



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



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



**MINISTRY OF
HEALTH**

MANATŪ HAUORA



**NEW ZEALAND
CUSTOMS SERVICE**
TE MANA ĀRAI O AOTEAROA



BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD



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



COVID-19 Response Weekly Report

13 May 2022

Contents

1. Status Summary 2

2. COVID-19 Insights 7

 2.1 Insight of Note Written by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 7

3. Ministry of Health 10

 3.1 Policy/Programme Updates 10

4. Managed Isolation and Quarantine Weekly Report 17

 4.1 Transition and Readiness 17

 4.2 Operational Update 19

 4.3 Ombudsman Complaints..... 22

 4.4 Upcoming Communications Issues and Activities..... 22

5. The Border Executive Board Report..... 23

 5.1 Key Issues Being Considered 23

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..... 26







 12.1 Items to Note/Updates 26

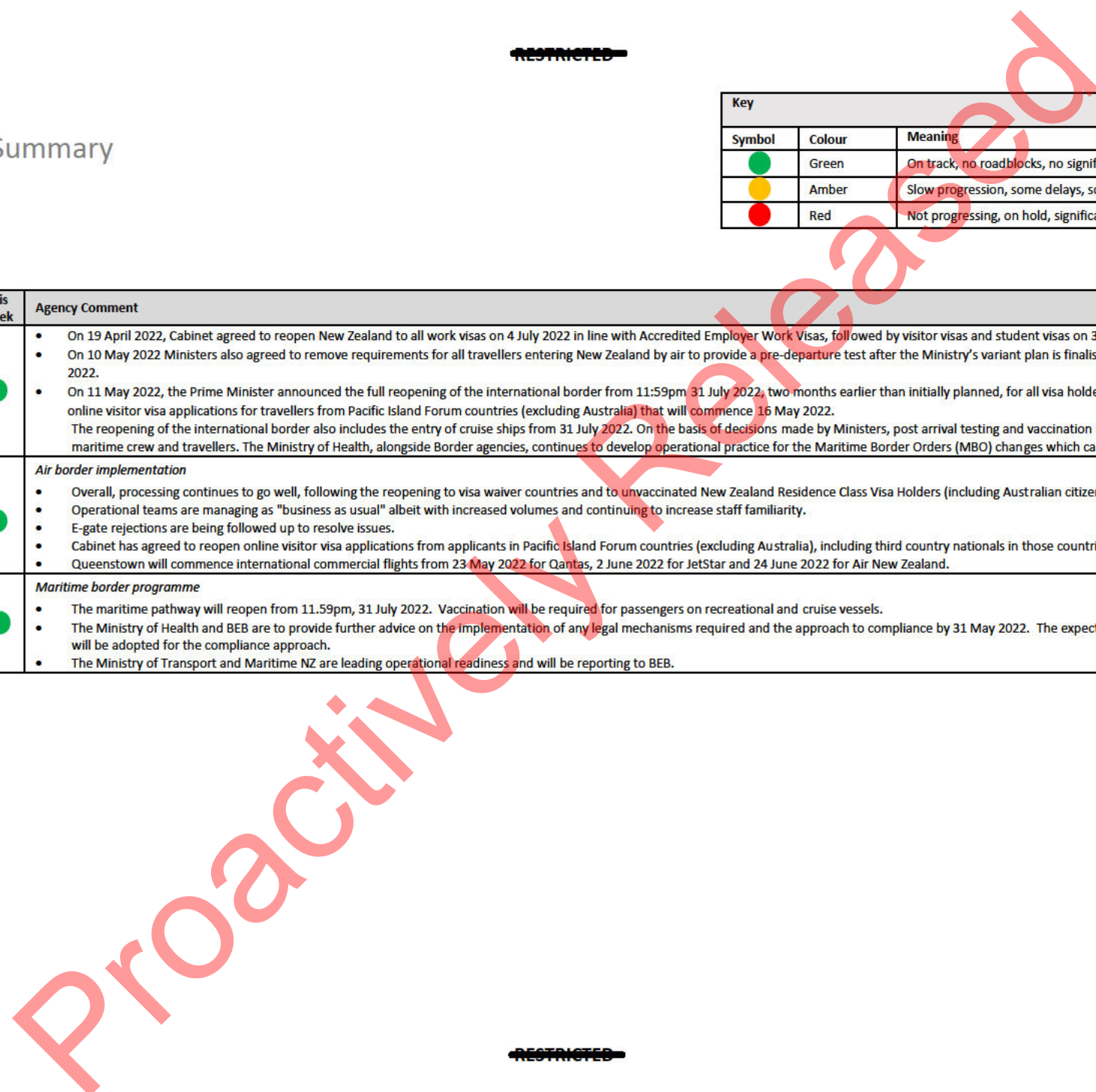
13. Upcoming Cabinet Papers..... 27

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

Reconnecting New Zealanders	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
	MoH			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 19 April 2022, Cabinet agreed to reopen New Zealand to all work visas on 4 July 2022 in line with Accredited Employer Work Visas, followed by visitor visas and student visas on 31 July 2022. On 10 May 2022 Ministers also agreed to remove requirements for all travellers entering New Zealand by air to provide a pre-departure test after the Ministry's variant plan is finalised and no later than 11:59pm 31 July 2022. On 11 May 2022, the Prime Minister announced the full reopening of the international border from 11:59pm 31 July 2022, two months earlier than initially planned, for all visa holders and tourists. This includes entry for online visitor visa applications for travellers from Pacific Island Forum countries (excluding Australia) that will commence 16 May 2022. <p>The reopening of the international border also includes the entry of cruise ships from 31 July 2022. On the basis of decisions made by Ministers, post arrival testing and vaccination requirements will be clarified for maritime crew and travellers. The Ministry of Health, alongside Border agencies, continues to develop operational practice for the Maritime Border Orders (MBO) changes which came into effect 2 May 2022.</p>
	BEB			<p><i>Air border implementation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, processing continues to go well, following the reopening to visa waiver countries and to unvaccinated New Zealand Residence Class Visa Holders (including Australian citizens ordinarily resident). Operational teams are managing as "business as usual" albeit with increased volumes and continuing to increase staff familiarity. E-gate rejections are being followed up to resolve issues. Cabinet has agreed to reopen online visitor visa applications from applicants in Pacific Island Forum countries (excluding Australia), including third country nationals in those countries from 16 May 2022. Queenstown will commence international commercial flights from 23 May 2022 for Qantas, 2 June 2022 for JetStar and 24 June 2022 for Air New Zealand.
	BEB			<p><i>Maritime border programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The maritime pathway will reopen from 11.59pm, 31 July 2022. Vaccination will be required for passengers on recreational and cruise vessels. The Ministry of Health and BEB are to provide further advice on the implementation of any legal mechanisms required and the approach to compliance by 31 May 2022. The expectation of Ministers is that a light touch will be adopted for the compliance approach. The Ministry of Transport and Maritime NZ are leading operational readiness and will be reporting to BEB.



Border Cont'd

Reopening new travel pathways - Pacific Islands	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
	MFAT	●	●	<p><i>Aotearoa New Zealand is supporting Pacific partners' border reopening</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As some Pacific partners begin to plan for reopening, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and other agencies are providing support to Pacific governments where requested. For instance, agencies who previously conducted one-way quarantine free travel (QFT) discussions have held three useful meetings with Vanuatu officials to discuss lessons learned from Aotearoa New Zealand's phased reopening. Vanuatu officials are grateful for this engagement that will support the reopening of their borders (scheduled for 1 July). Similarly, officials are supporting Niue's preparations following its announcement that QFT from New Zealand to Niue will commence from 27 June and weekly passenger flights will resume. <p><i>Aotearoa New Zealand's reopening plans will need to deliver for the Pacific</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Prime Minister's announcement that from 16 May, online visitor visa applications will re-open for applicants in Pacific Island Forum countries, reaffirms New Zealand's commitment to our Pacific relationships and important social, cultural and economic ties. s9(2)(g)(i) Tourism is likely to be a key driver for Pacific partners' reopening, and an important aspect of economic recovery. Some Pacific countries s6(b)(i) have expressed concern about labour shortages in their tourism sectors. There is likely to be some transfer of workers among countries s6(b)(i) and recruitment of third country nationals from beyond the Pacific, s9(2)(g)(i). Aotearoa New Zealand has a role to play in supporting transfers of people to fill vacant roles, including RSE workers. Officials will work with Pacific partners to support the refresh of their tourism sectors. <p><i>Repatriation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first of a series of scheduled repatriation flights for workers and Manaaki scholars to Kiribati will be on 21 May. There are 30 seats available, with priority given to workers who have well-being needs. Two more flights are scheduled for 4 and 18 June. With repatriation now underway for workers from Kiribati, there are established repatriation pathways for workers from all Pacific countries apart from Tuvalu.

Isolation and Quarantine

Self - Isolation Managed Isolation	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
	MBIE	●	●	<p><i>MIQ Readiness Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are on track to deliver Version 1 of the Readiness Plan on 30 May 2022. Alongside the plan, we will provide options for 'retention/surge' with different levels of assurance, indicative costs for contractual retainers and indicative implementation costs for the readiness plan. <p><i>Decommissioning Planning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To date a total of 23 or the 32 facilities have been given back. The 'make good' work on these facilities continues. The next facility is on track for decommissioning on 13 May; Novotel Airport, then two on 1 June; Naumi Auckland and Grand Mercure Wellington. The final two community facilities will be decommissioned on 30 June. Planning continues for decommissioning the final four facilities with the proposed date of 31 July for de-designation and 31 August for decommissioning.
MOH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Update 	

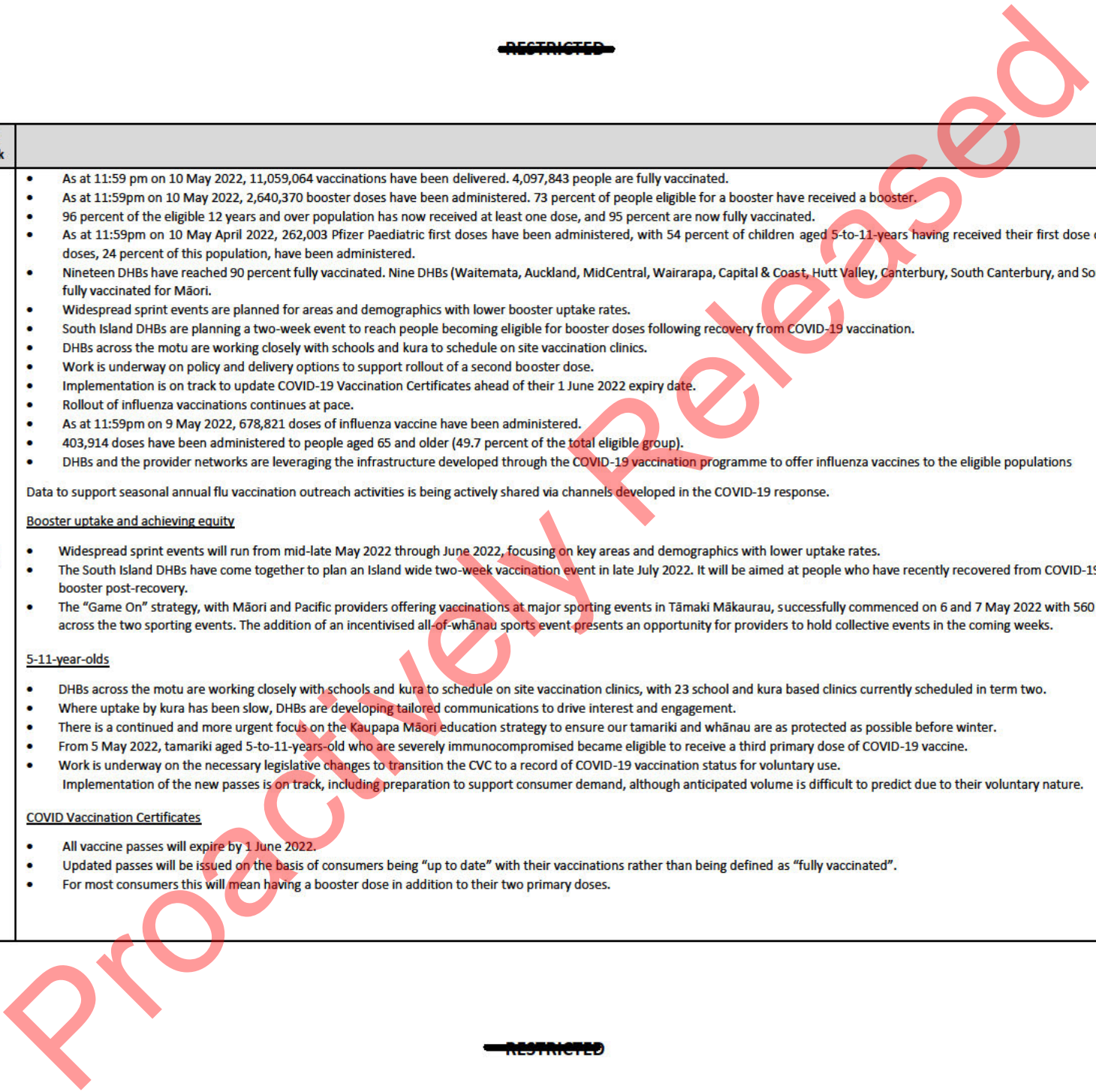
Community Protection

	Agency	Last Week	This Week	
Surveillance and Testing	MOH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Ministry of Health's updated testing plan was approved by Minister Verrall on 29 April 2022, considered by the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee on 4 May 2022, and endorsed by Cabinet on 9 May 2022. This testing plan has been revised in preparation for the post-peak Omicron response and will inform the testing modalities to support the Surveillance, Variant and Winter strategies. The plan will be reviewed periodically as needed when innovations evolve.On 11 May 2022, Minister Verrall signed off a health report agreeing that supervised rapid antigen testing (RAT) by community pharmacies to unvaccinated, asymptomatic, domestic travellers under current settings, continue only until 11.59pm, 10 June 2022, rather than 30 June 2022. Implementation will take four weeks from 11 May 2022 sign-off. This follows Air New Zealand's decision to discontinue the airline's vaccine pass/negative test regime for domestic travel.
Contact Tracing	MOH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No update
Technology Updates	MOH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No Update
Care in the Community	MOH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No Update

Proactively Released

Vaccination

Agency	Last Week	This Week	
Implementation and operation	MoH	● ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As at 11:59 pm on 10 May 2022, 11,059,064 vaccinations have been delivered. 4,097,843 people are fully vaccinated. • As at 11:59pm on 10 May 2022, 2,640,370 booster doses have been administered. 73 percent of people eligible for a booster have received a booster. • 96 percent of the eligible 12 years and over population has now received at least one dose, and 95 percent are now fully vaccinated. • As at 11:59pm on 10 May April 2022, 262,003 Pfizer Paediatric first doses have been administered, with 54 percent of children aged 5-to-11-years having received their first dose of vaccine. 119,331 Paediatric second doses, 24 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. • Widespread sprint events are planned for areas and demographics with lower booster uptake rates. • South Island DHBs are planning a two-week event to reach people becoming eligible for booster doses following recovery from COVID-19 vaccination. • DHBs across the motu are working closely with schools and kura to schedule on site vaccination clinics. • Work is underway on policy and delivery options to support rollout of a second booster dose. • Implementation is on track to update COVID-19 Vaccination Certificates ahead of their 1 June 2022 expiry date. • Rollout of influenza vaccinations continues at pace. • As at 11:59pm on 9 May 2022, 678,821 doses of influenza vaccine have been administered. • 403,914 doses have been administered to people aged 65 and older (49.7 percent of the total eligible group). • DHBs and the provider networks are leveraging the infrastructure developed through the COVID-19 vaccination programme to offer influenza vaccines to the eligible populations <p>Data to support seasonal annual flu vaccination outreach activities is being actively shared via channels developed in the COVID-19 response.</p> <p><u>Booster uptake and achieving equity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread sprint events will run from mid-late May 2022 through June 2022, focusing on key areas and demographics with lower uptake rates. • The South Island DHBs have come together to plan an Island wide two-week vaccination event in late July 2022. It will be aimed at people who have recently recovered from COVID-19 who are becoming eligible for a booster post-recovery. • The “Game On” strategy, with Māori and Pacific providers offering vaccinations at major sporting events in Tāmaki Mākaurau, successfully commenced on 6 and 7 May 2022 with 560 COVID-19 vaccinations administered across the two sporting events. The addition of an incentivised all-of-whānau sports event presents an opportunity for providers to hold collective events in the coming weeks. <p><u>5-11-year-olds</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHBs across the motu are working closely with schools and kura to schedule on site vaccination clinics, with 23 school and kura based clinics currently scheduled in term two. • Where uptake by kura has been slow, DHBs are developing tailored communications to drive interest and engagement. • There is a continued and more urgent focus on the Kaupapa Māori education strategy to ensure our tamariki and whānau are as protected as possible before winter. • From 5 May 2022, tamariki aged 5-to-11-years-old who are severely immunocompromised became eligible to receive a third primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine. • Work is underway on the necessary legislative changes to transition the CVC to a record of COVID-19 vaccination status for voluntary use. • Implementation of the new passes is on track, including preparation to support consumer demand, although anticipated volume is difficult to predict due to their voluntary nature. <p><u>COVID Vaccination Certificates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All vaccine passes will expire by 1 June 2022. • Updated passes will be issued on the basis of consumers being “up to date” with their vaccinations rather than being defined as “fully vaccinated”. • For most consumers this will mean having a booster dose in addition to their two primary doses.



Vaccination Cont'd

Agency	Last Week	This Week	
MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New passes will be made available in two phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 24 May 2022: everyone who has an up-to-date vaccination status for their age group, or everyone who has a temporary medical exemption. - 31 May 2022: the remaining population, including those who are not recommended to have a booster dose due to recent COVID-19 infection, or international arrivals who require a local dose or booster to be considered up to date in New Zealand. Consumers will be able to obtain an updated COVID vaccination certificate (CVC) via the same online and assisted channels that were made available when CVCs first became available in 2021.

System Readiness & Planning

Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment on Status of Focus Area
Health Supply Chain MoH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall supply and distribution of RATs is very steady, with good volumes of RATs in stock and being distributed. Cancelling a current order of 13 million RATs will be considered soon. Existing stock volumes are surge-ready – if there is suddenly a demand for more RATs. In the week ending 5 May 2022, there were 30,000 orders placed in the RAT Requestor system, covering 110,000 people. These numbers exclude people accessing RATs via workplaces, and community providers. On 6 May 2022, the Ministry had 52.3 million RATs stock on hand. Approximately 1.6 million RATs had been dispatched from the warehouse in the previous 7 days. The Ministry continues to build its RATs stocks. As of 6 May 2022, there were 42.2 million RATs on order to 30 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 CCES is minimal. We continue to see a higher proportion of these requests originating in the South Island. Currently 17 RAT devices are approved for sale, supply and use in New Zealand, including three new devices approved last week. As of 4 May 2022, 15 RAT devices are undergoing technical review (stage 2), with four of these awaiting further information for assessment from applicants. 3,928 PCR tests were processed on 11 May 2022 with a total of 24,425 tests completed over the last seven days, and a rolling seven-day average of 3,464. As at week ending 6 May 2022, the Ministry holds at least 12 weeks supply across all personal protection equipment (PPE) categories at current usage. The Ministry of Health is closely managing the sourcing and supply of PPE. The team is also undertaking some work regarding PPE expiry and ensuring that (as much as possible) any PPE that is shortly due to expire is used up, and that resupply of any expiring stock is undertaken.
System Readiness DPMC	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is ongoing, between agencies, to confirm the final outstanding aspect of what happens when a visitor gets COVID-19. This relates to what services are available to travellers that do not have a place to safely isolate and how the system can provide Alternative Accommodation Support for travellers that find themselves in this situation. This outstanding question is being discussed at the DCE Ops hui this week to identify an appropriate pathway forward. DPMC is facilitating a workshop this week to build a comprehensive repository of active and latent COVID-19 system tools. The workshop with AoG agencies is to identify a full list of system tools and considerations required to reactivate tools in the future responses to COVID-19 or for other purposes. Fortnightly NRG meetings are in place to maintain oversight and integration across the AoG system.
Planning for Next Phase DPMC	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next steps for the planning team are finalising an update to the Toolbox section of the plan, and an Omicron response lesson capture to support plan updates. The lesson capture includes a survey and workshop on 25 May. New Variant planning is underway, led by MoH.
MOH	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter planning preparedness continues across Ministry of Health directorates. Modelling is expected to be completed by the end of May 2022. The Ministry of Health continues to monitor the current Omicron outbreak to ensure the COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF) settings remain appropriate. The COVID-19 Assessment Committee meet on 16 May 2022 to review the CPF settings for New Zealand. Ministers with Power to Act will consider the Committee's recommendations on 18 May 2022. Following this, a decision on any changes to traffic light settings for New Zealand will be made.

2. COVID-19 Insights

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

2.1.1 Futureproofing: How Other Countries are Preparing for COVID-19 Variants

Introduction

The Insights and Reporting Team in DPMC's COVID-19 Group have analysed the preparations undertaken by various governments around the globe to prepare for new COVID-19 variants. The jurisdictions examined represent a range of responses, both to the initial COVID-19 outbreak and in their forward planning for future variants. Countries analysed include America, Australia, Denmark, Italy, Germany, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, and the United Kingdom. The analysis covers approaches to COVID-19 testing, infection prevention and control, vaccination, therapeutics, Long-COVID, and the health and response structure.

All of the countries analysed focused on a 'living with the virus' approach to COVID-19 and its subsequent variants. There is an emphasis within long-term plans on maintaining health sector capacity, high levels of vaccination, and methods to keep patients out of the hospital system as much as possible (for instance using telehealth or therapeutic treatments). Many 'new-variant' strategies are also being applied to government efforts against other diseases such as influenza. State resources are generally being focussed on at-risk populations, rather than the general public given the protection that vaccinations have provided. This is a brief report, and more information on the topics within this report is available on request.

Testing:

Approaches to testing for COVID-19 vary, with some countries increasing their testing capacity, whilst others are scaling it back. The majority of countries, including Australia, the USA, and Denmark plan to continue to use surveillance testing moving forward.^{1 2} In preparation for future surges of new COVID-19 variants they have committed to maintaining, or increasing, their current testing capacity, with a focus on high-risk groups. Australia plans to keep existing testing capacity, prioritising those at risk and their household members.³ Similarly, in Denmark, testing requirements apply only to those who are part of at-risk groups.⁴ The USA has identified a need for PCR and at-home tests for all major respiratory pathogens.⁵ To do so, the USA has indicated that they will improve the collection and characterisation of pathogens; expand laboratory capabilities; target sequencing and other surveillance efforts in high-risk transmission zones; and strengthen data systems to detect, characterise, and communicate rare events.⁶ The USA's National Preparedness Plan also seeks to increase equitable access to testing, and is shifting focus to prioritising supporting local community organisations to do so.⁷

Contrastingly, the UK, and Germany, are among the countries scaling back their testing surveillance program.⁸ For example, the UK has decided to end free testing for the general population.⁹ The UK has indicated they will continue to provide free testing for those the National Health Service classifies as at high-risk. They will retain core infrastructure necessary to scale up testing in the instance of a worst-case new variant.

The WHO is encouraging countries to continue to employ strategic testing linked to genomic sequencing to be able to monitor for the emergence and spread of variants.¹⁰ This is intended to pave the way for a sustainable system of integrated disease surveillance.

Infection prevention and control:

Infection prevention and control varies across countries, and includes things such as the use of face masks and personal protective equipment, ventilation and air filtration, social distancing, self-isolation and other measures.

Many countries are supporting face mask use. Italy has demonstrated more variant caution and have indicated they will continue to enforce mask wearing in many public settings.¹¹ The USA plans to supply the public with 400 million N95 masks even though no formal mask mandate exists anymore.¹² The UK also plans to continue to inform the public on COVID-19 best practice behaviour, including where to use face masks.¹³ In several countries personal protective equipment remains free for those working in social care and other high-risk areas due to the risk posed by current and future variants.^{14 15}

Air quality has been an increasing focus of attention worldwide. Unique in the scale of their commitments are the USA and the UK. Both countries have put resources and money into ventilation and air filtration resources and research. One instance of this is the UK providing CO₂ monitors and high efficacy particulate air cleaning units to education facilities.¹⁶

There have been some changes to who is classified high risk. For example, the UK roadmap asserts that the coverage provided by vaccination is sufficient that many of those previously classified high-risk (excepting aged care) are now advised to follow the same guidance as everyone else, as a result of the protection they have received from vaccination.¹⁷ However, it has also introduced a 'stop COVID hanging around campaign' which emphasised the importance that simple actions can have on reducing the transmission of COVID-19.¹⁸

Vaccination:

Most western nations, such as the USA, UK, Australia, and Sweden are prioritising second-dose boosters for their at-risk population, including the immunocompromised and elderly as the protection provided by their original vaccinations wanes.^{19 20 21} For example, Sweden targeting communities with lower rates of second booster uptake, particularly in areas of economic deprivation and high-risk groups like the elderly.²²

There is a growing trajectory towards vaccinating younger people. Many European nations plan to launch a vaccination campaign for children under the age of five, such as Germany, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Poland, the Czech Republic, and the USA, with the USA intending to do so when the FDA authorises a vaccine for that age group.^{23 24}

Vaccine mandates in high-risk sectors are common in the countries analysed. One example is the requirement in France for those working in care homes to be vaccinated.²⁵

The terminology around vaccination is also shifting. The main shift is a change in terminology from 'fully vaccinated' to 'being up to date with vaccination'. This approach is also recommended by the WHO's roadmap for prioritising COVID-19 vaccines.²⁶ For example, Australia's clinical guidelines for 'up-to-date' vaccination status now includes third boosters, and consideration of previous infection by COVID-19.²⁷

As new variants emerge and supply chain issues are exacerbated, some countries are working to obtain new vaccines. The UK government has secured contracts with vaccine suppliers that provide them with access to the most up-to-date vaccines, ensuring protection against emerging variants.²⁸ While the USA government has not announced similar commitments, a roadmap issued by a collective of USA Health Academics and Professionals recommends that America should continue to use the incentives available to rapidly develop novel vaccine platforms, ultimately resulting in a "pan-coronavirus vaccine" effective against current and future strains.²⁹ Both nations have considered expanding domestic and international industrial bases for the manufacture of vaccines.^{30 31}

Therapeutics:

Many countries are looking to expand the use of therapeutic treatments. In the USA, and globally, therapeutic treatments including oral antivirals, monoclonal antibodies, and other biologics are currently supplied primarily to patients already hospitalised, or at high risk of hospitalisation, complications, or death.³² However, in the case of current and future variants they may offer a viable option for mild cases to be treated at home, freeing up hospital beds. The USA is looking to expand this with its recently announced test-to-treat scheme, which will enable people who receive a positive test to immediately collect therapeutic medication from the testing centre.³³ Similar efforts are being undertaken in the UK.³⁴ In contrast to the majority of western nations, Australia's 2.1 billion (AUD) plan for winter preparedness has a relatively minor focus on therapeutic options, despite its provisional approval of several therapeutic treatments.^{35 36}

Long-COVID:

Many countries are dedicating resources toward the establishment of specialised clinics for the treatment of Long-COVID. This comes alongside the decision in most of the countries analysed, to increase investment in healthcare, primarily through increasing capacity and enhancing the use of telehealth (UK and Singapore in particular).^{37 38} In addition to the individual implications, decisions appear to be driven by societal and economic impacts of Long-COVID resulting from reduced work performance and health complications.³⁹ Examples of particular note in addressing Long-COVID are the USA's development of a national research agenda to advance efforts to detect, prevent and treat Long-COVID, and the UK's NHS establishment of specialist physical, cognitive

and psychological assessment, and treatment services throughout England for people experiencing Long-COVID, underpinned by a £100 million plan for 2021-2022.^{40 41}

Health and Response Structure:

The COVID-19 pandemic is influencing the structure of health systems across the globe, with some countries intending to keep components of their new response structures, and others intending to conclude them. The USA's National Preparedness Plan aims to maintain America's emergency response capabilities as established by their COVID Surge Response Playbook.⁴² The government has created a permanent structure to deploy additional medical personnel and to add to hospital capacity if a new variant arises. They will also add at-home tests, anti-viral pills and masks for the general population to the national stockpile for the first time.⁴³ Likewise, the UK plans to increase staffing numbers and expand hospital capacity as needed.⁴⁴ It will also maintain a large focus on 'telehealth' technologies to ensure additional bed capacity in hospitals, which is a similar approach that is being utilised in Singapore.⁴⁵ Singapore's long term roadmap also identifies the need to improve the wellbeing of healthcare workers, highlighting the rise in abuse and harassment towards the profession in the last few years.⁴⁶ Additionally, Thailand has outlined the need for a system to support persons whose mental health might be adversely affected by COVID-19, focusing on three levels of care, the individual, the family, and the community.⁴⁷

In contrast to the majority of countries, Australia has indicated they will focus on providing increased funding to the health sector to help it recover from the impacts of COVID-19 but has made no other commitments to extending any parts of its response past September 2022.⁴⁸

Many governments have identified communications and engagement as a key component of their response. Australia has a long-term COVID-19 communications strategy which will also utilise COVID-19 frameworks for its influenza awareness and vaccination campaigns.⁴⁹ Whilst the USA has issued a Request for Information from researchers, technology platforms, and healthcare workers to understand the impact of COVID-19 misinformation on health care infrastructure during the pandemic; the role that technology platforms played in the societal response to the pandemic; and the human impact of health misinformation.⁵⁰

COVID-19 data infrastructure has also been a focus for some governments, with a notable example the USA.⁵¹ Their Road Map concluded that the government must create a national health data platform with infrastructure to promote health equity, public access to data, faster insight generation, standardised reporting schedules, and inputs, and centralised public health data platforms.

Thank you to the following teams that assisted with this report: Ministry of Health

3. Ministry of Health

3.1 Policy/Programme Updates

3.1.1 Health system preparedness programme: update

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

COVID-19 Care in the Community

Therapeutics update

On 5 May 2022, the Ministry of Health released information on Molnupiravir, associated guidance for the health sector and public communications. This release package included information on Pharmac's widened access criteria for Paxlovid™ and Molnupiravir, and the addition of the intravenous antiviral medicine Remdesivir. This change in criteria will simplify and standardise the process for prescribing these COVID-19 antiviral treatments.

The Ministry of Health is exploring how we can best evaluate the data we have been gathering on stock utilisation and the demographics of who is accessing COVID-19 oral therapeutics, to assess whether prescribing is equitable and reaching the priority populations. We are looking at options for a practice-level audit of Paxlovid™ prescribing and have been working on ways we can improve collaboration between general practices, pharmacies, and Māori and Pacific providers. Current actions include sending a list of local Māori and Pacific providers to practices and pharmacies for awareness and being clearer in sector guidance around collaboration.

Improving Communications and Support for Disabled People

The Ministry of Health is seeking approval from Ministers for \$2 million in funding to be allocated to disabled people for an initiative designed to improve communications and provide additional support.

The initiative proposes that disability organisations and providers would be able to apply for grants from the fund, which will be used in two ways:

- to improve communication resources for disabled people impacted by COVID-19, to help them navigate care pathways and provide resources that enable organisations to reach out to people in their sectors and communities.
- to provide care packages that help disabled people and their households prepare for COVID-19 by stocking up on food and other essentials.

This initiative will let organisations and providers tailor their response to the needs of disabled people in their communities, using and building on the trusted relationships that already exist.

Risk Score tool version 2.0

The risk score tool is part of the COVID-19 digital platform when a positive case is identified. The tool helps to recognise who needs to be prioritised for contact for the first assessment, which determines whether their COVID-19 care needs to be supported with active care management. It also supports the hubs by prioritising outreach from the hub to those who have not responded to the initial text outreach to indicate that they are COVID-19 positive. The tool model uses age, ethnicity, and vaccination status data to inform risk of hospitalisation.

The second version of the risk score tool is being developed to help identify those at increased risk of hospitalisation, and ensure individuals are being appropriately prioritised for monitoring, support, and therapeutics. We are investigating how the available disability data and New Zealand Electronic Prescribing System data for therapeutics may be incorporated into this score, and whether it will improve the accuracy of this tool.

Workforce

Analysis of the winter planning checklist completed by DHBs is underway and is expected to be completed within the next fortnight. Initial analysis indicates issues raised during COVID-19 assurance are likely to be ongoing during winter, including limited workforce availability due to an international shortage of qualified health professionals in key areas such as nursing, general practitioners, and specialists.

The longer-term focus for DHBs is on workforce pressures, in particular on nursing and midwifery. The Nursing Pipeline Working Group (NPWG) has asked the Nursing Council (who is represented on the NPWG) to review the enrolled nurses' scope of practice and extend it, eg, more medication management. The aim is for the new enrolled nurse qualification to staircase with the Bachelor of Nursing to make it easier for enrolled nurses to become registered nurses at a later date. For students who do not complete the Bachelor of Nursing and leave after the first year, it will enable them to get an enrolled nursing qualification. The Ministry of Health is providing 'return to nursing funding' for enrolled and registered nurses working as health care assistants. This can support them to obtain their Annual Practicing Certificate.

3.1.2 National Immunisation Programme

COVID-19 Vaccinations

As at 11:59 pm on 8 May 2022, 11,059,064 vaccinations have been delivered, including 4,288,882 first doses, 4,097,843 second doses, 31,969 third primary doses, and 2,640,370 booster doses.

Vaccinations delivered

For the week ending 8 May 2022, 10,898 doses were administered, of which 2,731 were paediatric doses and 7,404 were booster doses. This is down from the previous week's numbers which were 16,268 doses administered, of which 6,663 were paediatric doses and 8,794 were boosters.

Boosters

- As at 10 May 2022, 2,640,370 people aged 18 years and older have received a booster dose. This represents 73 percent of the 3,617,044 people who are currently eligible for a booster. A total of 8,408 people became eligible to receive a booster dose in the week to 8 May 2022.
- As at 10 May 2022, 8,693 16 and 17-year-olds have received a booster dose. This represents 11 percent of the 81,370 eligible people in this age group.
- Ample capacity for COVID-19 vaccinations remains available across the motu through pharmacy, general practice, Māori and Pacific Health Providers, DHB outreach and community vaccination centres. The primary focuses are to expand the suite of vaccines available at clinics to include Influenza and MMR, and leverage established events and activities to drive uptake.
- There is a focus on key areas and demographics within lower uptake areas to increase vaccination rates including Northland, across Te Manawa Taki, Whanganui, Hawke's Bay and Southern DHBs. Widespread sprint events, leveraging learnings from the localised sprint event pilots in March and April 2022, will be run across these districts from mid-late May through to June 2022. The South Island DHBs have also come together to plan an Island wide two-week vaccination event in late July 2022. It will be aimed at people who have recently recovered from COVID-19 who are becoming eligible for a booster post-recovery

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 10 May 2022.

To date, 35 percent of eligible tamariki Māori aged 5-to-11-years have been partially vaccinated, equal to last week. 48 percent of Pacific children aged 5-to-11-years have been partially vaccinated, equal to last week.

DHBs across the motu are working closely with schools and kura to schedule on-site vaccination clinics. Twenty-three schools and Kura based clinics are currently scheduled in term two. Where uptake by kura has been slow, DHBs are developing tailored communications to drive interest and engagement. There is a

continued and more urgent focus on our Kaupapa Māori education strategy to ensure our tamariki and whānau are as protected as possible before winter.

The third primary dose for immunocompromised children aged between 5-to-11 years was implemented on 5 May 2022.

Equity

Māori

There has been continued activity from providers this past week, particularly across the Māori and the Pacific providers in Tāmaki Makaurau. This was reflected in a noticeable increase in vaccinations during the weekend of 6 and 7 May 2022, with 560 COVID-19 vaccinations administered by the Tāmaki Mākaurau “Game On” participating providers.

The first of the large sport events, the Blues vs the Rebels at Eden Park on 6 May 2022, and the Moana Pasifika vs Waratahs at Mt Smart Stadium on 7 May 2022 was a successful kick-off of the “Game On” strategy. This is a pilot programme which offers tickets to all-of-whānau sports events for consumers who get vaccinated at participating providers. There is an opportunity for providers to hold collective events in the coming weeks.

Working with existing community groups (which offer hauora support, including kai packs, rongoā Māori, oral health, and other vaccinations) has been successful in comparison to events that have focused solely on COVID-19 vaccinations. As a result, there has been a shift in focus to offering flu vaccines as well as COVID-19 vaccines, which is supported by the providers. Where required, DHBS are now funding flu and MMR stock for providers to ensure adequate supply of vaccines for priority communities and are supplying a trained workforce with clinical support.

Pacific people

Pacific vaccination rates remain high for those 12 years and over, with 98 percent partially vaccinated and 97 percent fully vaccinated with two doses. 57 percent of Pacific peoples who are eligible for boosters have received their booster. Forty-eight percent of Pacific children aged 5-11 are partially vaccinated and 14 percent of Pacific children have been fully vaccinated.

Vaccination events where those vaccinated receive whānau tickets to the upcoming 14 May Super Rugby Blues Vs Reds game saw a number of Pacific whānau vaccinated. An event held by Pasifika Family Health on 7 May 2022 saw 258 vaccinations administered. This greatly exceeded the target set for the event of 100 vaccinations.

Providers are reaching out to sports clubs to run vaccination pop-ups based at their clubs and utilising the sports promotion strategy to increase vaccination rates. The Sports Engagement approach is being looked at for other smaller regions with relatively low uptake for Pacific vaccination.

Disability and mental health

As at 8 May 2022, 90 percent of those aged 12 years and over supported by the Ministry’s Disability Support Services (DSS) funding are fully vaccinated. Seventy-nine percent have now received their booster and 25 percent of DSS-supported children aged 5 to 11 are fully vaccinated, with a further 27 percent partially vaccinated.

Eighty-six percent of mental health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) service users aged 12 years and over are fully vaccinated. Those who solely use mental health services have slightly higher vaccination rates at 88 percent, while those who solely use AOD services have lower vaccination rates at 81 percent. Fifty-nine percent of eligible mental health and AOD service users have received their booster dose.

Applications for the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Peer Support fund have now been assessed by the panel. Due diligence processes are now underway. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications within the next two weeks. Of the 41 applications received, 14 so far have been deemed successful, with a spread of providers funded across the motu.

The programme is utilising existing relationships and communication channels to reach the disability and mental health and addictions sector. Key messages are being disseminated to raise awareness of the eligibility criteria and encourage health and disability workers to have conversations with the community and facilitate opportunities for immunisation.

Incidents

For the week ending 8 May 2022, the Ministry of Health was informed of the following new incidents:

- s9(2)(a) [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

s9(2)(g)(i) [redacted]

Update on previously reported incidents:

On 3 March 2022, an incident occurred in Southern DHB that affected one dose for 1,546 consumers and two doses for 28 consumers. As of 3 May 2022:

- 1,003 consumers (64 percent) have completed a replacement dose
- 424 consumers have declined (115) deferred or are undecided in relation to receiving a replacement
- 148 consumers have not responded

The DHB has activated an outreach plan to engage and have finalised the communications plan to contact the remaining 148 consumers with no recorded response.

On 8 April 2022, an incident at Taranaki DHB was reported affecting 60 consumers aged 5 to 11 years, who were administered expired Paediatric Pfizer vaccine. The vaccinations occurred between 28 March and 6 April 2022 concerning three providers at six vaccinating sites. The DHB is leading the incident response and has contacted 58 consumers with an outreach plan for the remaining two whānau.

The outcome of the formal investigation into the incidents will be available early June 2022

Adverse Events following immunisation

s9(2)(k) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] with good engagement from both consumers and healthcare professionals.

The Ministry of Justice has advised that the coroner investigating the first reported death of possible vaccine-mediated myocarditis (reviewed by the COVID-19 Vaccine Independent Safety Monitoring Board in August 2021) will release their findings on 17 May 2022. The coroner’s findings are currently embargoed and will not be proactively published. Communications are preparing reactive messaging.

COVID-19 Vaccination Certificates

The current application of COVID-19 vaccination Certificates (CVCs) were put in place to support the implementation of the COVID-19 Protection Framework. These passes will all expire by 1 June 2022.

The updated pass will be issued on the basis that consumers are 'up to date' with their vaccinations, rather than being defined as 'fully vaccinated' as has been the case until now. For most consumers this will mean having two primary doses in addition to a booster dose.

Legal work is underway to revoke the appropriate elements of the COVID-19 Public Health Response (COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate) Order 2021 and to transition CVCs to a record of COVID-19 vaccination status for voluntary use.

Consumers will be able to obtain the updated passes by accessing the same online and assisted channels that were available when they were first issued in 2021.

Implementation of the new certificates remains on track and comprises three main workstreams being:

- planning and execution of the communications approach
- updating the supporting technology to issue a revised pass in accordance with the 'up to date' definition
- preparation of the assisted channels to support consumer demand (noting the uncertainty of demand for the voluntary passes).

Communications Update

The Ministry of Health has worked with Clemenger BBDO, to launch a new television commercial on 15 May 2022, which is designed to connect with parents to 'normalise' immunisation as what parents do to protect their tamariki and rangatahi. To achieve the commercial's purpose, it will be launched with no specific COVID-19 call-to-action. This will allow time for the overarching message to be established i.e., 'immunisations are what I do to protect my tamariki', before bringing in the COVID-19-specific message. The rational, more informative, layer encouraging childhood immunisations through other media channels will continue, and the specific COVID-19 call-to-action will be added from 7 June 2022.

A Winter Wellness framework has been developed to guide communications across COVID-19 Response and the wider health system for the winter of 2022. This coordinated approach across a pre-winter, winter and post winter period and beyond will enable communications to be targeted at the right audiences, at the right time, and with amplification of these campaigns and messaging across all available platforms. A unifying identity that tells a story of 'keeping well for winter' has been developed and will be used across a range of collateral and platforms. The first day of winter (1 June 2022) will provide a vehicle for a range of communications activity across the motu to highlight a range of winter-related health messaging including flu, MMR and COVID-19 vaccinations.

The communications approach encouraging people who have not yet received their booster to get one has been refreshed in recent weeks to prioritise more targeted communications to priority groups, while utilising above the line advertising to reinforce new information such as three-month waiting time post COVID-19 infection and 16 and 17-year-olds now able to get their booster.

Direct messaging via text continues to remind people who are three months post COVID-19 infection and have not yet received their vaccination to get their booster. In addition, last week 350,000 people received an email or text from the Director General to encourage them to get their booster. The success rate of these direct marketing efforts continues to be reviewed

3.1.3 Technical Advisory Group: update

COVID-19 TAG

The COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group (COVID-19 TAG) did not meet in the week commencing 2 May 2022. The next COVID-19 TAG meeting is scheduled for 20 May 2022.

CV TAG

The COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CV TAG) did not meet in the week commencing 2 May 2022. The next CV TAG meeting is scheduled for 10 May 2022.

Therapeutics TAG

COVID-19 Therapeutics Technical Advisory Group (Therapeutics TAG) met on 6 May 2022 and discussed the following items.

- Therapeutics
 - Pharmac update
 - Medsafe update
 - Science and Technical Advice update
 - Primary Care update
- Equity considerations
- Antiviral Access Criteria update
- Evusheld update
- The role of serology
- Clinical Management of COVID-19 in Hospitalised Adults (including in pregnancy) Guideline updates

The next Therapeutics TAG meeting is scheduled for 20 May 2022.

CT TAG

The COVID-19 Testing Technical Advisory Group (CT TAG) met on 6 May 2022 and discussed the following items.

- Testing strategy update
- SARS-CoV-2 Antibody and Immunity Testing Memo
- Proposed Direction of CT TAG
- Testing Plan
- Surveillance Plan
- COVID-19 Therapeutics TAG: Use of Serology
- COVID Testing team changes update

The next CT TAG meeting is scheduled for 17 May 2022.

3.1.4 Upcoming communications issues and activities

As at 10 May 2022

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement
11 May 2022	Reconnecting New Zealand announcement	MBIE/MoH	Information on updates to border orders/pre-departure testing/vaccine requirements etc have been sent over to Minister Hipkins' office. The Prime Minister is due to make the announcement.	Prime Minister
13 May 2022	Winter Wellness announcement	MoH	Director-General to talk about winter wellness – being prepared over winter, new variants, hybrid immunity, reinfection.	Director-General only
13 May or 16 May 2022	My Vaccine pass	MoH	New vaccine pass available from 24 May 2022.	Minister Hipkins
Ongoing	New variants – planning for new variants and looking at new XE variant/BA.4/BA.5	MoH	Updated Q&A due to go to Minister's Office 10 May 2022, after DG sign out. Full communications plan in the process of being developed.	Minister Hipkins
Ongoing	Border Worker Testing	MoH	Changes to border worker testing requirements – details TBC.	TBC
Ongoing	Reports into the Delta outbreak and PCR testing capacity are being reviewed and once finalised will go over to the Minister's office with recommendations.	MoH	Full communications plan.	Minister Hipkins
Ongoing	Omicron community outbreak – daily communications and support for the health sector and public, including cases in a number of regions across the country.	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

4. Managed Isolation and Quarantine Weekly Report

4.1 Transition and Readiness

4.1.1 Workforce

There is to be a rapid reduction in the MIQ workforce. A further 15 people employed by MBIE in the MIQ National Office will leave this week taking the total to 138 by 13 May 2022. This includes confirmed resignations where staff are working out their notice period.

As of 10 May, the formal change process for the remaining facilities, and our regional and national offices commenced. This will provide an opportunity to give feedback on the proposed structure and positions identified for the National Quarantine Capability (NQC), which will number approximately 34-40 roles in total.

The consultation period ends 24 May and feedback will be considered 24-31 May. We expect that the decision for the new operating model will be made in early June and implemented mid-July.

4.1.2 Decommissioning of Facilities

23 of the 32 facilities have now been given back. 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	Hand-back date	Facility RAG status
Auckland						
Crowne Plaza	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
Four Points	One	Empty	Decommissioned		14/4/22	Blue
Grand Mercure	One	Empty	Decommissioning		29/4/22	Blue
Grand Millenium	One	Empty	Decommissioned		14/4/22	Blue
Novotel/Ibis Ellerslie	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
Sebel	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
SO	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
Stamford	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
Pullman	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
Sudima Airport	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
Rydges	One	Empty	Decommissioned		14/4/22	Blue
Naumi (Afghan/refugees)	Two	Empty	De-designated		1/6/22	Green
M Social (aircrew)	Two	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue
Novotel Airport (mariners)	Two	Empty	De-designated		13/5/22	Green
Ramada (deportees)	Two	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	Blue

Facility (by region)	Tranche	Current occupancy	Current phase	Staff on site within last 7 days	Hand-back date	Facility RAG status
Auckland						
Jet Park	Core facility	Occupied (8 pax)	N/A core facility	203	N/A	N/A
Holiday Inn	Core facility	Occupied (16 pax)	N/A core facility	189	N/A	N/A
Waipuna Auckland	Core facility	Occupied (10 pax)	N/A core facility	150	N/A	N/A
Hamilton						
Distinction	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Ibis Tainui	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Amohia (Jet Park)	Three	Empty	De-designated		30/6/22	
Rotorua						
Sudima	Three	Empty	De-designated		30/6/22	
Rydges	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Ibis	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Wellington						
Grand Mercure	Three	Empty	De-designated		1/6/22	
Christchurch						
Chateau on the Park	One	Empty	Decommissioned		14/4/22	
Crowne Plaza	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Distinction	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Sudima Airport	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Novotel Airport	One	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
The Elms	Two	Empty	Decommissioned		29/4/22	
Commodore	Core facility	Occupied (1 pax)	N/A core facility	123	N/A	N/A
Totals:		35 pax		665 staff (down from 228 last week)		

4.1.3 Knowledge Legacy

A programme of work is underway to ensure that MBIE scale back or decommission the functions that MBIE undertake as a Business Group within MBIE in a responsible way. This includes ensuring that we continue to meet our obligations as a government agency, decommissioning or putting in sleep mode technology systems that are no longer needed, and capturing lessons learned.

4.1.4 Readiness Programme

MBIE are on track to deliver Version 1 of the Readiness Plan on 30 May 2022.

Alongside the plan, MBIE will provide options for 'retention/surge' with different levels of assurance, indicative costs for contractual retainers and indicative implementation costs for the readiness plan.

4.2 Operational Update

4.2.1 Omicron Outbreak – Ongoing Support

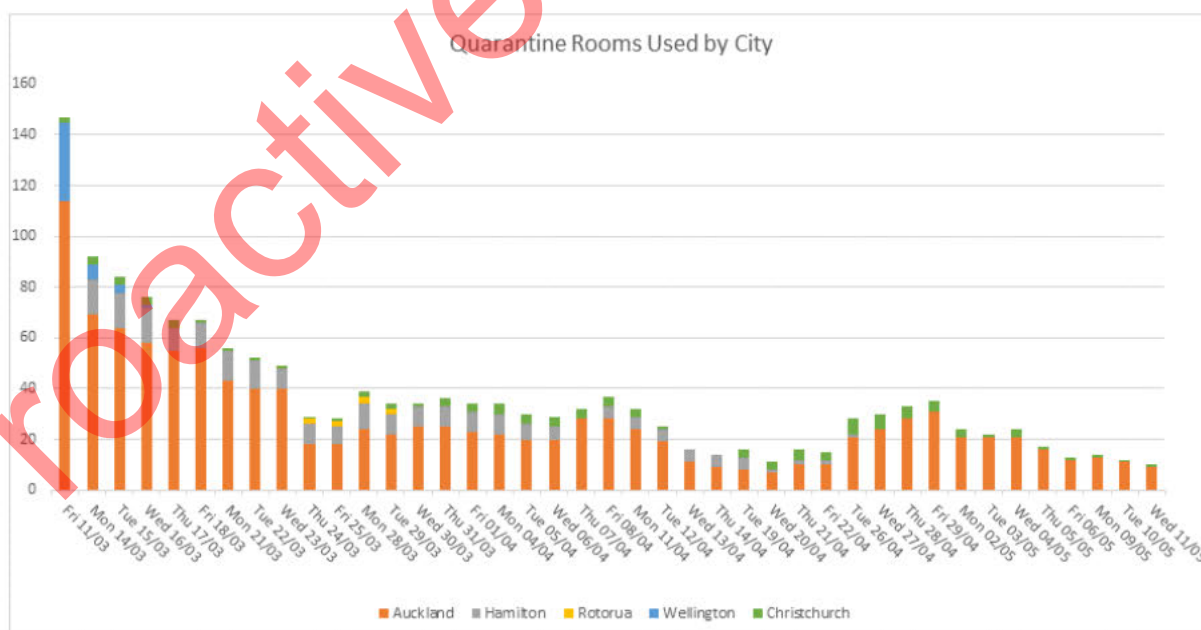
MIQ has four facilities across New Zealand designated as Managed Isolation and Quarantine facilities. These facilities provide support to community cases (including close contacts) who are unable to safely isolate at home, as well as refugees, evacuees, mariners, and some air crew.

4.2.2 Current Occupancy

As at 12 May 2022 there were 35 people in Managed Isolation and Quarantine.

Total PAX in MIQ:	Community cases:	Mariners/Air Crew:	Evacuees/Refugees:
35	17	4	14

4.2.3 Community Cases in MIQF



Overall quarantine usage remains low and with a slight upward trend at the end of April – likely reflecting the overall movement in national case numbers.

4.2.4 Group Arrivals Update

Summary of approved group arrivals as of 03 May 2022 (to end June 2022)

Group	Date of Arrival	Allocation Approved	Final number of rooms allocated	Comments
Refugee Quota	9 May – 15 May	18	12 (18 pax)	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. MBIE are currently discussing with the Refugee Centre their transition out of MIQ post-June.
	16 May – 22 May	25	11 (25 pax)	
	23 May – 29 May	31	17 (31 pax)	
	May tbc	74	34 (74 pax)	
	June	90	45 (90 pax)	
Afghanistan Arrivals	May TBC	28	12 (28 pax)	There are approximately 100 Afghanistan Evacuees to arrive before the end of July. They will arrive sporadically in small groups and not all of them will enter MIQ.

4.2.5 Invoicing

The table below shows the number of invoices issued up to 8 May 2022.

Grouping	Invoices issued (net of credit notes)	Paid	Issued not due	Issued overdue	Invoices issued (\$)	Paid (\$)	Issued not due (\$)	Issued overdue (\$)	90+ days over due	90+ days overdue (\$)
Groups /Temp Visa	11,011	7,197	1,726	2,088	\$77,989,500	\$64,002,866	\$4,919,120	\$9,067,514	1,335	\$6,936,584
Maritime	797	657	47	93	\$3,620,323	\$3,228,732	\$98,856	\$292,735	27	\$118,312
Aircrew	330	280	25	25	\$5,286,912	\$3,330,594	\$1,283,563	\$672,755	9	\$115,608
Other	46,090	28,269	7,725	10,096	\$132,998,169	\$90,952,411	\$14,544,589	\$27,501,169	5,754	\$18,606,004
Total	58,228	36,403	9,523	12,302	\$219,894,904	\$161,514,602	\$20,846,128	\$37,534,174	7,125	\$25,776,508
Percentage	100%	62.5%	16.3%	21.1%	100%	73.4%	9.4%	17.1%	12.2% of invoices issued	11.7% of \$ value of invoices

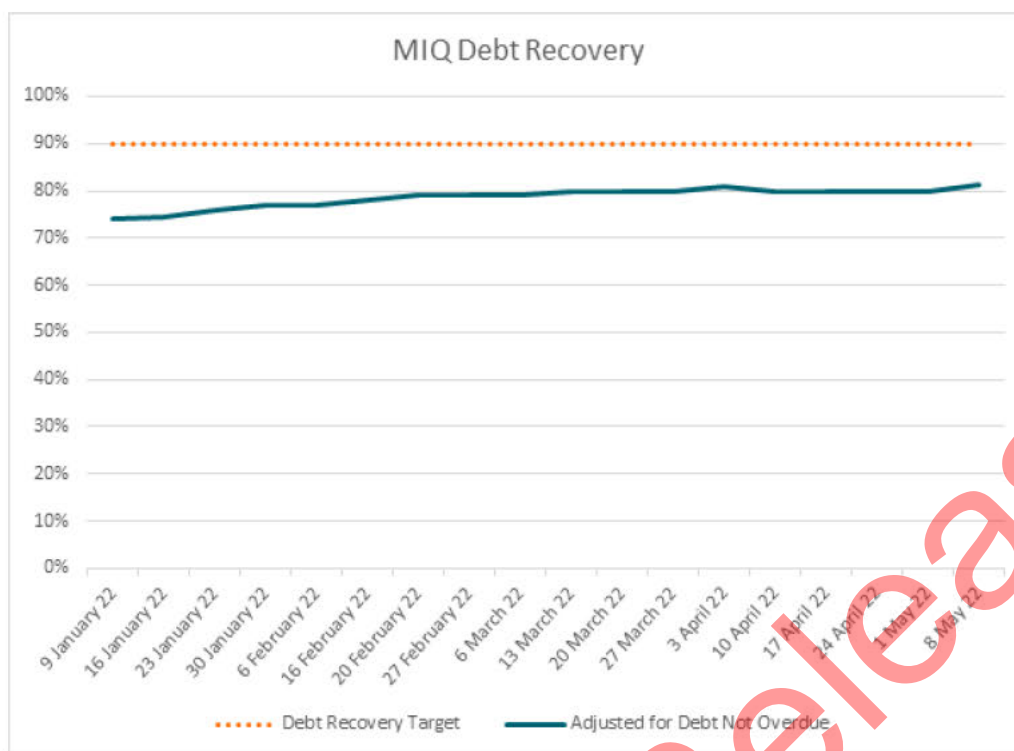
4.2.6 Fees Collection

- Invoicing is up to the point where returnees left MIQ from 30 January to 28 February 2022.
- 1,934 invoices worth \$3.9m were sent out last week. This is above our average processing levels as MBIE approach the last large batches for February and are now focusing on the smaller manual batches in late January and early February.
- Unmatched data will be further investigated once invoicing is up to date. There are 6,474 unmatched records in the database for the period 25 March 2021 to 28 February 2022 that need to have their liability determined before invoicing.

4.2.7 Debt Recovery

The debt recovery percentage increased to 81% this week with a total of \$2.6m received in the week. This brings the total received to \$161.5 million (73.5% by value of invoices issued).

- As of 8 May 2022, 9,357 invoices worth \$32.6m have been passed to our partner. \$11.4m has now been paid (an increase of \$434k).
- A further \$515k of debt is under instalment and is expected to be converted to payments over coming weeks.
- Of the invoices sent, 347 customers worth \$1.2m have now submitted waiver applications, and while applications are processed, they stay as outstanding debt.



4.2.8 Fee Waivers

The table below breaks down the waiver application information between 11 August 2020 and 8 May 2022. The numbers below relate to all waiver applications; waivers can be applied for before, during and after an individual has stayed in managed isolation.

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
17,666	3,030	13,806	95	9,002	85	1,785	2,423	416
			'Approved' = 66.5% of completed waivers			'Declined' = 33.5% of completed waivers		

4.2.9 Reducing the Fee Waiver backlog

At the end of 2021 we reported on the backlog of fee waiver applications.

- New applications received from 1 May to 8 May 2022: 271
- Net reduction from 13 December 2021 to 8 May 2022 is 4257
- Net decrease (weekly) from 1 May to 8 May 2022 is 803

Status	Backlog at 13 December 2021	New Applications Received since 13 December 2021	Backlog at 17 April 2022
Processing or to be processed	3979	4461	534
Waiting for Customer	1108		296
Total	5087	4461	830

4.3 Ombudsman Complaints

MBIE are currently managing 88 cases, with 74 of those being preliminary enquiries.

Of are 14 active cases:

- one is on MIAS;
- five are on emergency allocations;
- three are on exemptions from managed isolation;
- one is an undue financial hardship fee waiver;
- one is on access to fresh air in a facility;
- two are on MIQ facilities and;
- and one is the Chief Ombudsman’s self-initiated investigation, of which MIQ MBIE have been advised that a provisional opinion may be sent to MBIE around mid- May.

In the week 6 May MBIE closed 5 cases: 3 were final opinions against MBIE, (two were undue hardship fee waiver cases, and one relating to how MBIE responded to a complaint) one was a fee waiver case in MBIE’s favour and one complaint was discontinued.

4.4 Upcoming Communications Issues and Activities

As at 11 May 2022:

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement Y/N
19 May	Proactive release of original glide path/future of MIQ documents	MIQ	Reactive comms	Y
30 May (TBC)	Proactive release of MIQ briefing papers	MIQ	Reactive comms	Y
June (TBC)	Ombudsman Self-Initiated Investigation findings	MIQ	Reactive comms	Y
June (TBC)	Grounded Kiwis judicial review - final declaratory statement	MIQ/Crown Law	TBC	TBC

5. The Border Executive Board Report



5.1 Key Issues Being Considered

5.1.1 Border Executive Board Meeting

There was no BEB meeting this week as the Board is meeting on a fortnightly cycle, where appropriate. The next meeting is 18 May 2022.

5.1.2 Reconnecting New Zealanders – Air Border Implementation

The Pacific

Cabinet has agreed to reopen online visitor visa applications from applicants in Pacific Island Forum countries (excluding Australia), including third country nationals in those countries from 16 May 2022.

This means that Immigration New Zealand can process applications from 16 May 2022. When an application is processed, and approved, the visa holder can then travel to New Zealand. The service standard for processing is generally 20 days – more or less – less if volumes are low.

There are a number of factors to be addressed both for readiness and ongoing, especially from the immigration and communications perspectives. Operational readiness will be monitored.

5.1.3 Maritime Border Programme

The Prime Minister announced on 11 May 2022, the reopening of the maritime pathway from 11.59pm, 31 July 2022. This will see the return of foreign cruise, recreational, and specialist vessels. Vaccination will be required for recreational and cruise passengers with the exception of New Zealand citizens and residents and Australians (aligning with air requirements).

As directed by Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministers, the Ministry of Health and BEB will provide further advice by the end of May 2022 on the implementation of any legal mechanisms required and the approach to compliance. This will include an option for a light touch approach for monitoring compliance.

Work is also underway to operationalise reopening the maritime pathway including when the New Zealand Traveller Declaration can be utilised for cruise passengers.

6. New Zealand Customs Service Weekly Report



6.1 Items to Note/Updates

6.1.1 Maritime – Operation Takutai

Tranche 2 amendments to the Maritime Border Order will see the foreign-flag vessel ban lifted from 31 July 2022, which will see the return of foreign cruise, recreational, and specialist vessels.

Operational readiness work in preparation for 31 July 2022 is being led by the Ministry of Transport and Maritime New Zealand, and is progressing with inter-agency workshops and working groups.

Customs continues to work with the Ministry of Health to identify what the operational requirements will be for implementation of any health settings associated with reopening to all foreign-flagged craft.

Customs Maritime staff have commenced delivering Rapid Antigen Tests to vessels that have indicated they have crew on board who intend on disembarking and entering the community, and this new process is working well.

6.1.2 Compliance Checking at the Air Border

As part of Reconnecting New Zealanders, the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Air Border) Order 2021 came into force on 28 February 2022. Customs staff undertake compliance checks for all passengers on arrival for evidence of pre-departure testing or exemption, vaccination verification or exemption or a travel pass.

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. Non 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 3 to 9 May 2022 (both dates inclusive), a total of 38,471 passengers travelled to New Zealand. Of this number, 64 were considered to not meet the requirements for air travel into New Zealand:

- 10 travellers were issued warning letters, and 54 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 and are next scheduled to meet on Tuesday 17 May 2022. The agenda includes updates on the COVID-19 Surveillance Strategy and variant planning, the COVID-19 System Transition Plan, agencies' responses to the assurance recommendations raised by the COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group through their advice notes during the Omicron wave, the future structure and content of the System Assurance Framework, and the *Reconnecting New Zealanders* programme.

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. The Group are continuing work on their rapid review of lessons from Omicron to inform the future. This is expected to be delivered to you on 20 May 2022.

DPMC are continuing to work with your office to confirm a time for you to meet with the Group in late May. DPMC are also working with your office to proactively release the advice notes provided to you and the Associate Minister for COVID-19 Response by the Group during the Omicron wave in February and March 2022. These are provisionally scheduled for release on 20 May 2022.

9. Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group

9.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group did not meet this week and are next scheduled to meet on Wednesday 18 May 2022.

10. Business Leaders Forum

10.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Business Leaders Forum does not currently have a date for its next meeting.

11. Community Panel

11.1 Items to Note/Updates

The Community Panel are next meeting in June 2022 (date to be confirmed). DPMC are working with your office to arrange for the June meeting to be an in-person meeting with you and the Prime Minister.

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.

Proactively Released

13. Upcoming Cabinet Papers

s9(2)(f)(iv)



Proactively Released

COVID-19 Insights References

- ¹ Australian National Cabinet. Statement on Australia's Winter Preparedness Plan. <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet-statement-67> – Last updated 11 March 2022.
- ² The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.
- ³ Australian National Cabinet. Statement on Australia's Winter Preparedness Plan. <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet-statement-67> – Last updated 11 March 2022.
- ⁴ Danish Health Authority. On Being Tested. https://www.sst.dk/en/English/Corona-eng/Symptoms_tested-positive-or-a-close-contact/On-being-tested – Accessed 10 May 2022.
- ⁵ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.
- ⁶ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 10 May 2022.
- ⁷ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 10 May 2022.
- ⁸ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ⁹ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ¹⁰ World Health Organisation. Global genomic surveillance strategy for pathogens with pandemic and epidemic potential, 2022–2032. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240046979> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ¹¹ Ministero della Salute. Covid-19, Minister Speranza signs ordinances on masks and foreign travel. <https://www.salute.gov.it/portale/nuovocoronavirus/dettaglioNotizieNuovoCoronavirus.jsp?lingua=english&menu=notizie&p=dalministro&id=5893> – Accessed 6 May 2022.
- ¹² The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.
- ¹³ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ¹⁴ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.
- ¹⁵ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ¹⁶ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ¹⁷ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ¹⁸ United Kingdom Department of Health and Social Care. Press Release: New campaign to 'Stop COVID-19 hanging around'. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-campaign-to-stop-covid-19-hanging-around> – Accessed 6 May 2022.
- ¹⁹ U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Authorizes Second Booster Dose of Two COVID-19 Vaccines for Older and Immunocompromised Individuals. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-second-booster-dose-two-covid-19-vaccines-older-and> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ²⁰ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ²¹ Australian Government Department of Health. COVID-19 booster vaccine advice. <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-your-vaccination/booster-doses> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ²² Swedish Government. Follow-up of COVID-19 vaccination. <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/folkhalsorapportering-statistik/statistikdatabaser-och-visualisering/vaccinationsstatistik/statistik-for-vaccination-mot-covid-19/uppfoljning-av-vaccination/> – Accessed 12 May 2022.
- ²³ France 24. European countries start vaccinating 5- to 11-year-olds amid high Covid infection rates. <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20211215-european-countries-start-vaccinating-five-to-11s-amid-high-covid-infection-rates> – Accessed 10 May 2022.
- ²⁴ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.
- ²⁵ British Broadcasting Corporation. Covid-19: France suspends 3,000 unvaccinated health workers. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-58581682?msclkid=e5c2a140cf2d11ecb36fb68cf828887b> – Accessed 9 May 2022.
- ²⁶ World Health Organisation. WHO SAGE Roadmap for Prioritizing use

of Covid-19 Vaccines. file:///C:/Users/SalmonM/Downloads/WHO-2019-nCoV-Vaccines-SAGE-Prioritization-2022.1-eng%20(1).pdf – Accessed 10 May 2022.

²⁷ Australian Government Department of Health. ATAGI statement on defining 'up-to-date' status for COVID-19 vaccination. <https://www.health.gov.au/news/atagi-statement-on-defining-up-to-date-status-for-covid-19-vaccination?msclkid=1b41b8c5d0c611ec86b88a4771783f1a> – Accessed 12 May 2022.

²⁸ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.

²⁹ Getting to and Sustaining the Next Normal a Roadmap for Living with COVID. <https://www.covidroadmap.org/> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

³⁰ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.

³¹ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

³² The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

³³ The United States White House. President Biden's State of the Union Address (2022). <https://www.whitehouse.gov/state-of-the-union-2022/> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

³⁴ The United Kingdom National Health Service. Treatments for coronavirus (COVID-19). <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-care-and-treatments-for-coronavirus/treatments-for-coronavirus/> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

³⁵ Australian National Cabinet. Statement on Australia's Winter Preparedness Plan. <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet-statement-67> – Last updated 11 March 2022.

³⁶ Australian Government Department of Health. COVID-19 treatments: Provisional registrations. <https://www.tga.gov.au/covid-19-treatments-provisional-registrations> – Accessed 12 May 2022.

³⁷ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.

³⁸ Singapore Ministry of Health. Call for Public Cooperation and Assistance. <https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/call-for-public-cooperation-and-assistance> – Accessed 6 May.

³⁹ Family Practice, Volume 9, Issue 1. Post-acute and long-COVID-19 symptoms in patients with mild diseases: a systematic review. <https://academic.oup.com/fampra/article/39/1/159/6322429?login=true> – Published February 2022

⁴⁰ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

⁴¹ NHS England and NHS Improvement coronavirus. Long COVID: the NHS plan for 2021/22. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/documents/long-covid-the-nhs-plan-for-2021-22/> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

⁴² The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

⁴³ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

⁴⁴ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.

⁴⁵ United Kingdom Government. COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19> – Accessed 9 May 2022.

⁴⁶ Singapore Ministry of Health. Keeping Healthcare Affordable and Improving the Well-Being of Healthcare Workers. <https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/keeping-healthcare-affordable-and-improving-the-well-being-of-healthcare-workers> – Accessed 9 May 2022.

⁴⁷ National Public Radio. The Dark Side Of Thailand's Coronavirus Success. <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/06/16/874198026/the-cost-of-thailands-coronavirus-success-despair-and-suicide> – Accessed 9 May 2022.

⁴⁸ Australian National Cabinet. Statement on Australia's Winter Preparedness Plan. <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet-statement-67> – Last updated 11 March 2022.

⁴⁹ Australian National Cabinet. Statement on Australia's Winter Preparedness Plan. <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet-statement-67> – Last updated 11 March 2022.

⁵⁰ The United States White House. National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NAT-COVID-19-PREPAREDNESS-PLAN.pdf> – Accessed 6 May 2022.

ProactiveMedia.com