



Proactive Release

The following document has been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), on behalf of the Minister for COVID-19 Response, Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall:

COVID-19 Briefings - August 2022

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: 01082022 Assurance of System readiness Work Underway to Respond to a Variant of Concern

Title of paper: 03082022 Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19 Response System Reviews

Title of paper: 05082022 Review of New Zealand's COVID-19 Protection Framework and self-isolation settings - 5 August

Title of paper: 05082022 Public awareness campaign to support people who are unable to wear masks

Title of paper: 08082022 Meeting with Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group 10 August 2022

Title of paper: 12082022 Preparation for Release of Haumaruru Briefing

Title of paper: 25082022 Meeting with Prof. Michael Plank

Title of paper: 26082022 All of Government COVID-19 System Readiness Exercise

Title of paper: 30082022 COVID-19 Community Panel, Chair's Report

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- Section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals;
- Section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials;
- Section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion; and
- Section 9(2)(h), to maintain legal professional privilege.

Aide-Mémoire

Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19 Response System Reviews

To:	Minister Verrall, COVID-19 Response		
From:	Amber Bill Head of System Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Date:	3/08/2022
Briefing Number:	DPMC-2021/22-2588	Security Level:	In Confidence

Purpose

1. To provide you with the report “Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19 Response System Reviews” for your information (Attachment A). The report presents high level insights drawn from a thematic analysis of recommendations from external reviews of the COVID-19 response.

Background

2. Since June 2021, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) COVID-19 Group have coordinated system-wide reporting of progress against recommendations from various system reviews. These regular reports formed part of a broader set of system assurance activities and transparency on continuous improvement.
3. Over 1600 recommendations for system improvements from 75 reviews of the COVID-19 response carried out between March 2020 and March 2022 have been tracked and reported to the COVID-19 Chief Executives Board (CCB) and to the Minister for COVID-19 Response in a series of progress reports: June 2021, August 2021, December 2021, and March 2022.
4. The progress reports sought to provide transparency on continuous improvement and ensure that system improvements identified by the reviews were being made. The reports have been, or are in the process of being, proactively published on the Unite Against COVID-19 website and are included as Attachment B for your reference.


Thematic analysis of the recommendations

5. The report “Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19 Response System Reviews” (Attachment A) has drawn from reviews that were conducted by external audit or independent reviewers and presents a high-level summary of themes emerging from the recommendations. Focus has been on recommendations and themes that provide system insights with the intent that these insights can inform both further COVID-19 response activities and future pandemic responses.

- 6. Consistent with the direction of a more orthodox model of accountability, this report is the final one of the system-wide reporting of progress against recommendations.

Next steps

- 7. Responsibility for any outstanding recommendations continues to rest with individual agencies to monitor or close as appropriate.
- 8. The report "Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19 Response System Reviews" will be proactively released alongside the other progress reports.

 Amber Bill Head of System Assurance and Continuous Improvement DPMC COVID-19 Group	Minister Verrall Minister for COVID-19 Response
3/8/2022/...../.....

Attachments:	
Attachment A:	Report: Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19 Response System Reviews
Attachment B:	Reports on Tracking Progress Against Recommendations

Contact for telephone discussion		
Name	Position	Telephone
Amber Bill	Head of System Assurance & Continuous Improvement, COVID-19	s9(2)(a)

**Attachment A: Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19
Response System Reviews**

Proactively Released

INSIGHTS FROM RECOMMENDATIONS ACROSS COVID-19 RESPONSE SYSTEM REVIEWS

Introduction

This paper provides thematic analysis and insights drawn from recommendations from a selection of reviews carried out during the response to COVID-19.

Since June 2021, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) COVID-19 Group have coordinated system-wide reporting of progress against recommendations from various system reviews. These regular reports formed part of a broader set of system assurance activities and transparency on continuous improvements.

Over 1600 recommendations for system improvements from 75 reviews of the COVID-19 response carried out between March 2020 and March 2022 have been tracked and reported to both the COVID-19 Chief Executives Board (CCB) and to the Minister for COVID-19 Response.

This thematic analysis is a summary of those recommendations and is the final report on progress against the recommendations.

Methodology and Approach

For this report, high level emergent themes have been drawn from the recommendations with the intent of identifying insights that can inform both further COVID-19 response activities and future pandemic responses.

Due to the large number of recommendations in the DPMC dataset and that it would be of limited value to include recommendations that were very technical and related to operationally specific issues, only a subset of the recommendations have been included for

this analysis. These are from reviews that were conducted by external audit or independent reviewers (ie, reviews commissioned or conducted internally were not included).

Because of the system view taken by the reviews included, the recommendations will have broader application for system insights.

It is to be noted that recommendations of all status (ie, completed, in progress, superseded/not agreed and no status provided) have been included in the analysis, as the enduring value is in the recommendation raised by the independent reviewers, rather than the status of the recommendation at any particular time.

The list of reviews included in the analysis is attached as Appendix A.

For consistency with previous monitoring reports, insights are presented using the following themes:

- System Governance, Accountability, Leadership
- Strategy Planning, Economic and Assurance
- Equity and Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Communications and Engagement
- Workforce Sustainability and Resilience
- Data, Information, Privacy and Technology
- Policy and Processes Review
- Infection Prevention and Control¹
- Equipment².

¹ Infection Prevention and Control was excluded from the analysis due to the operationally specific nature of the recommendations.

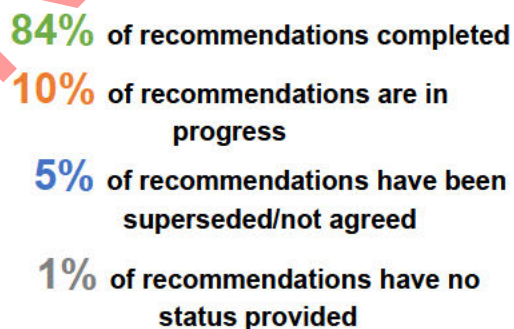
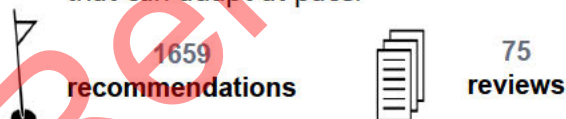
² Equipment was also excluded as there were no recommendations in this theme.

High level overview of insights

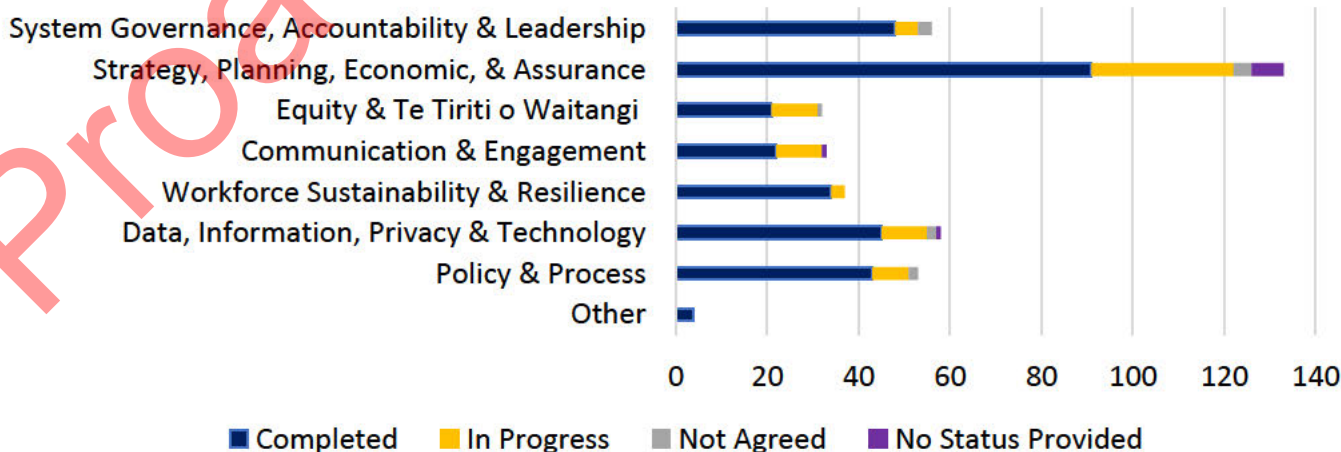
The analysis of the recommendations across the reviews shows a number of clear recurring themes. These include:

- The need for an all-of-government response architecture to be stood up to coordinate across different requirements and complexities of the response.
- A well performing system relies on a clear understanding and transparency of its respective roles and functions.
- A system-wide view is needed in policy development and decisions.
- System performance relies on the readiness and preparedness of the system.
- Timely engagement is critical for meeting obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to protect our vulnerable and isolated communities.
- Outcomes can be improved with integrated work between government and communities to support the delivery of services.

- A need for a unified communications capability across the response system to communicate complex and technical details with sufficient context and strategic narrative to the public.
- A tailored, consistent, and accessible messaging to the public is necessary for an equitable approach.
- Making the best use of capability will improve system performance and satisfaction.
- Data is crucial to system monitoring, continuous improvement, and equity.
- Innovation supports a flexible system that can adapt at pace.



Recommendations by theme and status as at July 2022



System Governance, Accountability and Leadership

Quick stats			
Completed	48	No status provided	0
In progress	5	Not agreed/superseded	3

Whole-of-system approach

Early recommendations signalled the need to move away from the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) model and establish a sustainable medium-long term function to coordinate and drive the policy programme for COVID-19. This is what is now known as the DPMC COVID-19 Group. The role and functions of the group were created in line with recommendations, with leadership at the centre of the system supporting agencies to deliver.

The COVID-19 pandemic has starkly shown how issues and events can cut across and impact the whole or multiple aspects of society. The crisis nature of the pandemic necessitated an all-of-government response architecture to be stood up to coordinate across the different requirements and complexities of the response. The whole-of-system approach to COVID-19 has, in effect, provided a case study from which insights can be drawn and model for future ways of working for the public service.

A well performing system relies on a clear understanding and transparency of its respective roles and functions

A theme that consistently emerged was the need to have clarity of roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and decision rights, and that these be explicitly set out, appropriately mandated and shared widely.

The need for clarity of roles extends from governance structures to operational decision making and delivery at the

frontline, especially in a national-regional model.

In addition to the need for greater coordination, a call for more rigorous collaboration practices and greater connection between policy development and operational realities came through frequently.

A number of recommendations also suggested the need for mechanisms to support external challenges and advice and consider expertise such as clinical, data, as well as Māori and Pasifika specific needs, thereby enhancing diversity of thought.

The establishment of the COVID-19 Group addressed some, but not all, of the issues highlighted in these themes.

A number of advisory groups and panels were also established to provide challenge and independent advice on a range of issues related to the COVID-19 response (eg, the COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review Improvement and Advice Group (CICRIAG), Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group, COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group, COVID-19 Testing Technical Advisory Group).

Strategy, Planning, Economic, and Assurance

Quick stats			
Completed	91	No status provided	7
In progress	31	Not agreed/superseded	4

A system-wide view is needed in policy development and decisions

Recommendations reinforced the importance of policy development factoring in impacts across the whole system and society, rather than just one system element or single issue. For example, assessing the economic and

social impacts of a policy response was essential even though at its fundamental core, COVID-19 is a public health issue.

The COVID-19 response has modified and adapted as more was understood about the virus and its management. A number of recommendations raise the importance of continuous improvement loops where feedback is shared across the system. This in turn, informs and improves strategic settings and decision-making.

System performance relies on the readiness and preparedness of the system

Recommendations consistently pointed to the need for greater and more transparency around readiness planning, as well as the separation of day-to-day response activities from longer-term strategic planning.

In addition, workforce planning was repeatedly highlighted as a core element of planning to ensure they could be delivered and took into account, any existing capacity challenges, as well as the ability to scale up and down and surge capacity.

Equity and Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Quick stats			
Completed	21	No status provided	1
In progress	10	Not agreed/ superseded	0

At the core of these recommendations is the need for and importance of diversity for a range of perspectives, networks and cultures. This includes and is not limited to gender, ethnicity, faith, agency affiliation & sector knowledge. Similarly, the critical need for engagement with vulnerable communities and age groups has also been recognised.

Timely engagement is critical for meeting obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to

protect our vulnerable and isolated communities

A number of recommendations reinforced that timely engagement with diverse and vulnerable communities and age groups, including for example, rural, faith-based, disabled people, rainbow, Māori, Pasifika, and other cultures and ethnicities should be factored into policy or operational design processes where their impacts will be felt greatly.

As an example, the DPMC COVID-19 Group facilitated a community panel that was unique in its composition to ensure that lived experiences and voices were captured and fed into the policy and operational development processes. This group brought together voices from a wide and varied subset of the population in one forum and provides a model that could be taken forward and used elsewhere in government. Feedback loops to ensure these groups also have visibility of how their views are being used to shape the response, are also essential to build into the consultation process.

The recommendations highlight the specific benefit of growing the knowledge base of insights into what is important to Māori and Pasifika. This would support the development of policy that identifies and builds a knowledge base of insights into the response as to the things that are important to Iwi in the context of an MIQ setting with isolation and testing. For example, the importance of family reunification, protocols around tangi and the repatriation of bodies as well as urban and rural needs.

Outcomes can be improved when communities support delivery

The important role that community plays has come through clearly as a theme throughout the reviews.

Recommendations raise the importance of working in a more integrated way with communities, such as drawing on existing

community relationships and networks to deliver services, like vaccinations. An example of this was seen in South Auckland and other communities in the way local Māori and Pasifika providers were called and relied upon to ensure that the more vulnerable people in their communities received appropriate care, treatment and support during the outbreaks. Further to this example, locally-led and delivered vaccination programmes saw successes in lifting the two-dose vaccination rate.

Some recommendations point to co-design as an important way to design and implement fit for purpose and innovative strategies. This approach could enable partnerships with Māori, Pasifika, disability, rural, business, and other community groups.

Communications and Engagement

Quick stats			
Completed	22	No status provided	1
In progress	10	Not agreed/superseded	0

Communication formed a fundamental part of the strategic approach.

Coherent and consistent public communication has been deemed a key pillar of the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Early recommendations identified the need for a unified communications capability across the response system and a strategic communications policy and plan.

The Unite Against COVID-19 (UAC) brand has had clear and consistent messaging to support the public's understanding and adherence to public health behaviours. Trustworthy information was made available in a wide array of languages via a number of channels.

Tailored, consistent and accessible messaging to the public is necessary for an equitable approach

The need to be able to communicate to the public, complex and technical details without confusion, was a strong theme running through a number of reviews. For example, a lack of clarity on and changing definitions for close, casual and casual plus contacts and rapidly changing settings were difficult for the public to navigate and comply with.

Conversely, some reviews recommended providing greater context and strategic narrative around the different measures being put in place so the public could understand the "why" and the science behind measures and protocols they were being asked to adhere to. This included the different performance of tests, and why some were being recommended over others.

Many of the public health messages for COVID-19 have been centred around mainstream audiences. There was, however, an increasing recognition throughout the COVID-19 response of the importance of tailored communications and use of additional channels to reach non-mainstream communities, especially audiences who do not have English as their first language.

Workforce Sustainability and Resilience

Quick stats			
Completed	34	No status provided	0
In progress	3	Not agreed/superseded	0

There are a number of recommendations that provided short/medium-term strategies and actions for reducing pressure arising from workforce fatigue and capacity issues, including:

- better planning for capacity needs – and then resourcing those needs
- formal documentation of institutional knowledge to help alleviate the impacts of loss of knowledge in high turnover roles
- more flexible use of capacity across the system.

Making the best use of capability will improve system performance and satisfaction

Several reviews made recommendations for how existing capability could be better utilised in the response to COVID-19:

- Operational and specialist expertise can be useful to bring into leadership roles to inform the viability of strategic settings and direction, to strengthen links between operational and strategic activities and reduce the risk of silos forming within a system.
- Knowledge and experience can be leveraged to support planning and readiness elsewhere in the system. For example, the Auckland Regional Public Health Service’s knowledge and experience can be leveraged to support other regions’ planning activities for outbreak response.
- Expertise outside of government can be used to deliver improved products and advice through, for example, external peer review or inclusion in governance, reference, steering and other advisory groups
- Appropriately skilled employees could be redeployed to other roles to reduce the concentration of work and responsibilities on a limited number of key personnel. For example, use of health assistants, and if necessary, options for training non-health

staff to take swabs to release nursing staff.

Wellbeing of staff is critical for retention

A recurring theme throughout the reviews was the impact of not fully understanding and resourcing capacity requirements on the wellbeing of the workforce. Tiredness and burnout were often mentioned, as were high turnover and key personnel risks.

Data, Information, Privacy and Technology

Quick stats			
Completed	45	No status provided	1
In progress	10	Not agreed/superseded	2

Recommendations in this theme referred to the need for information technology (IT) infrastructure, governance, systems and access to data collection, monitoring and analysis.

Strong leadership and governance over infrastructure and solutions

Recommendations in this theme pertained to the need for strong leadership on the data management and requirements of new solutions. A number of recommendations related to specific tools, but also highlighted the need for appropriate documentation to support the use and development of the tools and applications.

Tools need to be fit-for-purpose

Different tools will be better suited for different contexts and characteristics. Some recommendations addressed the need for enhanced user experience and take into account the end-to-end customer journey to capture more extensive data and other functionality that can improve the service.

This would be useful for communicating with the user throughout their journey.

The recommendations state the need for review and optimisation of key tools, such as testing and contact tracing systems to continuously improve the suitability and utility of the tools.

Data is crucial to system monitoring, continuous improvement, and equity

Recommendations point to greater accessibility to real-time aggregate data to support the public health strategy and clear performance measures and indicators for better system stewardship and continuous improvement. Real time data would provide visibility of system performance and impacts in a few clear format dashboards.

Innovation supports a flexible system that can adapt at pace

The pace and the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic has given rise to rapid innovation internationally, particularly around testing tools. There are a number of recommendations that highlighted specifically, the need to have greater openness to innovation and early adoption, including:

- The importance of having a resourced horizon scanning function to scan innovations from both the domestic and global contexts. Successes and failures internationally should be learnt from for the Aotearoa New Zealand context.
- Adopting international innovations to augment and enhance options with barriers to adoption removed. International data should be relied upon where there is a lack of data from the domestic context (or ability to easily generate this data).

Policy and Process Review

Quick stats

Completed	43	No status provided	0
In progress	8	Not agreed/superseded	2

Continuous review and improvement underpin the response

Most of the recommendations in this category refer to the need to review and refine specific policies and protocols using data and evaluation, consistent with the evidence-based and continuous improvement approach that underpins the response.

Specific recommendations suggest a stronger focus on the end-to-end systems (eg, aviation border system). There is a need to understand the operational implications of implementing new (or changes to) requirements more clearly on the consistency and compliance with other measures.

Some recommendations advised of the need to implement a centralised process for recording and regularly reporting on non-compliance of the measures across the end-to-end processes. This would clearly articulate the types of breaches and incidents that are expected to be reported on and thresholds for reporting. This information could further be collated and used to provide insight into compliance risks and issues.

What is still outstanding?

The purpose of monitoring the recommendations review of the COVID-19 response was to demonstrate the improvements of the response system over time and provide assurance that the insights identified have been considered and adopted, where appropriate.

Over 80% of the recommendations have been completed, and only 10% are still open for progress or action³ which represents a significant amount of work and effort across the system to make improvements and learn from the reviews.

yet been addressed or closed, the table below steps out actions in place to address them.

To retain the insights from the small number of recommendations that have not

Insight	Remedy Content
<p><i>Clear articulation of a medium-term strategy:</i></p> <p>While there have been several frameworks to guide the COVID-19 response – the Alert Level System and the COVID-19 Protection Framework – reviews consistently refer to the need for clear governance, management, and coordination of the end-to-end processes system across agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new COVID-19 post-winter strategy and preparedness activities against the variants of concern scenarios [CAB-22-MIN-0251 and CAB-22-MIN-0223 refer] will promote stability and support people and businesses to have the confidence to plan without the constant concern about disruption. • Planning activities to ready the system for transition to the new strategy include updating the National Management Plan. The updates will capture the changes to the response or roles and responsibilities that occur as a result of the transition.
<p><i>Engagement, consultation, and continuous review are critical to the response:</i></p> <p>Recommendations consistently highlighted the need to have rigorous or formalised collaboration practices to ensure more effective collaboration between agencies on policy development, operational planning, and communication material.</p> <p>They further raised the need for clear and consistent public communication and messages tailored to targeted communities to build and maintain confidence in the response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the response transitions to the more decentralised operating model, with Ministry of Health becoming the lead agency responsible for the ongoing coordination of the COVID-19 response over time, this connectedness and engagement will be essential to maintain or enhance. • As DPMC work alongside other responsible agencies on their readiness to transition, this theme can inform processes and decision-making structures. For example, in the planning for the establishment of the new COVID-19 Senior

	<p>Officials' Committee, which will maintain oversight over policy and strategy decisions and ensure an ongoing all-of-government approach is retained.</p>
<p><i>Expert advice will continue to drive operational excellence:</i></p> <p>Recommendations highlighted the need for independent and expert challenge in the development of policy and response.</p> <p>Some outstanding recommendations include a need to strengthen public health intelligence functions and include the role of epidemiologists in data analysis and governance structures. Integrated performance views of services and better leverage of existing data and reporting will also inform operational excellence and cadence for a future response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group terms of reference is being extended until 30 December 2022. The extension reflects the need to have ongoing independent expert advice to support readiness to respond to any changes in the epidemiology of COVID-19, including the possible emergence of new variants. • The recently established Public Health Agency (PHA) within the Ministry of Health will provide greater public health leadership across the health and disability sector. • While not fully embedded yet, the PHA will develop a more effective public health knowledge and surveillance system to integrate mātauranga Māori and tofa loloto into evidence-based health policy. • The use of intelligence and monitoring of public health will be a key part of advice to Ministers on all public health matters.
<p><i>Interconnectivity and wider utility of IT solutions:</i></p> <p>The recommendations highlighted the need for greater oversight over the portfolio of IT solutions created for the response. Recommendations specifically referred to tools that provide greater utility to individuals in terms of specificity of locations of interest, timeframes, and individual actions to be taken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be benefit for future responses to have improved public facing ICT systems that are appropriate for diverse audiences. • Greater interconnectivity between these tools would provide greater insight across agencies about the customer journey and inform improvements to services and policy.
<p><i>Innovation:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officials from DPMC, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Business,

As part of the continuous improvement posture of the response, the outstanding recommendations identified work in progress to establish an innovation team to support the assessment and processing of new technologies and innovations for addressing inequity in the response.

Innovation & Employment, and other relevant health research have commenced work to better New Zealand's testing system and understand the role innovation can play in this.

- This work includes surveys and workshops that inform agencies' advice on a new approach to ensure effective engagement on issues within testing innovation including with key stakeholders.
- This will draw on overseas-based experiences and horizon-scanning, consistent with the recommendations described above.

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Appendix A: Reviews included in analysis

TITLE	WRITTEN BY	DATE
Rapid Audit of Contact Tracing for COVID19 in NZ April 2020	Dr Ayesha Verrall	10/04/2020
Rapid Review of Initial Operating Model and Organisational Arrangements for the National Response to COVID-19	Rebecca Kitteridge & Brian Roche	23/04/2020
MoH Management of PPE in response to COVID19	Office of the Auditor-General (OAG)	15/06/2020
Simpson Roche Review - Oct. 2020 - NZ COVID-10 Surveillance Plan and Testing Strategy	Heather Simpson and Brian Roche	28/09/2020
Independent review of the COVID-19 Border Measures - Tranche One (Aviation)	Venter Consulting	2/10/2020
Second rapid review of the COVID-19 all-of-government response	Rebecca Kitteridge	30/10/2020
Ministers Internal Auckland February 2021 Outbreak review	Sandra Procter and Cheryl Barnes	15/03/2021
MIQ Rapid Assessment	Murray Jack and Katherine Corich	9/04/2021
Management of the Wage Subsidy Scheme	Office of the Auditor-General (OAG)	4/05/2021
SPHAG19 Letter 1: Risk Mitigation Measures for Very High-Risk Countries, 6 May 2021	Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group	6/05/2021
Preparations for the nationwide roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine	Office of the Auditor-General (OAG)	17/05/2021
Review of the Auckland February 2021 COVID-19 Outbreak and New Zealand's current COVID-19 Outbreak Response Capability	COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group	4/06/2021
SPHAG19 Letter 2: Future of the Elimination Strategy, 10 June 2021	Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group	10/06/2021

Rapid Review of Border Worker Testing – Phase One	Venter Consulting	21/06/2021
SPHAG19 Letter 3: Phased Reopening of Borders, 24 June 2021	Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group	24/06/2021
SPHAG19 Letter 4: Timing the Next Phase of Reopening, 27 July 2021	Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group	27/07/2021
Observations from the Recent Delta Outbreak and their Impact on Reconnecting New Zealanders	COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group	23/09/2021
A Rapid Review of COVID-19 Testing in Aotearoa New Zealand	COVID-19 Testing Technical Advisory Group	4/10/2021
SPHAG19 Letter 5: Strategy for a Highly Vaccinated New Zealand, 8 October 2021	Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group	8/10/2021
Border Worker Saliva Testing Programme	Meta Consulting Ltd	15/10/2021
MIQ Absconder Reviews	MIQ Risk & Assurance	10/12/2021
SPHAG19 Letter 6: The COVID-19 Pandemic: Prospects for 2022, 15 December 2021	Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group	15/12/2021
Delta Response Rapid Review – Report for Ministry of Health³	Dovetail Consulting Ltd	23/03/2022
Lessons from the Response to Omicron to Inform the Future⁴	COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group	20/05/2022

^{3,4} Recommendations from the review were included in the thematic analysis, but have not been included in updated numbers

Attachment B: Previous reports tracking progress against recommendations

Proactively Released

Reporting of the progress against Recommendations as at 30/06/2021

1

Overview Quick stats

This reporting tracks progress made against recommendations from 50 major reviews (conducted by external audits, independent parties or internal reviews) completed during March 2020-June 2021. Recommendations have been categorised into 10 system themes. The most common system themes are:

- Infection prevention & control (IPC): Recommendations that require operational changes related to IPC, in particular recommendations around MIQ fencing, air filtration, use of corridors/lifts, and other IPC measures. Over half of these are completed, with a number of actions underway.
- Policy & Process review: Recommendations encourage standardising and embedding initial reactive processes / protocols and reviewing the overall process. A number of recommendations involve ongoing process refinement and setting of standard operating procedures. Over 70% of these are completed with the remaining recommendations in progress.
- Data, information, privacy & technology: Improving the information captured and the approaches to data management and privacy are common recommendations. The vast majority of these recommendations are completed with some longer term IT tools being developed.
- Strategy, Planning, Economic, & Assurance: There are a range of recommendations covering longer term strategies to managing COVID-19 and planning for different scenarios, alongside the economic considerations, and methods to provide assurance to the risks in the system. A lot of work has been done to develop strategies and detailed planning in the system, on defining testing strategies such as the surveillance and testing plan, and providing ongoing assurance across the way the system manages its risks.
- Workforce sustainability & resilience: Positioning of resourcing throughout the system is often raised, and concerns on the capacity and resilience of the workforce remain a prominent consideration. 70% of these recommendations are completed with recruitment, training and support ongoing.

50 reviews included

1222 recommendations captured

63% of recommendations completed

30% of recommendations in progress

79% of recommendations are 6 months old or more, making up 20% of the recommendations still open

5% of recommendations are between 3-6 months old, making up 2% of the recommendations still open

16% of recommendations are less than 3 months old, making up 9% of the recommendations still open

[22 recommendations without status update yet*]

*Footnote: As this reporting is in its early stages, some recommendations do not yet have a status update provided.

2

Progress of the Recommendations against the themes and their status Completed Recommendations by Theme



*Footnote: The 10th theme is Equipment e.g. Facilities and capital pieces, there are currently no recommendations in this theme.

This table is updated each time to show progress made from the previous report and example recommendations.

Theme	# Completed recs	Last month's # completed recs	Examples of the completed recommendations and the subjects covered
Infection prevention & control	246		Many recommendations are specifically MIQ such as use of corridors / lifts usage and access, fencing of the hotels, filtration, PPE protocols, floor plans and occupancy rates of hotels.
Policy & Process review	142		Standard operating procedures and many relate to initial MIQ processes, including security and transferring of guests through airports etc.
Data, information, privacy & technology	87		Interim solutions to automate data / reporting, increased capturing of guest / returnee data including data across the system, additional privacy considerations.
Workforce sustainability & resilience	81		New units with permanent staffing, additional security guards in MIQs, increasing staffing capacity to reduce fatigue / pressure and staff on rosters to reduce reliance on key individuals.
Strategy, Planning, Economic, & Assurance	79		Planning / strategic considerations such as procurement strategies, scenario testing and plans for surge capacity, and establishing assurance on key risks and audit processes.
Communication & Engagement	55		Unite Against COVID-19 campaign, comms to guests / returnees in MIQ, and internal comms for security guards in MIQs etc, definition of different types of contacts e.g. casual plus.
System governance, accountabilities & leadership	54		Clarity of roles and responsibilities to create greater interagency work, and creation of accountability frameworks, establishing the COVID-19 Chief Executives Board and a range of external advisory groups.
Equity & Te Tiriti o Waitangi	33		More engagement planning / frameworks for Māori and Pasifika communities, including recruitment to increase the staff capacity / capability of Māori and Pasifika across the system.
Other – not yet defined	4		The four recommendations within this category at this stage relate to name changes e.g. changing the AoG group to be named DPMC's COVID-19 Group.

3

Recommendation Analysis - Focus on recommendations with the status "Superseded / not agreed" Notes of importance

There are 45 recommendations in the Superseded / Not agreed status category.

- Approximately half of these are in the Infection prevention & control theme (26 recommendations). A number of recommendations have not been implemented due to impracticalities such as certain ventilation controls recommended in particular MIQs but the large suites in those hotels are not being used for MIQ.
- 10 recommendations with the theme policy & process review where the recommendation has since been superseded.
- There are four recommendations covering equity considerations where the agency/group to address the recommendation was not appropriate.

Further work will be done in this status category to ensure recommendations have an appropriate owner and are being progressed.

The COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review and Improvement Advisory Group (CICRIAG) Auckland February 2021 Outbreak review has been provided to the Minister for COVID-19 Response and is being considered by Cabinet. Once available the recommendations and status updates will be included in this reporting.

Reporting of the progress against Recommendations – August 2021

Data as at 14/07/2021

Overview

This reporting tracks progress made against recommendations from 59 major reviews (conducted by external audits, independent parties or internal reviews) completed during March 2020-June 2021. Recommendations have been categorised into 10 system themes. The most common system themes are: Infection Prevention & Control (IPC); Policy & Process Review; Data, Information, Privacy & Technology; Workforce Sustainability & Resilience; Strategy, Planning, Economic, & Assurance.

The focus of this report is on recommendations with the status "Superseded / not agreed". There are 64 recommendations in the Superseded / Not agreed status category.

- Five of these 64 are in relation to the CICRIAG latest "Review of the Auckland February 2021 COVID-19 Outbreak and New Zealand's current COVID-19 Outbreak Response Capability".
- Almost half (30) recommendations are in the theme of IPC, which reflects that IPC knowledge and practice has evolved quickly and tends to involve quite detailed recommendations. For example there are a number of recommendations on the protocols for closing windows prior to interactions however, for some facilities these windows are locked in returnee rooms.
- 17 of these recommendations are from three reviews that are almost 12 months old. Agencies have assumed that the recommendations from these reports have been superseded. Agencies have been focusing on the more recent reviews first, and further investigative work is still to be done to confirm some recommendations.
- We have summarised the different reasons behind each recommendation in this "superseded/not agreed status" and have displayed these below.

Quick stats

59 reviews included | 9 more reviews than last month | 1399 recommendations captured | 177 more recommendations captured than last month

73% of recommendations completed | 18% of recommendations in progress

74% of recommendations are 6 months old or more, making up 11% of the recommendations still open

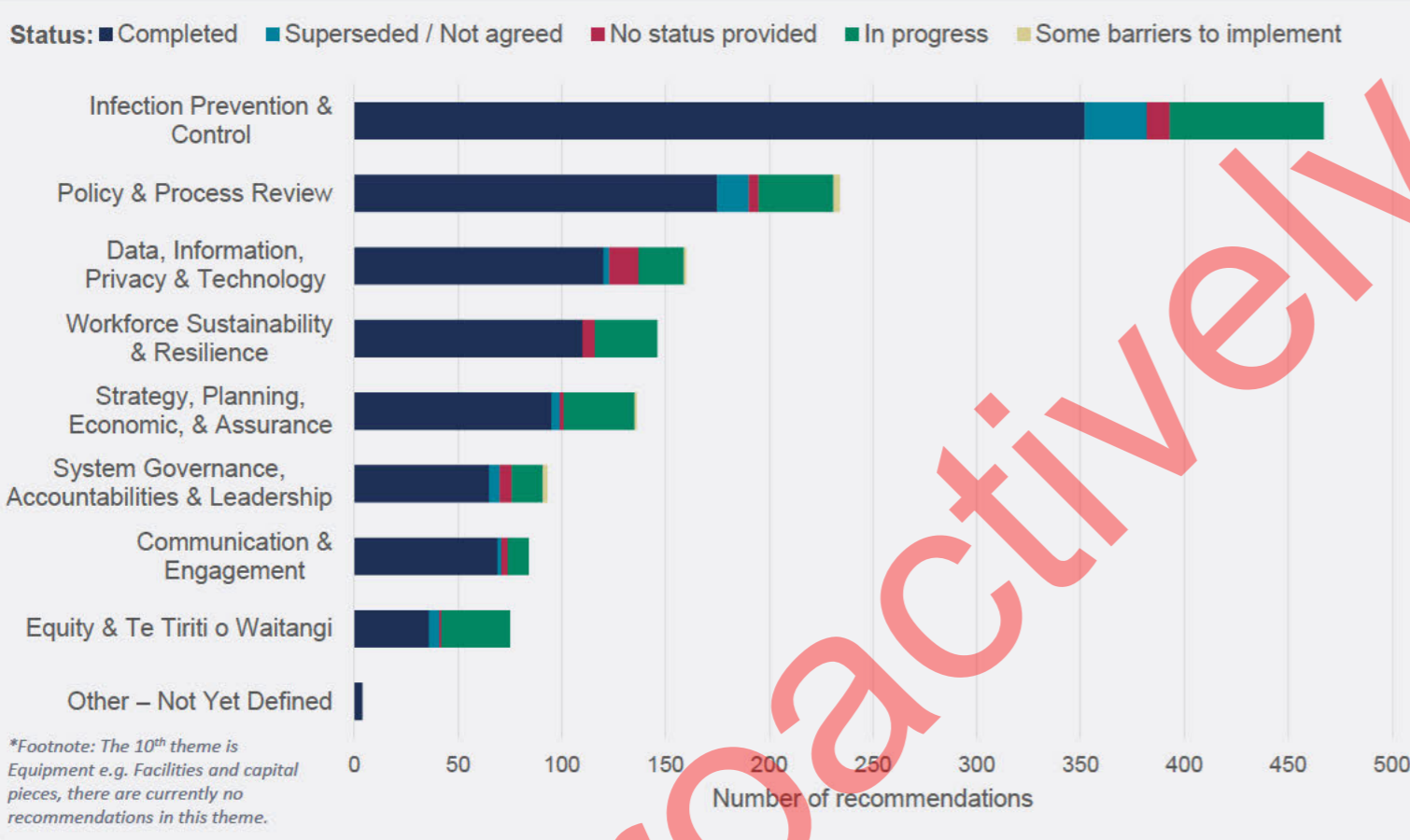
13% of recommendations are between 3-6 months old, making up 4% of the recommendations still open

13% of recommendations are less than 3 months old, making up 6% of the recommendations still open

[48 recommendations without status update yet*]

*Footnote: As this reporting is in its early stages, some recommendations do not yet have a status update provided.

All Recommendations categorised by their themes and their status (updated)



Superseded/Not agreed recommendations and the reasons behind not implementing

Of the list of 1399 recommendations, 64 recommendations have the status of "superseded / not agreed". The below is the outcome from summarising the reasons behind each agencies rationale for each of these recommendations.

# of recs	Reasons the recommendations are "Superseded/Not agreed"
10	Recommendation considered not necessary as agency already had measures in place.
9	The recommendation does not reflect current operation practices i.e. not possible or necessary to implement.
7	Recommendation has been addressed elsewhere by a different recommendation.
5	Recommendation no longer relevant, as the circumstances for the recommendation have changed.
4	Accept general intent of the recommendation, but the call to action is too vague to address
3	Recommendation duplicated in other reports
3	More effective approach to solving the recommendation
3	The benefit of the change to address the recommendation is not worth the cost i.e. minor risk
2	Ownership of the recommendation still to be determined
1	Longer term work required - solution being tracked elsewhere
47	Note this does not include the 17 recommendations from three reports that have not yet been investigated.

Next Report: Focus on recommendations that are 6 months old or more

There are 164 open recommendations that are 6 months old or more. The date has been based off the report the recommendation has been contained in. The largest three themes that are still open are IPC, Equity & Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Strategy, Planning, Economic, & Assurance.

Further work with key agencies across the system will be undertaken this month to understand whether progress can be made to complete these older recommendations.

Notes of importance: CICRIAG Auckland February 2021 Outbreak review

The COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review and Improvement Advisory Group (CICRIAG) Auckland February 2021 Outbreak review has been publicly released and included in this reporting. This report identified a range of areas of improvement, comprised of eight key recommendations and 22 other recommendations. The proposed actions for each recommendation have been developed with representatives from agencies across the system.

Reporting of the progress against Recommendations – December 2021 Data as at 22/11/2021

1

Overview

This reporting tracks progress made against recommendations from 72 major reviews (conducted by external audits, independent parties or internal reviews) completed during March 2020-October 2021. Recommendations have been categorised into 10 system themes.

It was originally planned to focus on the open recommendations that are 6 months old or more, however due to the time gap since the last report we have changed the focus of this report to be on the new and upcoming reviews. Since the last report there have been 13 reviews added to the stocktake. We have highlighted the recent most significant reviews and provided an outline of the review. It has been identified that there is change in focus in the more recent reviews from the "IPC" being the largest theme to "Strategy, Planning, Economic and Assurance" being the largest. Regular assurance continues to be sought with a number of reviews expected to be finalised over the coming months.

Review Title	Dated	Report writer	# of recs	Summary
Observations from the Recent Delta Outbreak and their Impact on Reconnecting New Zealanders	23/09/21	CICRIAG	34	Observations are categorised into 4 areas: vaccination, border processes, public health measures, Capacity/capability of the health system.
SPHAG19 Letter 5: Strategy for a Highly Vaccinated New Zealand, 8 October 2021	08/10/21	SPHAG19	9	The primary recommendation involves a shift in the overarching strategic direction of the response, from COVID-19 'elimination' to 'minimisation and protection'.
Absconder from MIQ Novotel Ibis Ellerslie	14/10/21	MIQ Risk and Assurance	11	Identified system vulnerabilities in relation to a MIF resident's unauthorised departure.
Border Worker Saliva Testing Programme	15/10/21	Meta Consulting Ltd	22	To assess the success of the rollout of saliva testing for border workers.

Quick stats

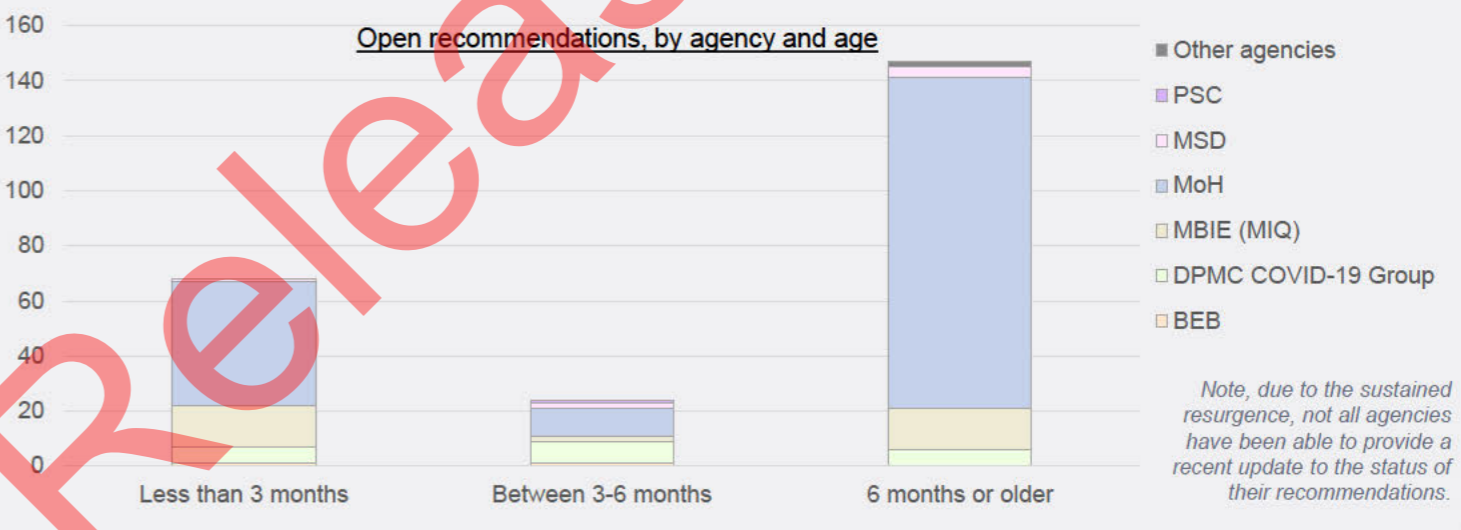
72 reviews included ↑ 13 more reviews than last report

1599 recommendations captured ↑ 200 more recommendations captured than last report

77% of recommendations completed (1231 with 204 completed since last report)

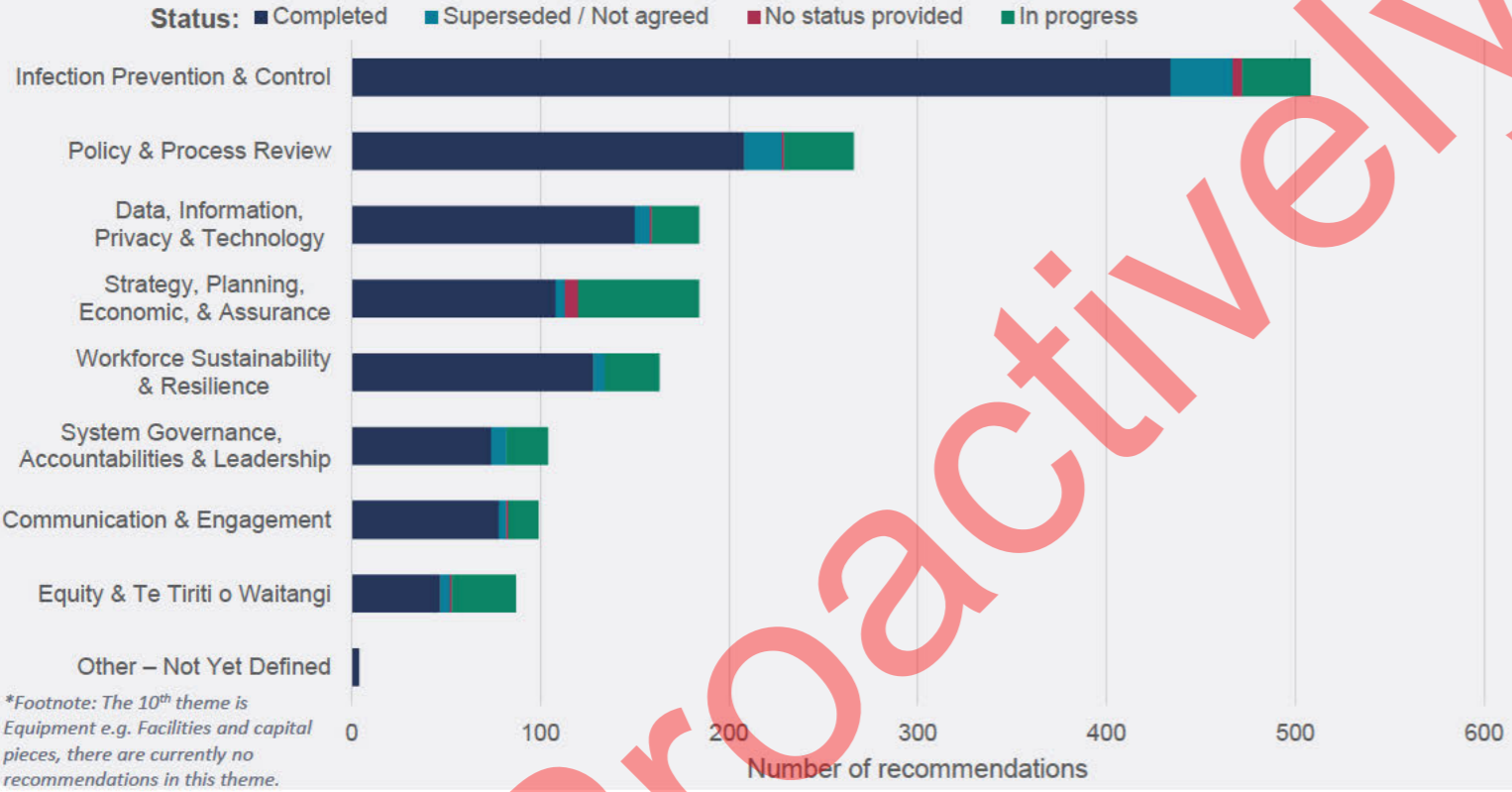
6% of recommendations have been superseded/not agreed

16% of recommendations are in progress

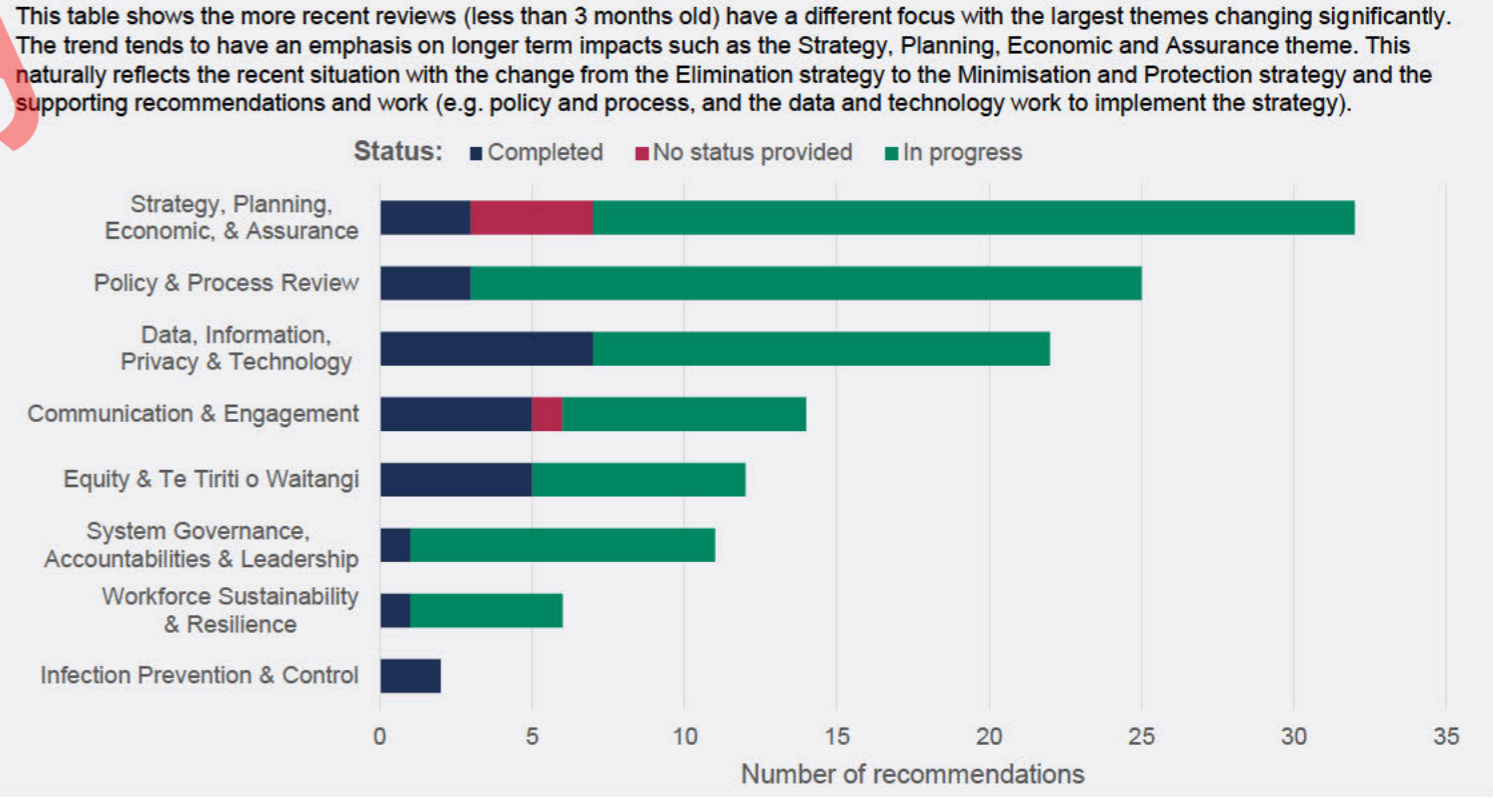


2

All Recommendations categorised by their themes and their status (updated)



Recommendations that are less than 3 months old, categorised by their themes and their status



3

Upcoming Reviews: Regular assurance activity and a system-view of review activity in relation to the August Delta Outbreak

- There is a number of reviews expected to be finalised over the coming months including:
- An MoH internal review on "Rapid Learnings from Delta Outbreak - Independent review by Dovetail Consulting Ltd Over November to December 2021"
 - An MIQ/MIF review of the "In-MIF Transmissions System Review" led jointly by MoH/MIQ review is underway.
 - Border Worker Testing and Vaccination (Maritime and Aviation) Phase Two by Venter Consulting is near finalisation.
 - An independent review of the "MIQ Governance" by Murray Jack and Katherine Corich is underway.
 - A "Joint review of maritime COVID-19 incidents since July 2021" by MoH and NZCS/BEB. This is near finalisation.

Reporting of the progress against Recommendations – March 2022

Data as at 17/02/2022

1

Overview and Focus for this Report – Recommendations that are older than 6 months

This reporting tracks progress made against recommendations from 75 major reviews (conducted by external audits, independent parties or internal reviews) completed during March 2020-December 2021. Recommendations have been categorised into the 10 system themes in the graph below.

The focus of this report were recommendations that were 6 months old or more, with a particular emphasis on closing out these recommendations.

From December, there were 153 recommendations, after our analysis, there was a 42% reduction overall with only 89 open recommendations remaining (noting that since December, 29 recommendations had aged into the 6 months old category). The approach used included:

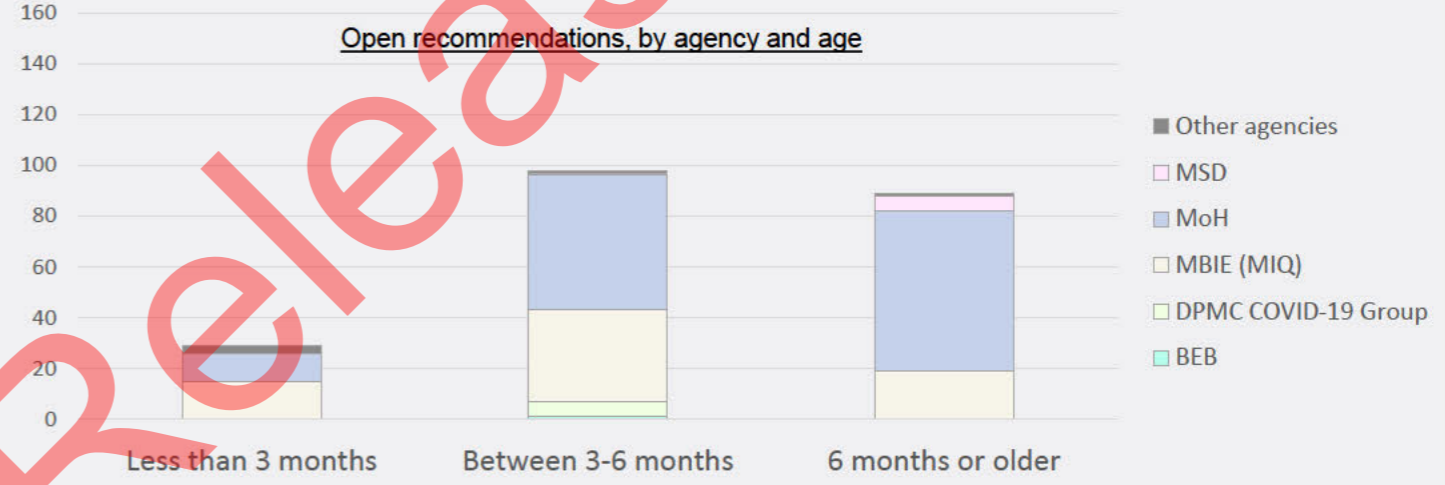
- Following up with the appropriate agencies for status updates and any pending recommendations for this quarterly reporting.
- For the remaining recommendations still open the System Assurance & Continuous Improvement team reviewed the information provided by agencies. Where this appeared to sufficiently address the original recommendation, this was assessed as completed. This included recommendations that were 'ongoing' in nature, such as those recommendations pertaining to Te Tiriti and equity issues.
- The SACI status identified recommendations where more focus was needed.

The next action point will be identifying key insights from the themes, as described below in section three.

Quick stats

75 reviews included | 3 more reviews than last report | 1659 recommendations captured | 60 more recommendations captured than last report

82% of recommendations completed (1353 with 122 completed since last report) | 5% of recommendations have been superseded/not agreed | 13% of recommendations are in progress



2

All Recommendations categorised by their themes and their status (updated)



Recommendations that were open and at least 6 months old, by agency and some examples

This table shows the recommendations that are 6 months old and the work that has been done to close out these recommendations. It also highlights some examples of the recommendations that have been completed.

Agency	Remaining recs 6 months old	Now completed recs that were 6 months old	Examples of the completed recommendations
BEB	0	1	Reconnecting NZers and the consideration of vaccination status
DPMC COVID-19 Group	0	15	Reconnecting NZers strategy steps, comms to the public, and strategic and operational process changes prior to the CPF being embedded.
MBIE (MIQ)	19	7	Remediation work on ventilation from IPC reviews, and resourcing levels including the need to flex across different MIFs which is part of a larger Workforce strategy.
MoH	63	68	Surveillance and testing strategies, some on the MIQ IPC recommendations, and a few on improvements following the Auckland February 2021 outbreak.
MSD/C4C	6	0	The majority of these are ongoing in nature so were considered closed via the 'SACI status', as are about improvements to equity and potential future wage subsidy schemes.
Other agencies (e.g. PSC and MBIE)	1	2	Addressing workforce fatigue including resourcing and training, in particular on response exercises.
Total:	89	93	

3

Highlighting Upcoming Work: Key agencies completing a refresh of their reporting on recommendations processes, and the identification of key insights

Ongoing changes to the system provides opportunities for continuous improvement reporting alongside the COVID-19 recommendations to the response, including the approach to the processes supporting the recommendations. In the next quarterly report we will include a more in-depth look at the recommendations in each of the 10 themes. MoH and MBIE (MIQ) are considering adjustments to their recommendation reporting processes which include:

- MoH has a governance group and a fortnightly working group in place for responding/tracking the reviews/recommendations
- A new online system has been put in place to make it easier for updates, and the governance and updating processes are under review.
- Monthly MIQ recommendations tracker, including sign-offs and reporting to governance and advisory groups
- Consideration about how to take the lessons identified in these recommendations about MIQ into the future design and build of the National Quarantine Service (NQS) operating model.