**DEPARTMENT** OF THE
**PRIME MINISTER** AND **CABINET**
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA

# Briefing

# REPORT ON PROGRESS AGAINST REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE

| To [Minister for COVID-19 Response] (Minister Chris Hipkins) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Date** | 07/04/2022 | **Priority** | Low |
| **Deadline** | 15/04/2022 | **Briefing Number** | DPMC-2021/22-1860 |

## Purpose

1. There have been many reviews of the COVID-19 response, resulting in many recommendations for system improvements across the response. At your request, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet COVID-19 Group coordinate a complete system-view of these recommendations and update the progress against reviews and recommended improvements for the COVID-19 response system. This supports the transparency and visibility of continuous improvement across the system on a regular basis.

2. The purpose of this briefing is to present the fourth (Appendix A) report for March 2022 on the progress against recommendations.

## Recommendations

1. **Note** the contents of the attached A3 report for March 2022 (Appendix A) for the COVID-19 reviews and the progress and update against response recommendations.

2. **Agree** that the attached March 2022 A3 report (Appendix A) will be provided to the COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group for their information.

   **YES / NO**

3. **Agree** that the attached March 2022 A3 report (Appendix A) will be proactively published online to the Unite Against COVID-19 website to provide transparency on real time continuous improvement, and that an appropriate date for publication will be confirmed with your Office.

   **YES / NO**

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|  |  |
|---|---|
| Rachel Sutherland (Acting) **Head of System Assurance & Continuous Improvement COVID-19 Group** | Hon Minister Chris Hipkins **Minister for COVID-19 Response** |
| …../04/2022 | …../04/2022 |

## Contact for telephone discussion if required:

| Name | Position | Telephone | | 1st contact |
|------|----------|-----------|---|---|
| Rachel Sutherland (Acting) | [Head of System & Assurance & Continuous Improvement] [COVID-19 Group] | DDI | s9(2)(a) | ✓ |
| Siobhan Carmichael | [Senior Advisor, Risk and Assurance] [System Assurance and Continuous Improvement] | DDI | s9(2)(a) | |

## Minister's office comments:

☐ Noted
☐ Seen
☐ Approved
☐ Needs change
☐ Withdrawn
☐ Not seen by Minister
☐ Overtaken by events
☐ Referred to

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# REPORT ON PROGRESS AGAINST REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE

## Purpose

1.  These reports intend to provide assurance and visibility to Ministers, and the public, that the COVID-19 Response system is learning and adapting over time.

2.  The March 2022 report is provided in Appendix A.

3.  In preparing this report, we have had a particular emphasis on closing out these recommendations that were 6 months old or more. As of December 2021, there were 153 recommendations over 6 months old that were still open.

4.  The DPMC COVID-19 Group worked with agencies to identify where some recommendations could be closed and where more focus was required. There are now only 89 recommendations open that are over 6 months old. This is a 42% reduction overall, with 93 recommendations closed.

5.  The March 2022 report provides detail about the approach used and some examples of the completed recommendations.

## Changes since the last report

6.  The key changes since the last report are:

    - The report now contains 1659 recommendations (up 60 since last report).

    - These recommendations are contained in 75 reviews (up 3 since last report).

## Next Steps

7.  With a range of changes underway across the system (specifically in response to Omicron and the coming transition to a new health system structure), it is a natural point for processes to be reviewed and refreshed. In particular, as we move towards transitioning the management of COVID-19 as part of business as usual activities, it will become increasingly important for agencies and the COVID-19 system to reflect on recommendations and other continuous improvement processes to embed these lessons, both for any future pandemic but also future ways of operating.

8.  By the next quarterly report, it is expected that a number of agencies will have modified their approach to reporting on the COVID-19 recommendations. In particular, MoH and MBIE (MIQ) are considering adjustments to their recommendation reporting processes.

    a) MoH has implemented a new online system for the ease of updates. Additionally, a review of the governance and processes in place is also underway to mitigate the experienced difficulties in various areas including receiving updates, maintaining record accuracy,

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closing out of old recommendations and reviews as well as addressing a backlog of new reviews in the tracking system.

b) A number of the MBIE (MIQ) recommendations from these reviews required significant work to complete the remedial actions, and as such have taken time to complete and close out. MBIE (MIQ) are working through all the recommendations that still remain and those that are in relation to facilities being decommissioned will be closed out. They also aim to capture any thematic from recommendations and feed into the lessons learnt work that is underway. They will continue to provide updates on ongoing tracking on the remaining few recommendations that require follow up.

9. Additionally, focus is also intended on identifying how the value from these reviews can be maximised. This will include an analysis of the recommendations across all reviews (open and closed recommendations) and drawing out some key insights from the themes of the recommendations (further to regular updates).

## Communications

10. The March 2022 report, is intended to be published on the Unite Against COVID-19 website along with the previous two reports [DPMC-2021/22-1147 refers]. We will work with your Office to find an appropriate date for publication of these three recent reports.

11. The next report is expected to be presented to you in June 2022.

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# Reporting of the progress against Recommendations – March 2022

Data as at 17/02/2022

## 1

### Overview and Focus for this Report – Recommendations that are older than 6 months

This reporting tracks progress made against recommendations from 75 major reviews (conducted by external audits, independent parties or internal reviews) completed during March 2020-December 2021. Recommendations have been categorised into the 10 system themes in the graph below.

The focus of this report were recommendations that were 6 months old or more, with a particular emphasis on closing out these recommendations.

From December, there were 153 recommendations, after our analysis, there was a 42% reduction overall with only 89 open recommendations remaining (noting that since December, 29 recommendations had aged into the 6 months old category). The approach used included:

- Following up with the appropriate agencies for status updates and any pending recommendations for this quarterly reporting.

- For the remaining recommendations still open the System Assurance & Continuous Improvement team reviewed the information provided by agencies. Where this appeared to sufficiently address the original recommendation, this was assessed as completed. This included recommendations that were 'ongoing' in nature, such as those recommendations pertaining to Te Tiriti and equity issues.

- The SACI status identified recommendations where more focus was needed.

The next action point will be identifying key insights from the themes, as described below in section three.
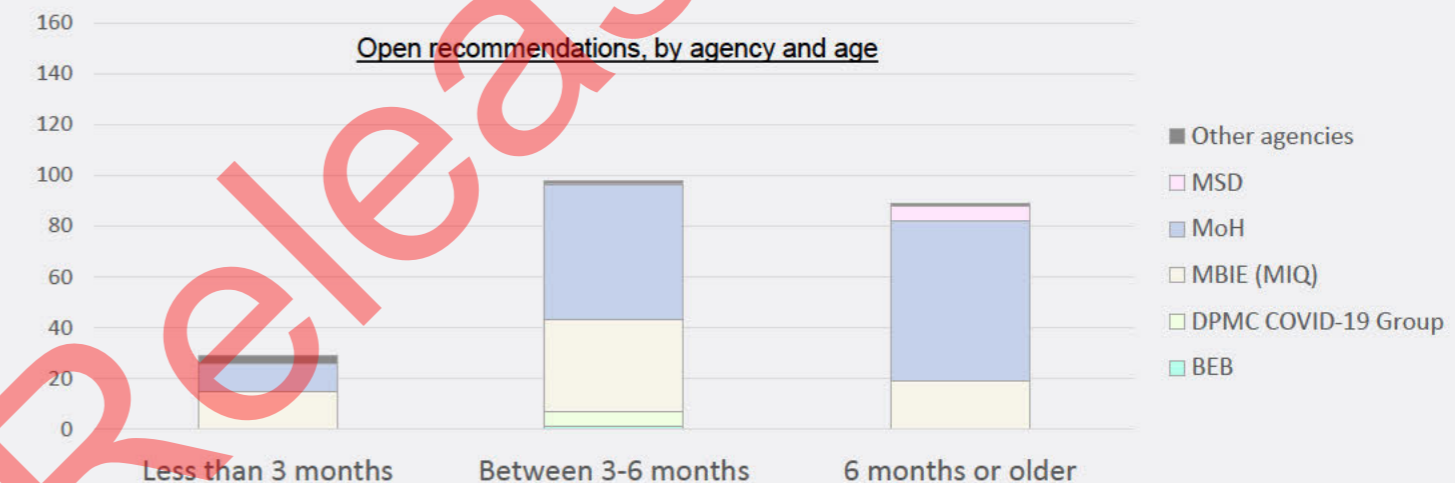
### Quick stats

**75** reviews included — **3** more reviews than last report

**1659** recommendations captured — **60** more recommendations captured than last report

**82%** of recommendations completed (1353 with 122 completed since last report)

**5%** of recommendations have been superseded/not agreed

**13%** of recommendations are in progress



Open recommendations, by agency and age

Legend: Other agencies, MSD, MoH, MBIE (MIQ), DPMC COVID-19 Group, BEB

Categories: Less than 3 months, Between 3-6 months, 6 months or older

## 2

### All Recommendations categorised by their themes and their status (updated)

**Status:** Completed ■ Superseded / Not agreed ■ No status provided ■ In progress ■



Themes (top to bottom):
- Infection Prevention & Control
- Policy & Process Review
- Strategy, Planning, Economic, & Assurance
- Data, Information, Privacy & Technology
- Workforce Sustainability & Resilience
- System Governance, Accountabilities & Leadership
- Communication & Engagement
- Equity & Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Other – Not Yet Defined

X-axis: Number of recommendations (0 to 600)

*Footnote: The 10th theme is Equipment e.g. Facilities and capital pieces, there are currently no recommendations in this theme.*

### Recommendations that were open and at least 6 months old, by agency and some examples

This table shows the recommendations that are 6 months old and the work that has been done to close out these recommendations. It also highlights some examples of the recommendations that have been completed.

| Agency | Remaining recs 6 months old | Now completed recs that were 6 months old | Examples of the completed recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|
| BEB | 0 | 1 | Reconnecting NZers and the consideration of vaccination status |
| DPMC COVID-19 Group | 0 | 15 | Reconnecting NZers strategy steps, comms to the public, and strategic and operational process changes prior to the CPF being embedded. |
| MBIE (MIQ) | 19 | 7 | Remediation work on ventilation from IPC reviews, and resourcing levels including the need to flex across different MIFs which is part of a larger Workforce strategy. |
| MoH | 63 | 68 | Surveillance and testing strategies, some on the MIQ IPC recommendations, and a few on improvements following the Auckland February 2021 outbreak. |
| MSD/C4C | 6 | 0 | The majority of these are ongoing in nature so were considered closed via the 'SACI status', as are about improvements to equity and potential future wage subsidy schemes. |
| Other agencies (e.g. PSC and MBIE) | 1 | 2 | Addressing workforce fatigue including resourcing and training, in particular on response exercises. |
| **Total:** | **89** | **93** | |

## 3

### Highlighting Upcoming Work: Key agencies completing a refresh of their reporting on recommendations processes, and the identification of key insights

Ongoing changes to the system provides opportunities for continuous improvement reporting alongside the COVID-19 recommendations to the response, including the approach to the processes supporting the recommendations. In the next quarterly report we will include a more in-depth look at the recommendations in each of the 10 themes. MoH and MBIE (MIQ) are considering adjustments to their recommendation reporting processes which include:

- MoH has a governance group and a fortnightly working group in place for responding/tracking the reviews/recommendations

- A new online system has been put in place to make it easier for updates, and the governance and updating processes are under review.

- Monthly MIQ recommendations tracker, including sign-offs and reporting to governance and advisory groups

- Consideration about how to take the lessons identified in these recommendations about MIQ into the future design and build of the National Quarantine Service (NQS) operating model.