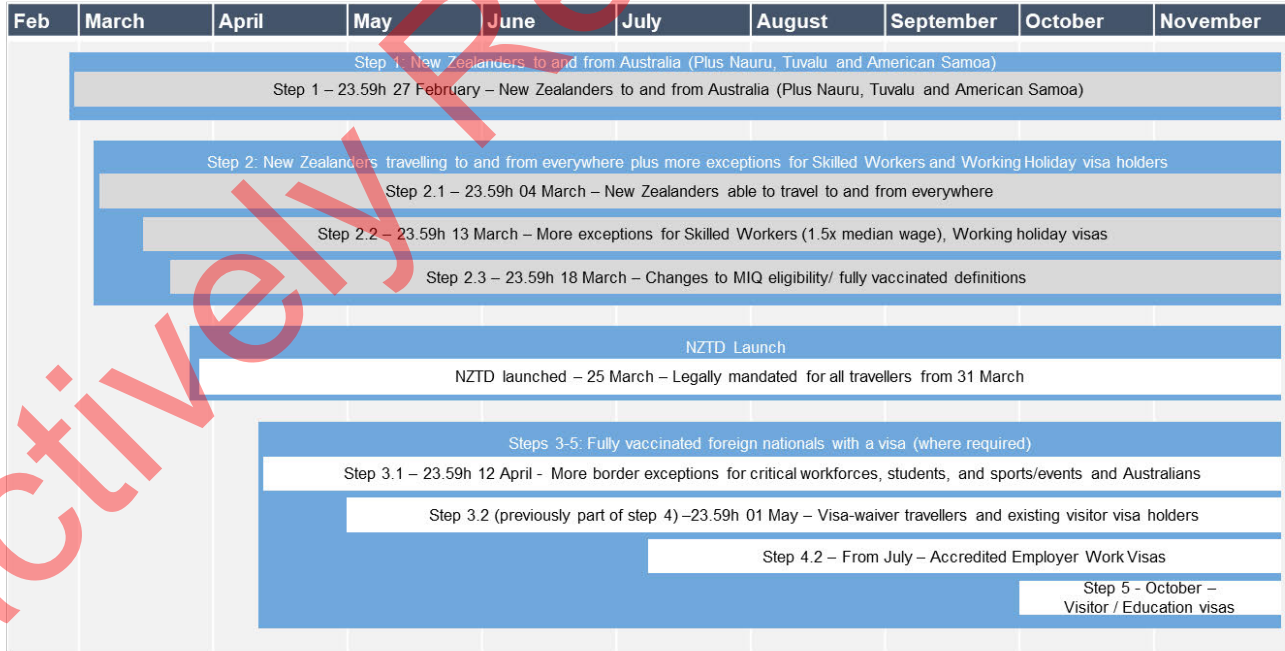


The **self-isolation pathway** is not currently in use.

Key settings summary

Setting	QFT	Test on arrival	MIQ
PDT:	Not required	48h PCR or 24h RAT/LAMP	
Vaccinated	NZers: N/A Non NZers: Fully vaccinated with approved vaccine		
Contact tracing info	Declaration in NMR or NZTD	Information in MIAS	
14 day travel history	Declaration in NMR or NZTD	Information in MIAS	
Testing	Not required	RAT on day 0/1 & 5/6 If positive, PCR at a CTC	Testing on day 0/1, day 3, day 5/6
Testing monitoring & compliance	N/A	Ongoing monitoring, limited compliance & enforcement	Ongoing monitoring compliance & enforcement
Positive test	N/A	Self-isolate with Care in the Community supports	Moved to Quarantine facility
Airport health screening	N/A	Option to self-refer	Required

Reconnecting New Zealanders step phasing and timing



Phasing and timing diagram notes: Grey boxes are live. Eligibility is in addition to: (A) the existing one-way QFT with the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau or Vanuatu, plus travel from Tonga required self-isolation since 22 February; and the existing one-way QFT with the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau or Vanuatu. Travel from Tonga required self-isolation since 22 February. (B) NZ citizens; NZ permanent residents or resident visa holders; Australian citizens or permanent residence visa holders where NZ is their primary place of residence; People with border exceptions or a critical purpose reason to travel; Partners, dependent children, or parents of a dependent child who: hold a visa based on their relationship to an NZ citizen or resident, are travelling with a New Zealander or resident, or are ordinarily resident in NZ.

Reconnecting New Zealanders Readiness Report – Status as at 23 March 2022

Overall status
GREEN

Ref	Lead agency	Group of activities	NZTD Release 25 March / Mandated use 31 March	Step 3.1 Temporary work and student visa holders and Australian citizens from 11.59pm Tuesday 12 April	Step 3.2 Visa waiver countries from 11.59pm Sunday 01 May
1	MoH	Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Change ABO ○ Change DG Notices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Change ABO/DG Notices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Change ABO/DG Notices
2	MoH	Border Health Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Confirm latest Health rules are current and integrated 		
3	Customs	Border Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review Staffing ○ Update SOPs and processes ○ Update staff training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review Staffing ○ Update SOPs and processes ○ Update staff training ≠ Update Immigration Regulations ≠ Update Safe Travel Advisory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review Staffing ○ Update SOPs and processes ○ Update staff training ≠ Update Immigration Regulations ≠ Update Safe Travel Advisory
4	Customs	Aviation sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update FAQ for aviation ○ Update sector advice/ websites ○ Mobilise Queenstown and Wellington operational support (dates TBC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Update FAQ for aviation ○ Update sector advice/ websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Update FAQ for aviation ≠ Update sector advice/ websites
5	MBIE	ALOs / Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update Training for Offshore airports ○ Finalise Integrated Call Centre ready including out of hours and overflow ○ Finalise training for IBOC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Update Training for Offshore airports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Update Training for Offshore airports
6	DPMC	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update websites and comms channels across government ○ Update sector advice/ websites ○ Initiate the 'Re-educate the traveller project' ○ Coordinate and plan with agencies to support the changes ○ Support immediate fixes to operational issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Update websites across government ≠ Update sector advice/ websites ○ Re-educate the traveller project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≠ Update websites across government ≠ Update sector advice/ websites ○ Re-educate the traveller project
7	MBIE	MIQ changes			
8	Customs	NZTD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete Pilot 4 – (pilot is now part of go live on 25 March). ○ Deliver Privacy Impact Assessment, MOU between Agencies ○ Deliver technical/operational support and testing for pilots and go live ○ Implement operational readiness processes ○ Deliver supporting communications and engagement to agencies, stakeholders, airlines and travellers ○ Make final changes based on pilot learnings – 24 March ○ Update NZTD with setting changes – 24 March ○ Open NZTD system 'Go live' - 25 March ○ Mandated cut over to NZTD system – 23:59 31 March (at which point Nau Mai Ra is no longer available for new declarations) 		

Legend: ≠ Not started
 ○ Work in-progress
 ✓ Complete