



# Aide-Memoire

## RECONNECTING NEW ZEALANDERS READINESS FOR STEPS

<b>To</b>	Rt Hon. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister Hon. Chris Hipkins, Minister for COVID-19 Response	<b>Report No</b>	DPMC-2021/22-1725
<b>From</b>	Cheryl Barnes, DCE, COVID-19 Group, DPMC	<b>Date</b>	18/03/2022

### Purpose

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

### Background

2. This report provides updates on readiness for (1) Step 2.3 - the removal of Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) for unvaccinated New Zealanders, (2) the New Zealand Traveller Declaration (NZTD) release and (3) Step 3.1. Appendix A summarises the Reconnecting New Zealanders (RNZ) steps and highlights the changes agreed by Cabinet last Monday.
3. Attached to this Aide Memoire is a readiness report dated 18 March 2022.

### Comment

#### *Numbers and airline update*

4. Since Step 1 of Reconnecting New Zealanders, at 11.59pm on Sunday 27 February, almost 35,000 people have arrived in New Zealand. This averages over 1,900 people per day. Around 23,000 of these are from Australia, 4,000 from Pacific Islands and 8,000 from the rest of the world.
5. Since the announcement on Wednesday, Air Canada announced it plans to return to service New Zealand from November, reversing its decision to withdraw.

#### *Readiness*

6. This report has an overall Green rating, with activities remaining on track for the current steps included in the report, noting that the system is going live this weekend with MIQ changes prior to it being fully ready.
7. With the Air Border Order / Director Generals notice changes relating to unvaccinated New Zealand no longer being required to enter MIQ coming into effect at 11.59pm on Friday 18 March, teams across Customs, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and Health are working to ensure:
  - i. Those currently in MIQ are released (estimated ~40 people);

- ii. Travellers arriving over the weekend (estimated at 7 people) are contacted and advised they are no longer required to enter MIQ;
  - iii. Airport Liaison Officers (ALOs) are in place, where possible, to support check-in procedures;
  - iv. Alerts are maintained on the 7 travellers to ensure they complete Nau Mai Rā (NMR) and receive the Welcome Packs, which include Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) kits, upon arrival.
8. In addition, work continues to contact relevant airlines to advise of the changes, amend processes and update communication channels.
9. Teams acknowledge that with this short turnaround to support the changes, overall system readiness will be achieved on Sunday, ahead of the estimated five working days and reflects a significant effort from operational agencies. However, it is likely that the seven travellers this weekend may have a less than perfect traveller experience as the outstanding changes for staff, airports and airlines associated with the Air Border Order change this evening filter through the system.
10. We continue to monitor the operational pain points the teams are experiencing. These are not impacting readiness and are included here for awareness:
- a. **Eligible travellers with New Zealand citizens** - there is no systemic way to identify non-New Zealand nationals, partners and children that are eligible to travel to New Zealand with a New Zealander; it must be completed at the airport. *Update: Manual eligibility assessments are being completed through a combination of Airport Liaison Officers assessments and airline check in calls to Immigration Border Operations. Airline feedback indicates that delays have been minimised and the process appears to be working well. Step 3 eligibility changes will see all Australians eligible for entry and this will enable the assessment process to be systemised using advanced passenger processing, negating the need for manual intervention.*
  - b. **Nau Mai Rā (NMR) completion rates** – Latest estimates show a small increase of 1% to 14% of travellers are failing to complete NMR declarations. If not resolved, the NZTD may not achieve high levels of adoption/ compliance. *Update: Non-completion rates continue to put pressure on the Border teams. Noticeably higher levels of non-compliance from airlines who have only previously operated red flights where passengers did not require NMR e.g. Singapore and Emirates. Training is being undertaken at airport level with customised airline approaches delivered. This is achieving significant success with compliance from Canada and Singapore now moving to acceptable levels. Focus shifting to how to maximise compliance for NZTD when it launches.*
  - c. **MIQ Voucher Release** – A number of travellers on the ‘test on arrival’ pathway are failing to release unneeded MIQ vouchers, creating additional manual processes for Border staff and the risk that travellers go to MIQ who are eligible to self-isolate. *Update: MIQ are continuing to monitor voucher allocations. Since the system reverted back to the self-service model on 02 March, there have been 3,401 vouchers cancelled (by the traveller or the MIQ team following email contact). The team are taking a ‘week ahead’ view of flight arrivals to consider who is holding vouchers to ensure validity. Incidents of travellers ending up on the incorrect pathway are minimal.*
  - d. **Pre-Departure Tests (PDT) under NZTD** - With the implementation of the NZTD and increased scrutiny on PDT tests, it is likely that we will see travellers prevented from boarding their flight at short notice. This may cause negative publicity for the new system. *Update: The NZTD communications team continue to work through improving communications to travellers, across all agency websites and channels, to ensure alignment and clarity of PDT requirements for travellers. Discussions are ongoing*

*regarding the preferred approach for those that have a fully or partially completed declaration (digitally or manual papers).*

11. In summary, Agencies remain confident these challenges will not delay the coming steps.

*Next week*

12. We also note and look forward to the Reconnecting Ministers meeting on 23 March. The draft agenda includes:

- a. Overview of the border system after re-opening and strategic approach to the future of reconnecting
- b. Review of surveillance strategy and testing requirements at the border
- c. Update on vaccination requirements at the border
- d. The role of the Low-Risk Pacific Pathway in light of recent changes to border settings
- e. Use of the Very High-Risk country criteria as part of the reconnecting approach
- f. Update on maritime work programme and changes to maritime border settings

Proactively Released

## Recommendations

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

*Cheryl Barnes*

Cheryl Barnes  
**Deputy Chief Executive  
COVID-19 Group**

Date: 18/03/2022

NOTED

Rt Hon. Jacinda Ardern  
**Prime Minister**

Date:     /     /

NOTED

Hon. Chris Hipkins,  
**Minister for COVID-19 Response**

Date:     /     /

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

Attachment A    Readiness report dated 18 March



**Appendix A: RNZ Timeline summary**

**IN CONFIDENCE – DRAFT – WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY**

**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

# Reconnecting New Zealanders: Cheat Sheet (16 March 2022)

**DRAFT**

### Entry pathways

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



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



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



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

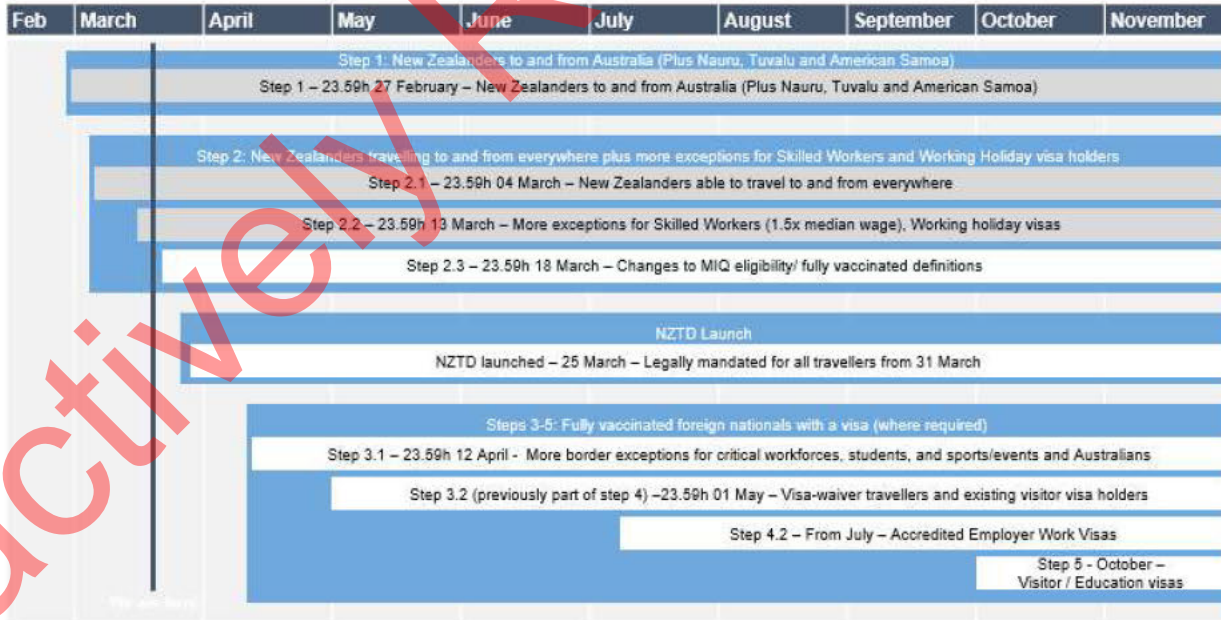


The **self-isolation pathway** is not currently in use.

### Key settings summary

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

### Reconnecting New Zealanders step phasing and timing



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

**IN CONFIDENCE – DRAFT – WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY**

## Reconnecting New Zealanders Readiness Report – Status as at 18 March 2022

Overall status  
GREEN

Ref	Lead agency	Group of activities	Step 2.3 No MIQ for unvaccinated travellers	NZTD Release 25 March / Mandated use 31 March	Step 3.1 Temporary work and student visa holders and Australian citizens from 11.59pm Tuesday 12 April
1	MoH	Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Change ABO/DG Notices</li> <li>○ Change IQO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Change ABO/DG Notices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≠ Change ABO/DG Notices</li> </ul>
2	MoH	Border Health Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete changes to NMR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Confirm latest Health rules are current and integrated</li> </ul>	
3	Customs	Border Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review Staffing</li> <li>✓ Agree manual processes for the 7 impacted travellers over the weekend</li> <li>○ Update SOPs and processes</li> <li>○ Update staff training and compliance table</li> <li>○ Update Immigration Regulations</li> <li>○ Update Safe Travel Advisory</li> <li>○ Confirm volume of RATs / packs for airports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review Staffing</li> <li>○ Update SOPs and processes</li> <li>○ Update staff training</li> <li>○ Update Immigration Regulations</li> <li>○ Update Safe Travel Advisory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review Staffing</li> <li>○ Update SOPs and processes</li> <li>○ Update staff training</li> <li>≠ Update Immigration Regulations</li> <li>≠ Update Safe Travel Advisory</li> </ul>
4	Customs	Aviation sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Update FAQ for aviation</li> <li>○ Update sector advice/ websites</li> <li>○ Update airport processes / pathways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Update FAQ for aviation</li> <li>○ Update sector advice/ websites</li> <li>○ Mobilise Queenstown and Wellington operational support (dates TBC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≠ Update FAQ for aviation</li> <li>≠ Update sector advice/ websites</li> </ul>
5	MBIE	ALOs / Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Agree manual processes for the 7 impacted travellers over the weekend</li> <li>○ Update training for Offshore airports</li> <li>○ Finalise Integrated Call Centre ready including out of hours and overflow</li> <li>○ Finalise training for IBOC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≠ Update Training for Offshore airports</li> <li>○ Finalise Integrated Call Centre ready including out of hours and overflow</li> <li>○ Finalise training for IBOC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≠ Update Training for Offshore airports</li> </ul>
6	DPMC	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Update websites across government</li> <li>○ Update sector advice/ websites</li> <li>○ Reactive comms for PMO</li> <li>○ Coordinate cross-agency comms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Update websites and comms channels across government</li> <li>○ Update sector advice/ websites</li> <li>○ Re-educate the traveller project initiated</li> <li>○ Coordinating and planning with agencies in support of changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≠ Update websites across government</li> <li>≠ Update sector advice/ websites</li> <li>≠ Re-educate the traveller project</li> </ul>
7	MBIE	MIQ changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Update MIQ website</li> <li>✓ Identify those due to come to MIQ that are eligible to test on arrival until full readiness is achieved (7 people)</li> <li>○ Advise those in MIQ of departure</li> <li>○ MIQ release / transition for travellers expecting to go to MIQ beyond the weekend</li> <li>○ Engage with suppliers, partners and stakeholders</li> </ul>		
8	Customs	NZTD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete Pilot 4 – (pilot is now part of go live on 25 March).</li> <li>○ Deliver Privacy Impact Assessment, MOU between Agencies</li> <li>○ Deliver technical/operational support and testing for pilots and go live</li> <li>○ Implement operational readiness processes</li> <li>○ Deliver supporting communications and engagement to agencies, stakeholders, airlines and travellers</li> <li>○ Make final changes based on pilot learnings – 24 March</li> <li>○ Update NZTD with setting changes – 24 March</li> <li>○ Open NZTD system 'Go live' - 25 March</li> </ul>	

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