



# Meeting of the COVID-19 Ministerial Group

## Minute of Decision

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### Exemptions to Temporary Border Restrictions for Essential Workers

The group of Ministers with Power to Act on COVID-19 matters [CAB-20-MIN-0130] convened on 25 March 2020 at 10.30am and, in accordance with their Power to Act:

- 1 **noted** that on 19 March 2020, Cabinet agreed to further border restrictions to prevent travel to New Zealand for anyone other than:
  - 1.1 New Zealand citizens and residence class visa holders;
  - 1.2 the partner, legal guardian or any dependent children travelling with a New Zealand citizen or residence class visa holder;
  - 1.3 Australian citizens and permanent residence class visa holders ordinarily resident in New Zealand;
  - 1.4 people subject to regulation 25 of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010, which includes air and marine crew;

[CAB-20-MIN-0122]

- 2 **noted** that on 19 March 2020, Cabinet also agreed to high level parameters for case-by-case exemptions to COVID-19 border restrictions, which include:
  - 2.1 those who need to travel for humanitarian reasons;
  - 2.2 essential health workers;
  - 2.3 citizens of Samoa and Tonga for essential travel to New Zealand;
  - 2.4 those on visitor visas who are partners or dependents of a temporary work or student visa holder, and who normally live in New Zealand;
  - 2.5 any other essential workers identified by the group of Ministers with Power to Act on COVID-19 matters;

[CAB-20-MIN-0130]

**IN CONFIDENCE**

- 3 **noted** that in advance of the process being developed to implement paragraph 2 above, officials have received two requests to make exemptions to the travel restrictions to enable travel for:
- 3.1 10 workers in the gas sector to work on the Pohokura pipeline maintenance project;
- 3.2 one maritime pilot to work in the maritime freight sector;
- 4 **noted** that these requests are supported by the Infrastructure Pillar of the COVID-19 government response, as the project is critical for supporting New Zealand's gas supply and wider energy security and continuity of maritime freight;
- 5 **noted** that the workers would be required to self-isolate on arrival in New Zealand before commencing work, and to have a self-isolation plan, approved in advance of their arrival;
- 6 **agreed** to make an exemption to the COVID-19 border restrictions for the 10 workers who have been identified as critical for the Pohokura pipeline maintenance project;
- 7 **agreed** to make an exemption to the COVID-19 border restrictions for one maritime pilot;
- 8 **noted** that the Minister of Immigration will sign a Special Direction to give effect to the decisions in paragraphs 6 and 7 above.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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**Distribution:**

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern (Chair)  
Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Hon Kelvin Davis  
Hon Grant Robertson  
Hon Chris Hipkins  
Hon Carmel Sepuloni  
Hon Dr David Clark  
Hon James Shaw

**Officials:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Chief Executive, DPMC  
Chief Executive, Ministry of Health  
Commissioner of Police  
All of Government Controller

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