



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

<b>Date</b>	29 June 2021	
<b>Time</b>	4.20-5.20pm	
<b>Venue</b>	Zoom	
<b>Attendees</b>	Sir Brian Roche Debbie Ryan Dale Bramley Philip Hill	Louise Cox (DPMC) Amber Bill (DPMC)
<b>Chair</b>	Sir Brian Roche	
<b>Minute taker</b>	Louise Cox	

### **Item 1: Apologies and disclosure of interests**

1. No disclosure of interests.
2. Apologies from Rob Fyfe.

### **Item 2: Agreement of minutes**

3. The draft minutes from 15 June 2021 were agreed with no amendments required.

### **Item 3: Update on Surveillance Strategy**

4. The Secretariat provided an update on the refresh of the Surveillance Strategy, noting that they had been in contact with the Ministry of Health to confirm how they are running the process for the refresh, how previous feedback is incorporated and discussions on the role of peer review.
5. It was agreed that an advice note on process including external peer review will be provided to the Minister for COVID-19 response (appended to these minutes).

### **Item 4: Report back on meeting with the New Zealand Customs Service**

6. Brian reported back on a meeting with Christine Stevenson, Chief Executive of the New Zealand Customs Service. Brian noted that the discussion was very positive, and that Christine

was very welcoming of input and the perspectives the Group will be able to contribute. Brian also reported that Christine extended an invitation for some members of the Group to attend a Chief Executives' Meeting on the Safe and Smart Border on 13 July.

### **Item 5: Work programme A3: feedback / gaps**

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7. The Secretariat talked through the work programme A3, noting that the timing of reporting is designed to align with other key decisions and is not intended to preclude advice being provided to the Minister for COVID-19 Response on elements of the work programme at any time the Group sees fit.
8. There was a discussion on the system components and triangulation with how the Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group have described the system components. It was agreed that the work programme A3 will be updated to align with the other Group's description to ensure consistency across the independent advisory groups.
9. It was raised that when thinking about the border we should also extend this to considering impacts on the South Auckland community where a large part of the Auckland border workers live.
10. There was also discussion on Pacific countries (particularly those that are part of the Realm of New Zealand) and how they are reflected in the border system and relevant strategies. It was agreed that the work programme is updated to include a Pacific lens.
11. System readiness was discussed, and it was raised that the Group's agenda in delivering the work programme should cover readiness elements where there may be risk of gaps in other work programmes or areas of accountability.

### **Item 6: Any other business**

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12. It was raised that the Wellington event with the Australian COVID-19-positive traveller will have provided a lot of lessons relating to preparedness and deployment. There is an opportunity for the Group to be involved in a lessons learned session and it was suggested that it would be useful for public health specialists from Auckland to take part in any assessment.
13. The Secretariat suggested that DPMC's Head of System Readiness and Planning is invited to the next fortnightly meeting to give the Group an overview of readiness planning events in train and the updated Response Plan. This was agreed as an action.
14. The Secretariat provided an update on plans to proactively release documents relating to the Group's review of the Auckland February 2021 outbreak response and forward work programme.

**Action register – Live actions**

	Date of meeting	Action	Responsible owner	Comments
1	15 June 2021	Brian and the Secretariat will discuss the idea of inviting Dame Karen Poutasi to a future meeting to discuss the vaccine roll out in the context of equity.	DPMC Secretariat	
2	15 June 2021	Follow up with the Ministry of Health on the use of the TAG for the Surveillance Strategy update	DPMC Secretariat	Discussion had with the Ministry on the role of peer review and feedback will be provided to the Ministry.
3	15 June 2021	Discuss with Sir David Skegg the proposed meeting with the Ministry	Brian Roche/DPMC Secretariat	
4	15 June 2021	Write up the scope of the proposed NSW conversation and share with the Group	DPMC Secretariat	On hold while NSW are dealing with the current outbreak.
5	15 June 2021	Work with the Office of the Minister for COVID-19 Response to arrange a meeting with the members of the Group	DPMC Secretariat	Times for next month received from Minister's office.
6	29 June 2021	Update the A3 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• align with the Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group's description of system components</li> <li>• ensure impacts on the South Auckland community and Pacific lens is captured.</li> </ul>	DPMC Secretariat	
7	29 June 2021	Invite DPMC's Head of System Readiness and Planning to the next meeting.	DPMC Secretariat	

*Advice Note*

## **Process including external peer review for the Surveillance Strategy**

1. The COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group (the Group) strongly supports the process to refresh the Surveillance Strategy (the Strategy) as outlined by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry). This process includes:
  - oversight by a Steering Group made up of Ministry, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Institute of Environmental and Scientific Research and Public Health Unit (PHU) leaders
  - review of surveillance strategies from Australia, Canada, Taiwan, the United States of America Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as recommendations made by the World Health Organisation
  - input from PHU staff and the COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group.
2. In respect of the other countries' surveillance strategies reviewed, the Group suggests that the United Kingdom surveillance strategies<sup>1</sup> are also used to inform the Strategy.
3. The Group has previously advised the Minister for COVID-19 that nationally important documents should be subject to external peer review before being finalised, to overcome the issues of quality and clarity that have existed in the previous Surveillance Strategy and other documents. In line with previous advice, the Group recommends that an additional step for external peer review is included in the Strategy refresh process.
4. The concept of external peer review to optimise health publications is a gold standard for health publishing. For the Strategy refresh the Group propose Prof Chris Bullen (University of Auckland) and Prof John Crump (University of Otago) are approached to do the peer review. Once peer-reviewed, the Group would appreciate seeing the peer reviews and the responses to them and the changes made prior to the Strategy being finalised and published.
5. The Ministry have indicated they plan to move from six-monthly to regular updates. They are suggesting a six- or eight-week cycle. The Group strongly support the need for regular updates with a six- to 8-week cycle. If the process for updating the Strategy is robust, the Group do not feel that they will need to provide input.
6. With the addition of an external peer review step in the above process, the Group are confident that a high-quality document will be produced.

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<sup>1</sup> including the latest version of the COVID-19 Vaccine Surveillance Strategy produced by Public Health England.