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

12 October 2020

[redacted]

Reference: OIA-2020/21-0083/-0085/-0086

Dear Matt Nippert

Official Information Act requests relating to COVID-19 – stockpiles, masking, and Auckland lockdown

Thank you for your three Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) requests received between 17 and 18 August 2020. I will be issuing one response to all of your requests. You requested (numbering added):

1. *Any reports for officials or ministers detailing stockpiles of ventilators, PPE or testing components prepared since March 1, 2020.*
2. *Any reports prepared concerning estimated likely use of the above supplies during a Covid-19 outbreak prepared since March 1, 2020.*
3. *All reports (including but not limited to a briefing papers and aide memoir) prepared or received by officials from August 1 to the date of this request concerning the detection of community transmission of Covid-19 in the community and the decision to place Auckland into alert level 3.*
4. *Reports (including but not limited to briefings papers and aide memoir) received or prepared by officials concerning the efficacy of mask use in combating the Covid-19 pandemic.*
5. *Reports (including but not limited to briefings papers and aide memoir) received or prepared by officials concerning orders or recommendations for mask use by health, border and the wider public.*

With regard to parts 1 and 2 of your request, I note you asked that "splitting and transferring … not be undertaken as my intent is to determine the level of visibility of the issues raised in this request, and the degree the AOG group is across them." Accordingly, I have not transferred these parts of your request to the Ministry of Health (MoH).

We are still completing consultations on two documents within scope of this request. We will endeavour to complete these consultations and provide you with a decision on their release as soon as possible.

With regard to part 3 of your request, you were informed on 24 September 2020 that this was partially transferred to the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, as part of the request is more closely connected to the functions of the Prime Minister.

With regard to parts 4 and 5 of your request, I understand that you made similar requests for information to MoH and Crown Law and expect you will receive a response from these agencies as appropriate in due course.

Executive Wing, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, New Zealand 6011
64 4 817 9698 www.dpmc.govt.nz

Accordingly, this response only addresses information held by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)

Please find enclosed a copy of the briefing *Mask demand and response (DPMC-2020/21-33),* dated 12 August 2020. Some information has been withheld in this document under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals, and
- 9(2)(b)(ii), to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information, or who is the subject of the information.

The following documents are also in scope of your request:

Item	Date	Document Title
1.	15/04/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
2.	22/04/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
3.	5/05/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
4.	12/05/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
5.	26/05/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
6.	2/06/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
7.	9/06/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
8.	16/06/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
9.	23/06/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
10.	30/06/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
11.	06/07/2020	CAB-20-MIN-0330 *Responding to New Cases of COVID-19 in the Community*
12.	22/07/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
13.	28/07/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
14.	4/08/2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
15.	10/08/2020	CAB-20-MIN-0387 *Implementing a rapid response to COVID-19 cases in the community and refinements of COVID-19 Alert Level settings*

These documents are publicly available on the COVID-19 website at: covid19.govt.nz/updates-and-resources/legislation-and-key-documents/proactive-release. Accordingly, I have refused your request for these documents under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information requested is publicly available.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decisions under section 28(3) of the Act.

I do not intend to have this response published on DPMC's website.

Yours sincerely

John Ombler
Deputy Chief Executive,
COVID-19 All-of-Government Response Group

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

Briefing

MASK DEMAND AND RESPONSE

To Office of the Prime Minister			
Date	12/08/2020	**Priority**	High
Deadline	12/08/2020	**Briefing Number**	

Purpose

This is a proposed policy for the use of face coverings as a result of a heightening of COVID-19 response levels. It covers specific focus areas of, General Public, Transport, Education and Supply Chain.

Recommendations

Noted

1. **Note** this paper

Contact for telephone discussion if required:

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
John Ombler	DCE, AoG COVID-19 Response Group, DPMC	s9(2)(a)	
Brendan Boyle	Acting Operational and Planning Leader, AoG COVID-19 Response Group, DPMC		✓

Minister's office comments:

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

MASK DEMAND AND RESPONSE

Purpose

This note provides a draft Cabinet paper in response to Cabinet's invitation for you to report back on any changes to Alert Level settings, including updated risk assessments [CAB-20-MIN-0330].

Key changes from previous Cabinet paper

1. From 1200 Wed 12 August 2020, Auckland will move to COVID Alert Level 3 while the remainder of NZ will go to Alert Level 2. It is expected that this heightened response level will remain in force for an initial period of 3-days (1200 Sat 2020).

2. In addition to the resumption of physical distancing, there is a need for promulgate a policy for the use of face coverings.

Face Coverings for General Public

3. Masks are an important additional tool to help reinforce physical distancing behaviour, NOT to replace it. The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is through physical distancing and small bubble sizes. Masks do not replace hand hygiene, staying away when sick and physical distancing, but help remind us to maintain these behaviours.

4. MoH recommends that the public make or source their own masks to prepare for a possible community outbreak. The recommended guidance is four washable and reusable masks per person. Single use disposable face masks are also appropriate if used as directed.

5. The wearing of masks is not mandatory, however it is recommended at AL 3. The bulk of masks available to the general public are single use and available from big box retailers. Reusable masks are also available from certain outlets.

6. This 'mask' requirement may also be met using any appropriate face covering (scarf, bandana, t-shirt). These 'solutions' are not fool proof, but can reduce the outward transmission of virus droplets out from the wearer.

Transportation

1. Transport employees who are interacting with the public should wear approved face masks if they are unable to maintain physical distancing. Other transport employees may conduct activities as normal but should conform to the requirements for the general public.

2. Members of the public utilising shared transportation should wear face coverings, but these are mandatory for air transportation.

Education

3. Secondary and university students are encouraged to wear face coverings, as are all teachers if practicable. Coverings are not required for primary students and younger.

Supply Chain

7. As of 10 Aug 2020, MoH has 93.3 million disposable procedure masks on hand. MoH policy is that these masks are reserved for health workers and will not be provided to members of the public.

8. Retailers are relatively confident in their supply chains and restocking:

a) s9(2)(b)(ii) will ration 1-box per person (50 disposable masks). Extra supply is expected to arrive about 26 Aug.

b) s9(2)(b)(ii) There are 10 million masks in the national supply chain with a large majority already in Auckland, however exact stock numbers are unknown.

c) s9(2)(b)(ii) has 2,717 boxes of 50 masks in stock, with another 6000 packs expected to arrive this week. Online services are experiencing a significant increase in demand.

9. Retailers are currently in crisis calls to discuss, among other things, the supply of masks. The demand for masks will primarily be met through retail sector provision. International supply chains are more robust than in March/April and disposable masks are now cheaper. A large increase in international orders for masks is expected.

10. If there is a gap in retail sector supply, it can possibly be mitigated through the selling of disposable procedure masks from the MoH stock on hand to retailers. This will be an exception to MoH policy. There is precedent for this exception. There is also the option of making MoH stock available for provision to groups with access inequities.

11. For groups that will suffer inequities, distribution will be a difficulty. The following are possible points of distribution to these groups:

a) Private sector

b) Community pharmacies

c) MSD Offices

d) Work and Income sites

e) Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups (CDEM Groups)

f) Whanau Ora Commissioning Agencies, Te Puni Kōkiri, District Health Boards, Māori Health Providers.

g) NGO's

h) Regional Groups

Communications

12. An essentially supporting activity is the communication of issues to the community. Successful public information will ensure correct masks/face coverings are used correctly and provide confidence so that people do not panic buy.

13. Demand can be softened by communicating that face coverings are an alternative to masks. We should also send strong messages that there is no need to make special trips to purchase masks. Masks should be purchased where possible as part of regular shopping trips to avoid additional unnecessary movement.

Next Steps

14. We recommend the following immediate actions be considered:

a) Immediate public education campaign to ensure correct masks/face coverings are used correctly and people do not panic buy;

b) AoG and MoH to work on exception process to lend masks to retail sector to meet gap in demand.

c) AoG, MoH and others as applicable, to determine if communities with access inequities will receive government assistance to access masks, and develop such options.

28 October 2020

[redacted]

Reference: OIA-2020/21-0083

Dear [redacted]

Official Information Act request relating to COVID-19 – stockpiles, masking and Auckland lockdown

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 17 August 2020. You requested:

> • *Any reports for officials or ministers detailing stockpiles of ventilators, PPE or testing components prepared since March 1, 2020.*
> • *Any reports prepared concerning estimated likely use of the above supplies during a Covid-19 outbreak prepared since March 1, 2020.*
> *The information sought in this request is to be used as part of a report by the NZ Herald into the preparedness of New Zealand for an outbreak of Covid-19. As the information will be used to inform the public about an important issue of obvious public interest given this is a public health emergency, I ask that any fee be waived.*
> *It is understood the AOG group has input from a great number of government departments and bodies, and some consideration may be given to splitting and transferring this request. I ask this not be undertaken as my intent is to determine the level of visibility of the issues raised in this request, and the degree the AOG group is across them."*

In our letter of 12 October 2020, we noted that two further reports still required further consultation before a decision could be made. We have completed this consultation and I have now made a decision on its release.

Information being released
I have decided to release the documents listed below, subject to some information being withheld as noted. The relevant grounds under which information has been withheld are:

1. section 9(2)(ba)(i), to protect the supply of similar information in the future; and
2. section 9(2)(i), to protect the Crown's commercial activity.

Item	Date	Document Description/Subject
1.	11 August 2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*
2.	18 August 2020	*COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report*

In making my decision, I have taken the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act into account.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Executive Wing, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, New Zealand 6011
☎ 64 4 817 9698 www.dpmc.govt.nz

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Barnes
Deputy Chief Executive,
COVID-19 All-of-Government Response Group

COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report

Tuesday 11 August 2020

Current strategy: Elimination.

Current Alert Level: 1

This weekly report responds to COVID-19 Ministerial Group's 09 April directive for All-of-Government officials to develop a set of measures and regular reporting that will inform future decisions on changing Alert Levels (AL) or the overall strategy.

The report places information about COVID-19 in New Zealand alongside evidence of the effects of restrictions on the economy and society more broadly, and public attitudes towards, and compliance with, restrictions.

This report covers:

The contents of this report reflect the principal matters that need to be taken into consideration when determining whether to change alert levels.

There are some gaps in measures and data, and these are noted where applicable.

Key changes and developments from last week

Developments to note:

- The number of returnees in Managed Isolation & Quarantine (MI&Q) has increased by approximately 1,200.
- The seven day average testing rate has increased from this time last week.
- There are currently 22 active cases in New Zealand, all of which are imported cases.

Changes to the report:

- A domestic flight data graph has been included to highlight differences in air travel between current and pre-COVID levels.

COVID-19 in New Zealand

As at 9am 11 August 2020, there are currently 22 active cases in New Zealand (Figure 1 and 2).

Figure 1: Summary of COVID-19 in New Zealand as at 9am 04 August 2020

22	**Active cases**
0	**Days since last imported case reported**
96	**Days since last import-related case reported**
81	**Days since last locally-acquired epidemiologically-linked case reported**
102	**Days since last locally-acquired, unknown source case reported**
0	**Significant open clusters[1]**
0	**Clusters with a new case reported in the last 14 days**

Source: Ministry of Health

Figure 2: Daily cases by source of transmission (cases reported in the past 28 days)[2]

Source: Ministry of Health (via EpiSurv)

Definitions:

- Imported cases: Cases with a reported history of international travel within 14 days of onset.
- Import-related case: Cases that have a link to an imported case.
- Locally acquired cases, epidemiologically linked: Cases that have a link to a locally acquired case with an unknown source.
- Locally acquired cases, unknown source: Cases that have no link to another case or overseas travel (potential community transmission).

[1] A cluster is considered closed when there have been no new cases for two incubation periods (i.e. 28 days) from the date when all cases complete isolation.
[2] The daily case numbers used in this report differ slightly from the figures reported each day by the Ministry of Health. The Ministry's figures are usually based on the change in the 24 hours to the 9am reporting time. The numbers in this report are based on the actual calendar dates of case reporting.

Managed Isolation and Quarantine

Border measures

Officials are implementing rolling surveillance testing of staff in managed isolation facilities and this will be progressively implemented in other high-risk locations.

Only New Zealand, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau and Australian citizens or permanent residents who normally reside in New Zealand are permitted to enter the country. This includes diplomats who hold a post in New Zealand.

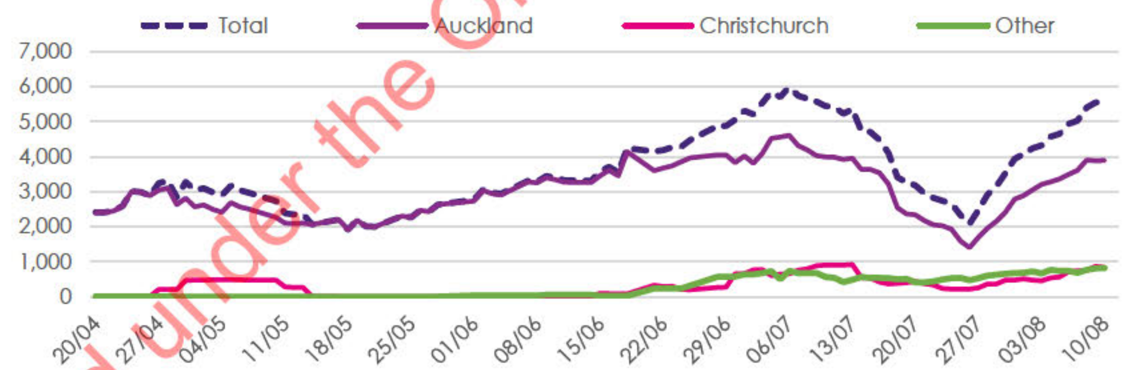
There are exceptions such as medical evacuations and essential health workers which are granted on a case by case basis. Compassionate exemptions have resumed, with MBIE assuming the lead agency role.

Isolation

As at 11 August 2020, there is total effective capacity to accommodate 7,103 returnees in MI&Q in Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington, Hamilton and Rotorua. Total effective capacity allows for a 24 hour room turn-around for sanitisation. At the time of release of this report, 1,561 beds are vacant.

During the reporting period, the number of individuals in MI&Q has increased from 4,316 to 5,542 (Figure 3). Over the next seven days the number of returnees is forecast to increase to a total of 5,925 with a total effective capacity of 7,405.[3]

Figure 3: Number of people in managed isolation or quarantine[4]



Source: Isolation, Quarantine and Repatriation SITREP, AoG calculation

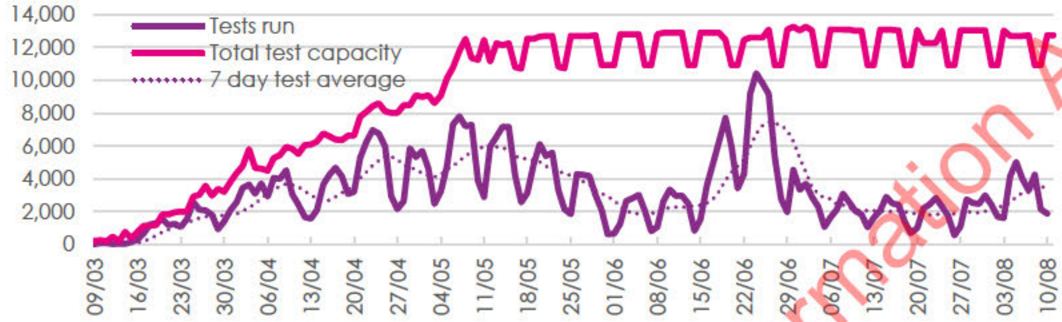
[3] The forecast capacity fluctuates and is based on actual capacity available at the time of the report. The numbers are determined by the number of available rooms provided by the hotels.
[4] "Other" includes Rotorua, Wellington and Hamilton. These will be displayed individually when numbers increase.

Health system capacity

Testing capacity

As at 11 August 2020, test stock is 78 days of supply at current testing levels, with testing capacity marginally higher than last week at 12,744 tests per day (Figure 4). The daily average testing rate is 3,530.

Figure 4: Testing capacity

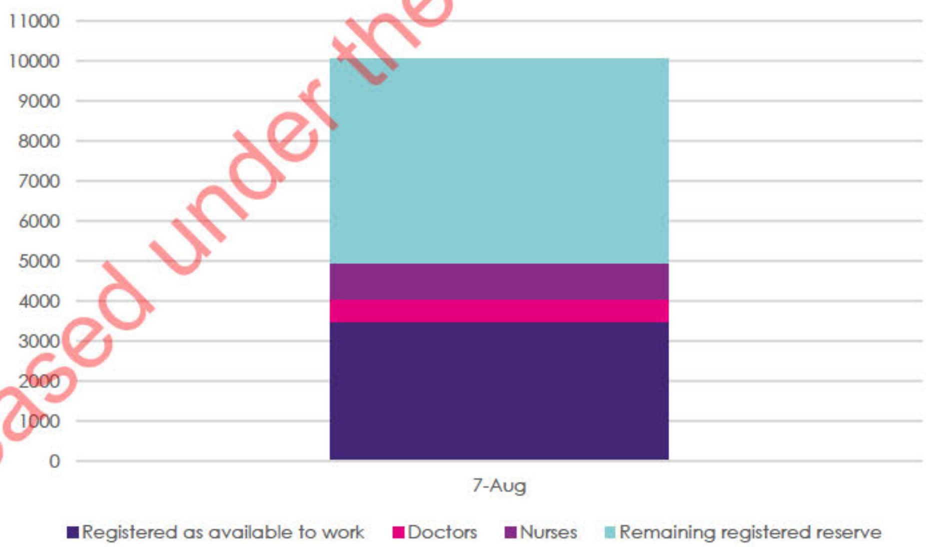


Source: Ministry of Health

Workforce surge capacity

As of 07 August 2020, there are 10,043 people registered in the surge capacity database of which 3,479 have indicated they are still available to work (Figure 5). Of those available, 559 are doctors and 926 are registered nurses.

Figure 5: Workforce surge capacity



Source: Ministry of Health COVID-19 SITREP

Personal protective equipment

Ministry of Health (MoH) have sufficient Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) stocks for the health and disability workforce currently however ongoing vigilance is required

Sourcing and distribution of PPE continues to be managed at a national level. There is sufficient stock of all PPE supplies in the country and demand has stabilised over recent weeks.

Global PPE supply supply chains will continue to have future challenges relating to ongoing global demand. A small number of mask shipments remain on hold pending further quality assurance. Test results for these masks are expected mid-August. Second wave pandemic modelling is alerting MoH to areas where they may need to secure additional supply as a risk management strategy. MoH are currently prioritising additional supplies of gloves and gowns.

Figure 6: PPE availability for the health sector and non-health essential services

Product Description	Stock on Hand		Average Distribution over Last Fortnight	PPE on Order	
	DHBs (3 Aug)	National Reserves (10 Aug)		Expected in Next Fortnight	Total on Order (4 Aug)
N95 Mask (or equivalent)	1337197	21686992	650	0	1070000
Procedure Mask (or equivalent)	6152425	92302150	241275	21095500	36645550
Isolation Gown (or equivalent)	503863	3748340	57250	0	4574180
Disposable Apron	1061622	2525950	1250	0	1725000
Glasses/goggles (or equivalent)	130955	1099001	0	0	1
Face shield (or equivalent)	191301	970360	0	0	53000
Nitrile Gloves (all sizes, Each)	13709399	42837500	1444400	15000000	205692800
Hand Sanitiser (500mL equivalents)	53064	336207	0	0	14
Hand Sanitiser (2L equivalents)	0	155862	0	0	0
Detergent Wipe (or equivalent)	447900	0	0	0	0
Disinfectant wipe (or equivalent)	3579678	115214900	492275	0	27398100

Source: Ministry of Health PPE data as at 6 Aug 2020.

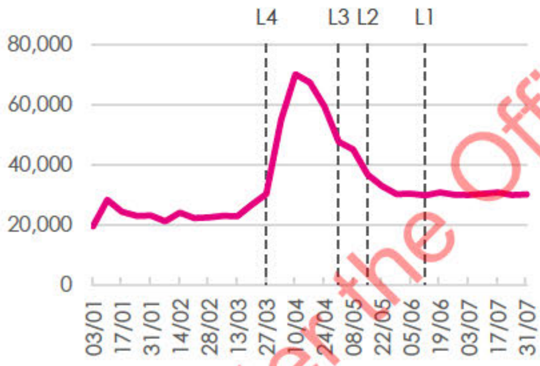
Effects of the measures on society

The number of Special Needs Grants for food remains largely unchanged since mid-June, with 30,025 reported for the period 25 – 31 July 2020. This likely reflects a new normal that is higher than pre-COVID-19 and 2019 figures (Figure 7).

Findings from the latest COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey, dated 2 August 2020, indicated a marginal, but non-significant change in depression and anxiety symptoms over the period 26 July – 2 August 2020, with approximately 7% of respondents reporting symptoms (Figure 8). Approximately 20% of respondents reported experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation (Figure 9). These figures have remained consistent since early June and remain lower than those reported during Alert Levels 3 or 4 (generally between 30 and 40%).

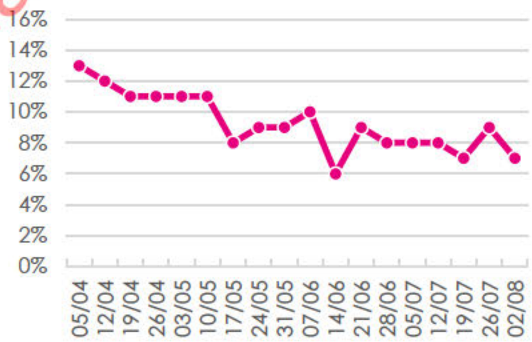
The number of Housing Register applications increased from 16,309 at the end of March, to 18,520 at the end of June (Figure 10). This is consistent with pre-COVID 19 levels. The largest increases were in Auckland (+531), Christchurch (+243) and Hamilton (+214). The increases in Christchurch and Hamilton were noticeably larger than the average increase over the prior three quarters (Christchurch +37 a quarter, Hamilton +125 a quarter).

Figure 7: Special Needs Grants for food



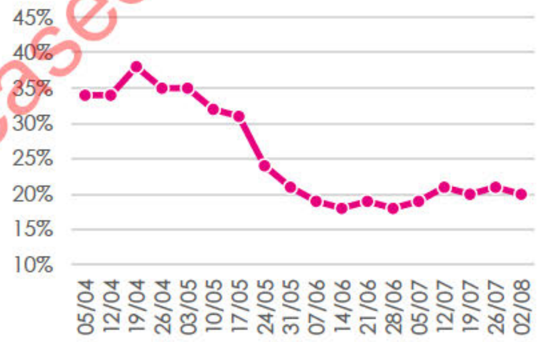
Source: MSD

Figure 8: Percentage of survey respondents reporting depression and anxiety



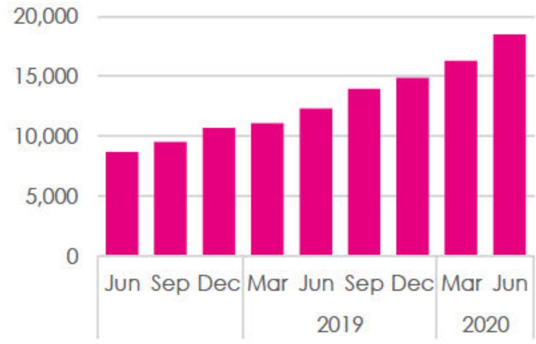
Source: COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey

Figure 9: Percentage of survey respondents reporting loneliness or isolation



Source: COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey

Figure 10: Housing Register applications



Source: MSD

Public movement

Over the period 28 July – 11 August 2020, data from Apple Maps indicates direction requests are consistent with pre-COVID-19 levels (Figure 11).

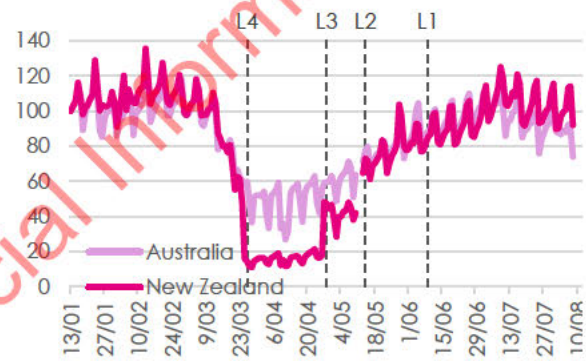
Light vehicle traffic volumes indicate mobility remains slightly below pre-COVID-19 levels (Figure 11 and Figure 12). Normal traffic volumes will likely return gradually, as border measures ease and the economy recovers.

Domestic flight data provided by Airways highlighted a significant decrease in domestic air movement occurring throughout New Zealand (Figure 13). Domestic air travel in New Zealand hit its lowest levels over 20 - 26 April 2020 at 660 domestic flights, compared to 6,242 in the same week in 2019. Current levels are 3,636 domestic flights over 27 - 02 August 2020, compared to 6,300 flights in the same week of 2019.

Figure 11: Light vehicle traffic volumes in main centres

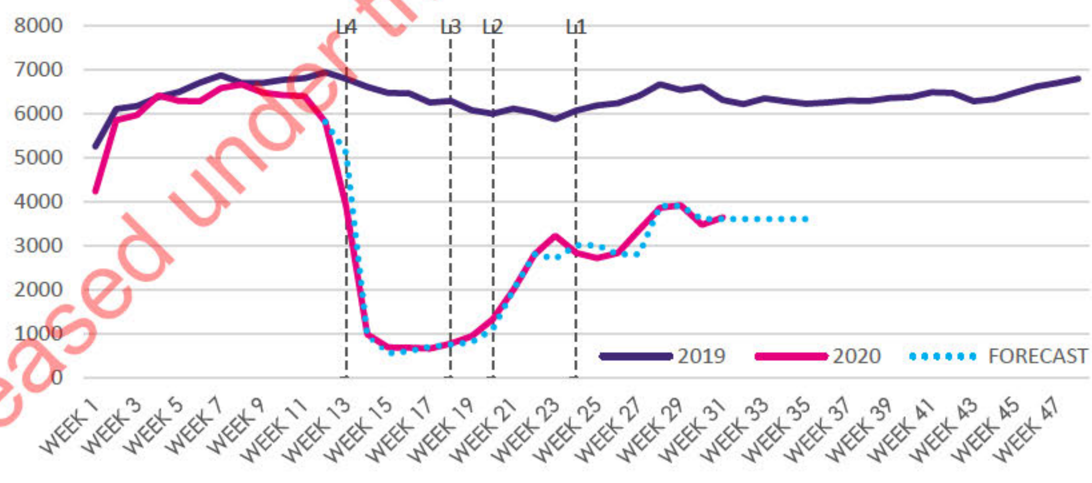
Source: NZTA

Figure 12: Volume of driving direction requests on Apple Maps (13/01=100)



Source: Apple Mobility Trends

Figure 13: NZ Domestic Flight data[5]



Source: Airways

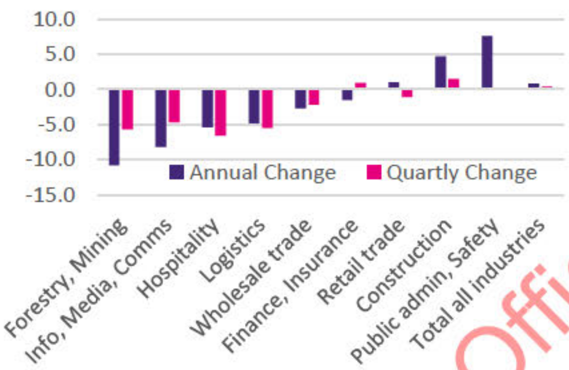
[5] 80% passenger transport operations, with the rest being hospital, military and private commercial flights.

Effects of the measures on businesses

The Quarterly Employment Survey indicated the overall number of jobs was generally unchanged in the June quarter, however there were significant changes within economic sectors (Figure 14). There were reductions in the number of paid jobs in Forestry and Mining, IT and media, hospitality and logistics. There were significant annual reductions in paid jobs across all industries. In contrast, there was growth in annual paid jobs across public services, education and construction.

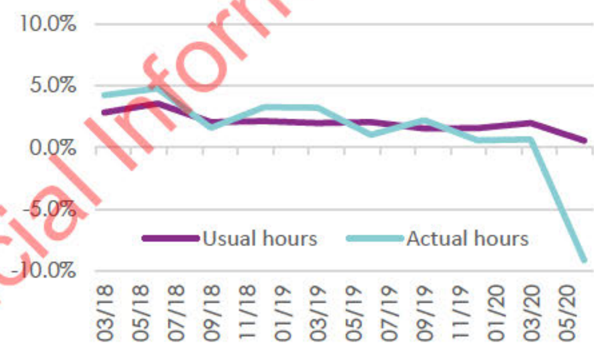
The Household Labour Force Survey indicated the number of hours paid by firms fell 3.4% in the June quarter, in contrast with the 10% fall recorded in hours worked. This is due to a significant fall in the number of actual hours worked as many individuals had their income covered by the wage subsidy, whilst rostered hours were relatively constant (Figure 15). In the June quarter there were 357,000 employees worked zero hours.

Figure 14: Paid jobs



Source: StatsNZ

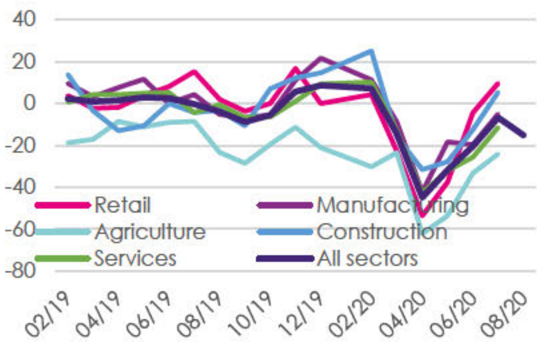
Figure 15: Hours worked



Source: StatsNZ

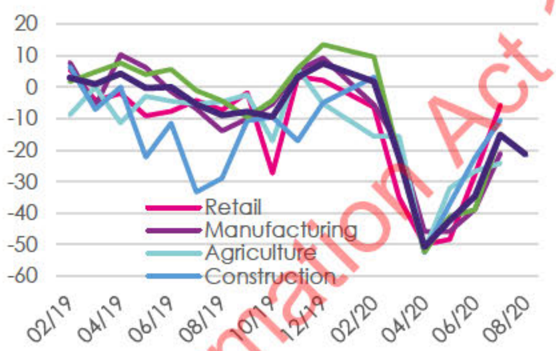
The preliminary ANZ Business Outlook for August indicates a decrease in business confidence. The activity outlook for firms' own business decreased 8 points to -17%, suggesting the confidence boost associated with the post-lockdown rebound has decreased. Investment intentions decreased eight points to -15% and employment intentions decreased six points to -21% (figures 16 and 17). Current employment levels have stabilised at approximately 23% below 2019 levels.

Figure 16: Investment intentions



Source: ANZ

Figure 17: Employment intentions



Source: ANZ

Macroeconomic and fiscal effects of the measures

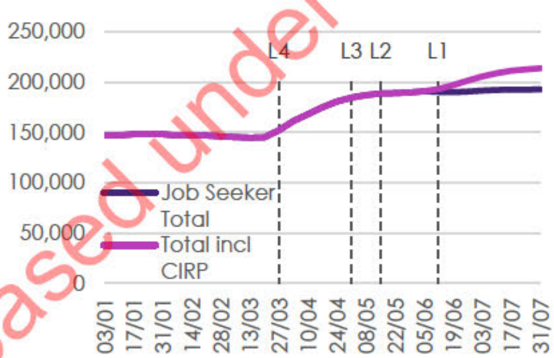
The headline unemployment rate decreased to 4.0% for the June quarter, the underutilisation rate increased to 12.0% as hours worked decreased. Weekly estimates based on subsets of the Household Labour Force Survey indicated the unemployment rate trended up to average approximately 5% during the final weeks at Alert Level 1.

Despite long term forecast concerns over job security appear to be decreasing and household confidence remains steady according to the July ANZ-Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence survey. The preliminary read of the ANZ Business Outlook survey indicated the post-lockdown rebound may have decreased marginally, with headline confidence dropping 10 points to -42.4 and the employment outlook deteriorating (Figure 18). Dairy prices have declined over the past month in the latest Global Dairy Trade auction.

Data from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) show that increases in the number of people receiving Jobseeker support have been widespread across the country. Between 3 January - 31 July 2020, all work and income regions experienced increases in the percentage of the working-age population receiving Jobseeker support. The largest increases were in the Bay of Plenty and Northland regions, which also had the two highest proportions of Jobseeker support in January.

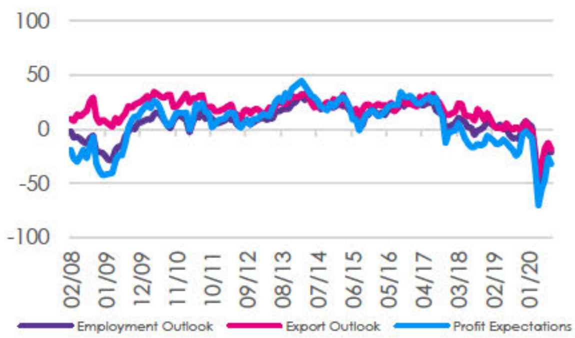
As of 31 July 2020 approximately 21,000 people were receiving the CIRP, an increase of 1,000 on the previous week. The number of Jobseeker Support recipients increased marginally, although 50 more recipients transferred onto the CIRP. The total number of people receiving income support (Jobseeker and CIRP) was 213,400 – up 1,000 on the week prior. The weekly increase in income support numbers has decreased in each of the previous five weeks.

Figure 18: Job seeker and CIRP recipients



Source: MSD

Figure 19: ANZ Business Outlook Survey



Source: ANZ

Fiscal measures

New Zealand's fiscal response packages for COVID-19 announced to date amount to around $47.7 billion in committed spending. As at 27 July, around $14.4 billion remained in the CRRF. There has been no change in the last week.

Figure 17: Fiscal costs of commitments and programmes already announced and estimated expenditure

Spending package	Total impact on net core Crown debt ($m), period to 2023/24
Infrastructure	4,709.184
Education, Skills and Training	4,578.477
Business and Firm	10,046.459
Income Support	20,697.13
Health	2,584.09
Housing	1,065.47
Other	4,193.98
Total Allocated Spend to date	**47874.795**
Unallocated CRRF remaining	14330.735

COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report

Tuesday 18 August 2020

Current strategy: Elimination

Current Alert Level: Auckland 3 / Rest of New Zealand 2

This weekly report responds to COVID-19 Ministerial Group's 09 April directive for All-of-Government officials to develop a set of measures and regular reporting that will inform future decisions on changing Alert Levels (AL) or the overall strategy.

The report places information about COVID-19 in New Zealand alongside evidence of the effects of restrictions on the economy and society more broadly, and public attitudes towards, and compliance with, restrictions.

This report covers:

The contents of this report reflect the principal matters that need to be taken into consideration when determining whether to change alert levels.

There are some gaps in measures and data, and these are noted where applicable.

Key changes and developments from last week

Developments to note:

- There are currently 90 active cases in New Zealand.
- The average daily testing rate has significantly increased from approximately 14,000 last week up to approximately 27,106 this week.
- Test stock has dropped to approximately 15 days' supply.

Changes to the report:

- The border measures section has been unchanged over the last few weeks and has been removed, pending more significant changes.
- A chart displaying guest related incidents in managed isolation facilities (MIF) has been added to the Managed Isolation and Quarantine section.
- COVID-19 Tracer App data has been added to the public movements section to better understand the levels of compliance among the general population and willingness to use.
- A domestic flight data was not made available this week and has not been included.

COVID-19 in New Zealand

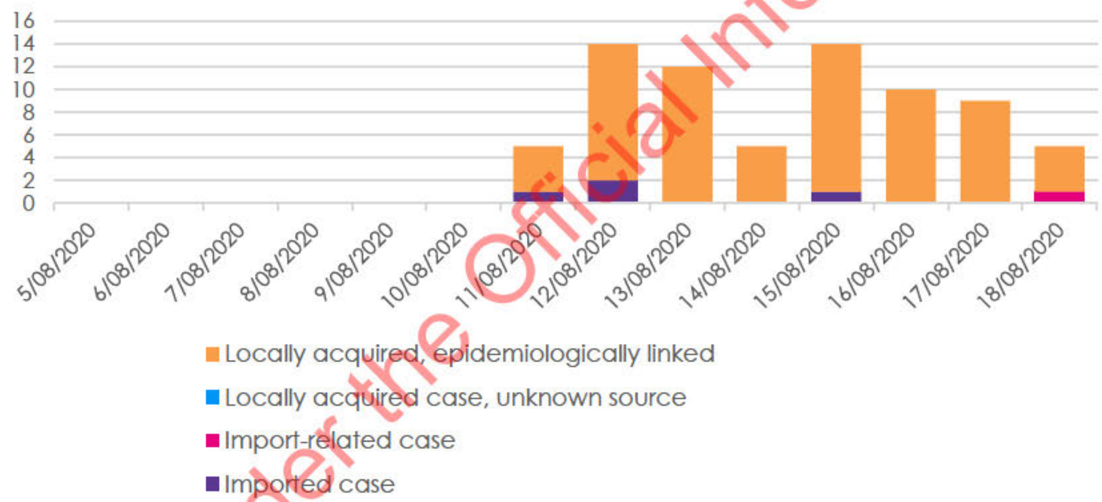
As at 9am 18 August 2020, there are currently 90 active cases in New Zealand (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Summary of COVID-19 in New Zealand as at 9am 18 August 2020

90	**Active cases**
2	**Days since last imported case reported**
98	**Days since last import-related case reported**
0	**Days since last locally-acquired epidemiologically-linked case reported**
109	**Days since last locally-acquired, unknown source case reported**
1	**Significant open clusters**[1]
1	**Clusters with a new case reported in the last 28 days**

Source: Ministry of Health (MoH)

Figure 2: Daily cases by source of transmission (cases reported in the past 28 days)[2]



Source: Ministry of Health (via EpiSurv)

Definitions:

- Imported cases: Cases with a reported history of international travel within 14 days of onset.
- Import-related case: Cases that have a link to an imported case.
- Locally acquired cases, epidemiologically linked: Cases that have a link to a locally acquired case with an unknown source.
- Locally acquired cases, unknown source: Cases that have no link to another case or overseas travel (potential community transmission).

[1] A cluster is considered closed when there have been no new cases for two incubation periods (i.e. 28 days) from the date when all cases complete isolation.

[2] The daily case numbers used in this report differ slightly from the figures reported each day by the Ministry of Health. The Ministry's figures are usually based on the change in the 24 hours to the 9am reporting time. The numbers in this report are based on the actual calendar dates of case reporting.

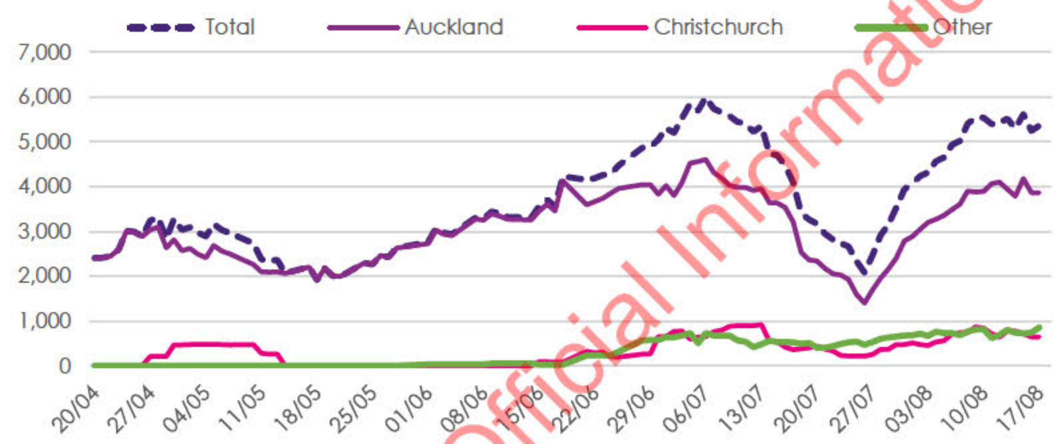
Managed Isolation and Quarantine

Isolation

As at 18 August 2020, there is total effective capacity to accommodate 7,077 returnees in MIF's in Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington, Hamilton and Rotorua. Total effective capacity allows for a 24 hour room turn-around for sanitisation. At the time of release of this report, 1,831 beds are vacant.

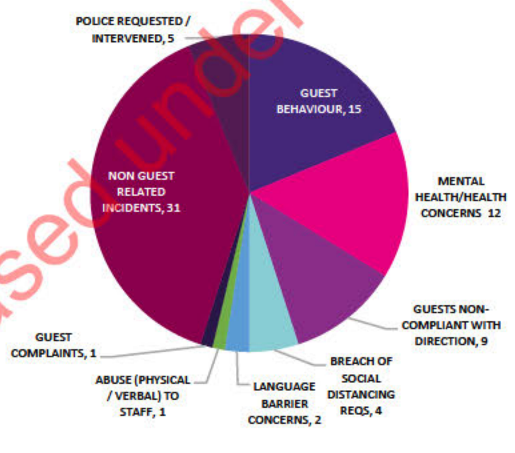
During the reporting period, the number of individuals in MIF's has decreased from 5,542 to 5,246 (Figure 3). Over the next seven days the number of returnees is forecast to a total of 5,854 with a total effective capacity of 7,312.[3]

Figure 3: Number of people in managed isolation or quarantine[4]



Source: Isolation, Quarantine and Repatriation SITREP, AoG calculation

Figure 4: Guest incidents (05 – 11 August 2020)[5]



[3] The forecast capacity fluctuates and is based on actual capacity available at the time of the report. The numbers are determined by the number of available rooms provided by the hotels.
[4] "Other" includes Rotorua, Wellington and Hamilton. These will be displayed individually when numbers increase.
[5] Non guest related incidents are those incidents involving either members of the public or MIF staff.

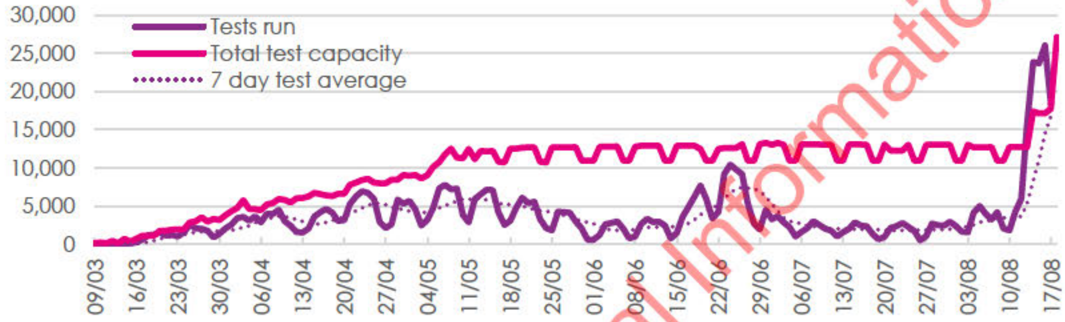
Source: Deployable Joint Inter-Agency Task force

Health system capacity

Testing capacity

As at 18 August 2020, test stock is 15 days of supply at current testing levels, with testing capacity significantly higher than last week, increasing up to approximately 27,106 tests per day (Figure 4). Comparatively on 11 August 2020, test stock was estimated to be 78 days of supply. The daily average testing rate has also significantly increased from 3,530 last week to approximately 16,842 this week.

Figure 4: Testing capacity

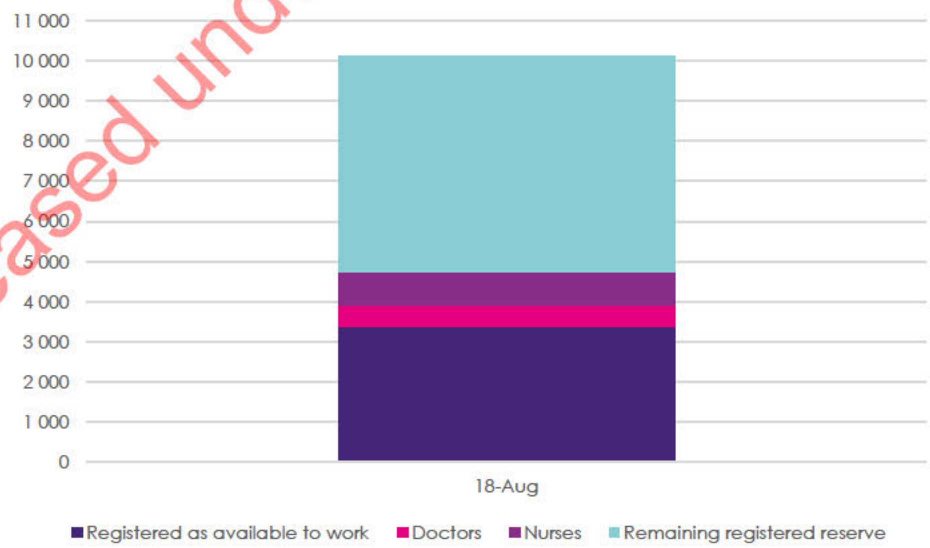


Source: MoH

Workforce surge capacity

As of 18 August 2020, there are 10,142 people registered in the surge capacity database of which 3,389 have indicated they are still available to work (Figure 5). Of those available, 513 are doctors and 839 are registered nurses.

Figure 5: Workforce surge capacity



Source: MoH COVID-19 SITREP

Personal protective equipment

MoH have sufficient PPE stocks for the health and disability workforce currently, however ongoing monitoring is required. Sourcing and distribution of PPE continues to be managed at a national level. There is sufficient stock of all PPE supplies in country. Demand is increasing with the recent community cases and MoH are pre emptively working with DHBs to distribute to some sectors such as Aged Residential Care.

PPE supply chains will continue to experience future challenges relating to ongoing global demand. A small number of mask shipments remain on hold pending further quality assurance. Test results for these masks are expected this week. Second wave pandemic modelling is alerting MoH to areas where they may need to secure additional supply as a risk management strategy. MoH are currently prioritising additional supplies of gloves and gowns.

Figure 6: PPE availability for the health sector and non-health essential services

Product Description	Stock on Hand		Average Distribution over Last Fortnight	PPE on Order	
	DHBs (17 Aug)	National Reserves (17 Aug)		Awaiting arrival confirmation	Total on Order (17 Aug)
N95 Mask (or equivalent)	1,215,962	21,906,742	1,100	13,070,000	16,070,000
Procedure Mask (or equivalent)	5,975,622	90,448,000	113,325	22,252,850	150,184,350
Isolation Gown (or equivalent)	477,512	3,750,450	47,850	4,748,280	7,031,280
Disposable Apron	1,001,341	2,443,250	24,750	8,565,000	8,565,000
Glasses/goggles (or equivalent)	126,965	1,096,601	0	1	1
Face shield (or equivalent)	185,512	995,400	100	18,440	18,440
Nitrile Gloves (all sizes, Each)	13,771,619	43,673,600	790,400	56,678,800	293,692,800
Hand Sanitiser (500mL equivalents)	51,347	333,243	0	14	300,414
Hand Sanitiser (2L equivalents)	0	155,862	0		0
Detergent Wipe (or equivalent)	422,950	0	0		0
Disinfectant wipe (or equivalent)	3,505,567	117,815,850	390,075	24,524,100	24,524,100

Source: MoH PPE data as at 17 Aug 2020.

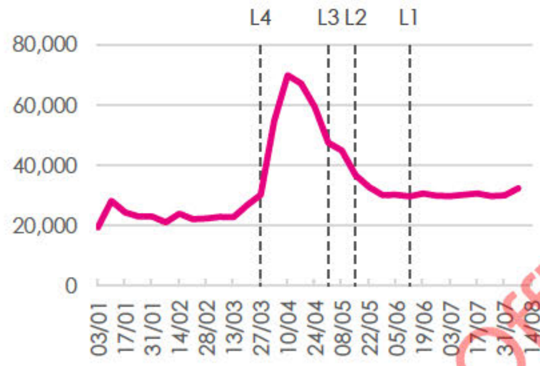
Effects of the measures on society

The number of Special Needs Grants for food remains largely unchanged since mid-June, with approximately 32,345 reported over the period of 31 July to 07 August 2020. This likely indicates a new normal that is higher than pre-COVID-19 and 2019 figures (Figure 7).

Over the period of July 2019 - July 2020, food prices increased 4.2% led by a 19%increase in the price of fruit and vegetables when compared to the same time last year (Figure 8). Increases in fruit and vegetable prices can have negative impacts on household wellbeing, particularly for those that are already financially struggling.

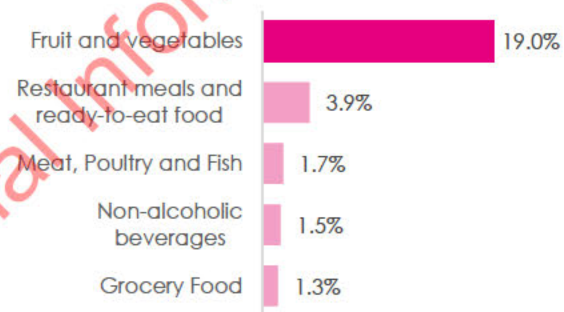
s9(2)(ba)(i)
[redacted]

Figure 7: Special Needs Grants for food



Source: MSD

Figure 8: Yearly percentage change in food prices (July 2019 to July 2020), by category



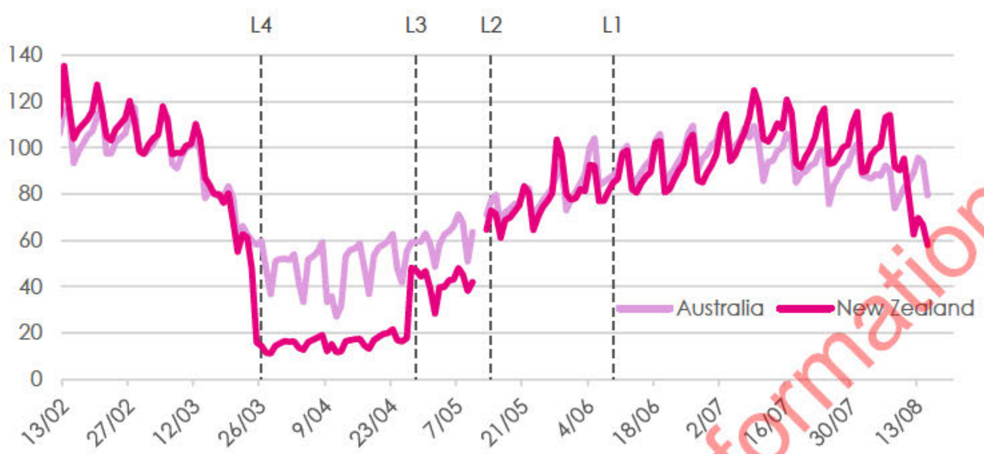
Source: StatsNZ

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

Public movement

Over the period 11 – 18 August 2020, data from Apple Maps indicates direction requests have decreased marginally. This likely indicates compliance with the change in alert level procedures. (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Volume of driving direction requests on Apple Maps (13/01=100)

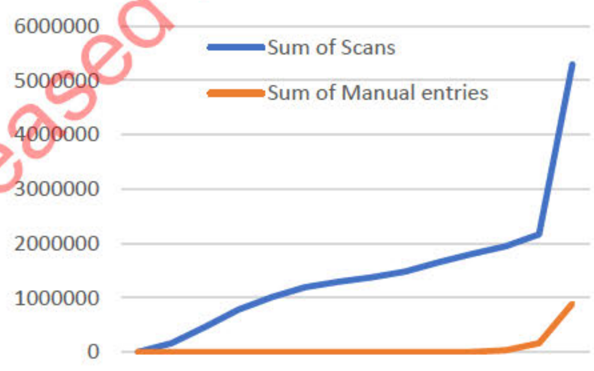


Source: Apple Mobility Trends

There has been a significant increase in NZ COVID Tracer app activity following the change in alert levels. Prior to the alert level change there was approximately 640,000 registered users, as of 17 August 2020 there are approximately 1,442,300 registered users. This is likely due to the recent outbreak highlighting community transmission and effective messaging surrounding importance of contact tracing.

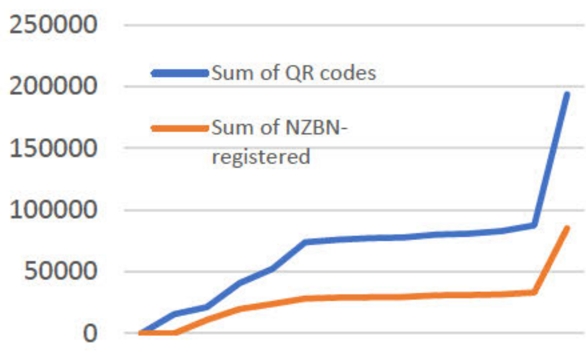
Over the period of 10 - 17 August 2020 approximately 4,118,708 COVID Tracer App scans occurred nationwide with a further 847,499 manual entries (Figure 11). During AL1, prior to the change in alert levels, the seven day average for Tracer App scans was approximately 30,000. Additionally, there has been approximately 123,339 new QR codes generated since the alert level change, compared to 4,267 for the week prior (Figure12).

Figure 11. COVID-19 Tracer App Scans and manual entries



Source: MoH

Figure 12. QR codes (cumulative)

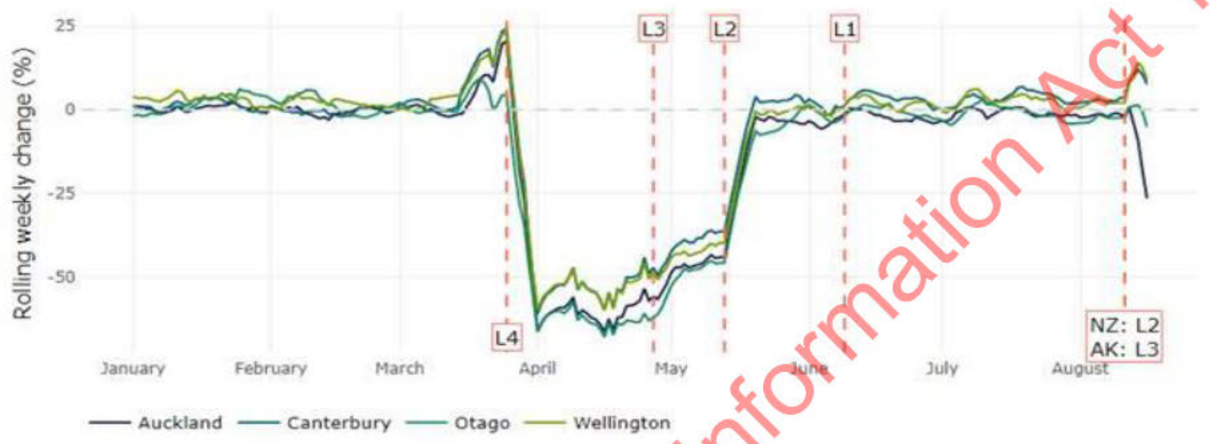


Source: MoH

Effects of the measures on businesses

Current Electronic Card Transaction data show that spending over the period of 02 – 09 August 2020 was at normal levels for most store types (figure 13). Most regions are experiencing relatively normal levels of spending. Auckland was one of the few regions yet to reach previous year's spending even before the re-imposition of AL3.

Figure 13: Regional spend



Source: Marketview

Preliminary data indicates consumer spending in Auckland has decreased by approximately a quarter for the week ending 16 August 2020, compared with the same week last year. Other regions have had an increase in spending since the reintroduction of AL2. Based on previous trends, these rises are likely to be temporary and possibly associated to 'panic buying' during the initial change in alert levels.

Spending in 'food and liquor' increased more than 25% for the week ending 16 August 2020 compared with the same week last year, with 'home & recreational retailing' also increasing by approximately 20%. This is also likely due to individuals stockpiling and preparing for lockdown, a trend that was observed prior to AL4. Other industry categories have started to decrease again, particularly in Auckland. The effects of returning to AL3 – from a spending perspective – will be more apparent next week.

COVID-19 effects can also be observed in public transport usage. In Auckland public transport (including buses, trains and ferries) weekly patronage was 53.3% of last year. Wellington's weekly bus patronage was 82.0% of last year. Christchurch weekly bus patronage was 81.2% of last year.

Macroeconomic and fiscal effects of the measures

Electronic card transactions and traffic movements have increased by approximately 5% and 10% compared to July 2019. The main exception is labour market indicators, including Jobseeker and COVID-19 Income Relief Payment (CIRP) recipients and online job vacancies (Figure 14).

Data from the early-August ANZ Business Outlook indicated business confidence decreased by 10 points to -42.4% while own activity[6] dropped 8 points to -17%. Near-term employment intentions decreased 6 points to a net 21% of firms expecting to cut jobs with the same net percentage reporting having fewer staff compared to last year.

Weekly growth in income support numbers increased for the first time in six weeks. Approximately 22,000 individuals were receiving the CIRP as of 07 August 2020, an increase of approximately 1,000 on the previous week. The number of Jobseeker Support recipients increased by approximately 600. The total number of people receiving income support (Jobseeker and CIRP) was approximately 215,000 – up 1,600 on the week prior.

Figure 14: New Zealand Activity Index[7]

Source: NZAC

[6] The "Own Activity" series in the ANZBO relates to a question asked of firms around their view of where activity in their own firm is heading a year hence, while the "Business Confidence" series is about their perceptions of general business conditions a year hence.
[7] The New Zealand Activity Index summarises several monthly indicators of economic activity. It is intended to be interpreted as a broad measure of economic activity.

Fiscal measures

New Zealand's fiscal response packages for COVID-19 announced to date amount to approximately $48.5 billion in committed spending. s9(2)(i) [redacted] The policies in the Creating a Resurgence Wage Subsidy Scheme and Amending the Leave Support Scheme paper were funded from underspends from the Wage Subsidy Extension, so these are not included in the update. As at 14 August, approximately $13.7 billion remained in the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF).

Figure 15: Fiscal costs of commitments and programmes already announced and estimated expenditure

Spending package	Total impact on net core Crown debt ($m), period to 2023/24
Infrastructure	4,709
Education, Skills & Training	4,578
Business & Firm	10,046
Income Support	20,697
Health	3,205
Housing	1,065
Other	4,194
Total Allocated Spend to date	**48,495**
Unallocated CRRF remaining	13,710

Open Source

General Sentiment

Sentiment over reporting period has been centred on the change in national Alert Levels. While the majority of New Zealanders appear satisfied that the increase in Alert Levels is necessary, there is a small minority of activists and issue motivated groups who display negative sentiment towards the government, attributing responsibility for the recent outbreak. The announcement that the government will consider tighter AL1 regulations has highlighted public concern, indicating such changes will likely result in negative sentiment towards the government's response.

The majority of New Zealanders appear to be willing to comply with increased alert level procedures with a significant number of commenters highlighting criticism of those who have failed to comply with MoH guidance.

There is a high degree of negative sentiment that appears to be coming from small business owners, particularly those in the hospitality industry who may feel disaffected by the government's decision to raise Alert Levels. Similarly, small isolated communities, particularly Maori and Pacific Island communities have a high level of concern they will be disproportionately affected by increased alert level procedures.

Contact Tracing Application

Since 10 August 2020, four articles have been published by the New Zealand media that have either covered or have mentioned the COVID-19 Contact Tracing Application. These articles have generated high interest on social media platforms, with a combined total of 745 comments. Approximately 83% of the comments analysed show that the general sentiment towards the Contact Tracing Application is positive or neutral.

Approximately 17% of the comments analysed highlighted a negative sentiment concerning the Contact Tracing Application. Commenters who held this view tended to either be concerned with sharing their information with the government and/or were actively promoting misinformation in relation to the recent COVID-19 outbreak. Those commenting negatively about the contact tracer application were generally met with negative reactions from other social media users.

Some commenters have also mentioned they aren't using the contact tracing application due to technical issues, including; the application not running properly, not being able to log in, and QR codes at businesses not scanning properly. It is likely these commenters would use the application again if there was clearer messaging about what to do when these technical issues arise.