



## Proactive Release

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

### **COVID-19 Response Weekly Reports - August 2022**

The following documents have been included in this release:

**Title of paper:** COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 5 August 2022

**Title of paper:** COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 12 August 2022

**Title of paper:** COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 18 August 2022

**Title of paper:** COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 26 August 2022

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 natural persons;
- Section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials; and
- Section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

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MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT  
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI



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



**Te Whatu Ora**  
Health New Zealand



NEW ZEALAND  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE  
MANATŪ AORERE



BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

# COVID-19 Response Weekly Report




5 August 2022

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## 1. Status Summary

Key		
Symbol	Colour	Meaning
	Green	On track, no roadblocks, no significant delays anticipated
	Amber	Slow progression, some delays, some roadblocks present
	Red	Not progressing, on hold, significant delays

### Border

	Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
Border Reopening and International Connections	BEB			<p><i>Air border implementation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Step 4 - As of 2 August 2022 Immigration New Zealand (INZ) has received 8,215 employer accreditation applications since applications opened on 23 May 2022. Of those, 7,434 applications have been decided and all have been approved. The median time to process an employer accreditation application is five days.</li> <li>As of 2 August 2022, 342 work visa applications have been received and five work visas have been granted since applications opened on 4 July 2022.</li> <li>Step 5 - Applications from both onshore and offshore based clients for student and remaining visitor visas reopened on 31 July 2022. This was the final step in the Reconnecting New Zealanders to the World programme.</li> <li>As of 2 August 2022, 722 student visa applications and 5,025 visitor visa applications have been received.</li> <li>Immigration New Zealand is as prepared as can be for a higher volume of student and visitor visa applications in the coming months. The Visa Operation has staff on standby to process these visa applications across three sites.</li> </ul>
	BEB			<p><i>Maritime border programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The maritime border re-opened from 11.59pm, 31 July 2022 with the removal of the ban on foreign flagged (cruise and recreational) vessels.</li> <li>Passengers and crew on recreational or cruise vessels are required to be vaccinated unless they are New Zealand citizens, or otherwise exempted or excused.</li> <li>For August 2022, agencies are expecting up to 10 small vessels with two to six crew each (with the first one due on 5 August) and one cruise ship with around 1,100 passengers due on 12 August.</li> <li>The maritime border for commercial and fishing vessels continues to be open and people arriving on those vessels will be tested for COVID-19 on arrival.</li> </ul>
Pacific Travel	MFAT			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Niue: Niue has community transmission and has moved to Code Red in its pandemic response settings. As of Tuesday 2 August, there were 20 active cases, with 19 of these in the community.</li> <li>Kiribati: There is a planned NZDF flight to deliver drought response and COVID-19 supplies to Tarawa on 12 August.</li> <li>American Samoa: American Samoa has extended its COVID State of Emergency through to 26 August as the territory's second wave of Omicron persists with an estimated 456 active cases as of 26 July. We could expect to see this roll onto Western Samoa in the coming weeks.</li> <li>Samoa: After 27 months the Government of Samoa ended its COVID State of Emergency, with effect from midnight 26 July and in advance of their 1 August border reopening.</li> </ul>

\* No update was received on Border Reopening and International Connections from Te Whatu Ora.

## Isolation and Quarantine



	Agency	Last Week	→ This Week	Agency Comment
Managed Isolation	MBIE	●	●	<b>Decommissioning of Facilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The final three facilities (Waipuna, Jet Park Auckland and Holiday Inn) were handed back on 29 July.</li> <li>All 33 MIQ facilities have now been decommissioned and handed back.</li> </ul> <b>MIQ Readiness Programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Version 2 of the Readiness Plan was provided to your office on 29 July.</li> </ul>
Self-Isolation	Te Whatu Ora	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the National Investigation and Tracing Centre has commenced the process for the August review of isolation and quarantine requirements. This follows the Minister's decisions last week regarding the July review.</li> </ul>

## Community Protection

	Agency	Last Week	→ This Week	
Surveillance and Testing	Te Whatu Ora	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As of 1 August, the rolling seven-day average is 4,075 PCR tests processed per day. As of 29 July, nationwide daily PCR single test processing capacity was 21,286 with surge capacity in the process of being quantified. Currently, 95.1% of PCRs have a processing turnaround time of under 24 hours.</li> <li>As part of surveillance activity, Te Whatu Ora is closely monitoring the Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) process for positive PCR samples across the border, hospitals and community settings. District targets have been identified and communicated with the laboratory network and ESR to ensure there is good representation from all regions based on population.</li> <li>As of the week ending 17 July: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>88.9% of arrivals (with online travel declarations) uploaded at least one RAT result, and 75.7% uploaded both required RATs for Days 0/1 and 5/6.</li> <li>4.4% of uploaded RATs were positive (compared to 3.5% and 2.5% over the previous two weeks).</li> <li>51% of positive RATs had a follow up PCR (slightly changed from 50% the previous week).</li> <li>302 positive border PCR samples were sequenced in this period.</li> </ul> </li> <li><i>*This data is currently provided three weeks after the reported period.</i></li> <li>The Public Health Agency (within MOH) reviewed the weekly WGS surveillance target of 300 for border cases, considering the recent increase in arrivals. The decision was made for the target to remain around 300.</li> <li>For the week ending 24 July, ESR sequenced 384 samples from imported cases, 144 hospital cases and 628 community cases. While the hospital surveillance target is currently set at 200 cases for sequencing, the number of samples for hospital cases available for sequencing is dependent on sample availability. While not all cases have a PCR sample, ESR have been advised to sequence all hospital samples that are appropriate for sequencing. We are working with ESR to ensure adequate sampling occurs each week. <i>*This data is currently provided two weeks after the reported period.</i></li> <li>Target volumes for WGS regions and districts have been revised to ensure sampling per region is proportionate to the population size and that target cohorts are also captured.</li> <li>We continue to work with diagnostic laboratories to ensure the flow of samples between labs and ESR is adequate to support ESR in meeting the surveillance targets.</li> </ul>
Testing/Procurement	Te Whatu Ora	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The procurement process and negotiations have been completed with 10 of 11 suppliers, with draft Service Level Agreements (SLA) sent for contracts beginning 1 August 2022. We await signed agreements from these 10 suppliers. Negotiations with Northern Regional Alliance (NRA) are not yet completed. A draft SLA has been sent to NRA for consideration and we await this supplier's feedback.</li> </ul>





### Community Protection

Agency	Last Week	This Week	
Te Whatu Ora			<p><b>Operational</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Care in the Community operations team within Te Whatu Ora continues to support the therapeutics reclassification and is in the process of expanding the network of pharmacies that dispense and supply oral therapeutics as part of Phase 2 of the COVID-19 oral antivirals for pharmacist-only supply.</li> </ul> <p><b>Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Te Whatu Ora, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, is developing guidance for GPs to develop a strategy to prioritise which COVID-19 patients will receive initial clinical assessments. Health care providers vary in determining who receives an initial clinical assessment for COVID-19. This is problematic because there is a limited pool of funding for this service, and the variability across the country may mean that funding will run out earlier than anticipated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Therapeutics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft guidance for Advance Prescriptions was distributed on 22 July 2022. Feedback on the draft has highlighted sector confusion around the dispensing process of these medicines and the need for consistent messaging: that there must be a clinical assessment prior to a prescription of any kind, and that there must be a medicines review prior to dispensing.</li> <li>Phase 2 of the COVID-19 oral antivirals for pharmacist-only supply has commenced. Phase 2 looks to extend this project to all pharmacies that choose to opt in, either to dispense the antiviral medicine pursuant to a prescription and/or to supply these medicines (without a prescription from an authorised prescriber) to people who have COVID-19 and who meet the eligibility criteria set by Pharmac.</li> <li>The aim of Phase 2 is to increase pharmacy access to COVID-19 oral antiviral medicines, nirmatrelvir with ritonavir (Paxlovid™) and molnupiravir (Lagevrio®) and enable the equitable access of antiviral medicines for the public.</li> </ul>

\*No update was received on Contact Tracing or Technology Updates from Te Whatu Ora.

### Vaccination

Agency	Last Week	This Week	
Te Whatu Ora			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As at 11.59pm 1 August 2022, 324,836 second booster doses have been administered, with 62,755 administered in the last seven days. A further 11,712 doses are booked in BookMyVaccine.</li> <li>Twenty-three percent of all eligible Māori and Pacific aged 50 years and over have received a second booster, an increase from 22% the previous week; and 42.8% percent of non-Māori non-Pacific aged 65 years and over have received a second booster, an increase from 40% the previous week.</li> <li>1,290 paediatric second doses were administered, a decrease of 57% from the previous week. An increase in paediatric doses occurred over the school holidays, and the reduction reflects the start of Term Three on 25 July.</li> <li>As at 3 August, 264 of 673 scheduled visits have been completed to Aged Residential Care facilities to provide second booster vaccinations.</li> <li>Vaccination rates for all people supported by Disability Support Services (DSS) funding have remained consistent for the past few weeks at 90% for primary dose, and 78% uptake for a booster dose. Rates for 5 – 11-year-olds who receive DSS funding uptake has also remained consistent with 29% fully vaccinated and a further 22% partially vaccinated.</li> </ul>

## System Readiness &amp; Planning

		Last Week	→ This Week	Agency Comment on Status of Focus Area
System Readiness	Te Whatu Ora	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As of 28 July, there were 57.3m RATs on hand. Based on quantities dispatched over the last two weeks, presumed stock is 18 weeks' supply. <i>*This data is currently provided one week after the reported period.</i></li> <li>44,000 orders were placed in the RAT Requester system over the last week (covering 150,000 people). This is around half of the previous week's 96,000 after an initial rush of orders from criteria changes.</li> <li>As of 28 July, Healthpoint showed 553 sites offering RAT collection and/or testing (including 376 community collection sites, 86 Community Testing Centres, and 126 providers supporting priority population groups). 106 delivery orders were placed in the last week for those unable to collect RATs (covering 217 people), including Targeted Rural Service, immunocompromised, aged, and disability. This was a decrease from 154 orders last week, following eligibility criteria changes for RATs requests.</li> <li>As of 28 July, Healthpoint showed 419 sites offering free masks. Current total procedure mask stock on hand: 99.1M (includes masks used in clinical settings), and current N95 stock on hand: 23.2M (includes N95s used in clinical settings).</li> <li>1.1M dispatches of N95s for community use have been processed in the last seven days, compared to the previous week's 670,000.</li> <li>7.8M dispatches of procedure masks for community use have been processed in the last seven days, with 17.2M over the previous week.</li> <li>We have seen a large increase in bulk orders placed by Māori health providers, community groups and charitable trusts.</li> <li>There are no significant issues to report. Collection sites continue to be encouraged to place more regular orders, to mitigate storage and order delay issues. Collection site orders are being prioritised for dispatch.</li> </ul>
	DPMC	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Catalogue of Response Measures V2.4 is complete and work continues to develop V3.0 in order to reflect the separation of Baseline and Reserve measures.</li> <li>The System Readiness Exercise is now in the final stage of preparation and is scheduled for 9 August 2022 and is centred on the National Response Group (NRG) to provide advice.</li> <li>Fortnightly NRG meetings remain in place to maintain oversight and integration across the AoG system, however this may reduce to monthly dependent on assessed need. Ad-hoc working groups and meetings will be called as necessary to resolve system problems.</li> </ul>
Planning for Next Phase	Te Whatu Ora	●	●	<p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p> <p>[Redacted content]</p>

## 2. Ministry of Health

### 2.1 Programme Update

#### 2.1.1 COVID-19 and National Immunisation Programme Research Round

This item updates you on the current COVID-19 and National Immunisation Programme (NIP) research round being led jointly by Manatū Hauora and Te Whatu Ora. The Ministry of Health last updated you on this round in the Weekly Report dated 7 July 2022.

On 13 April 2022, Minister Little announced the COVID-19 and NIP research round. As part of this research round, Manatū Hauora sought investigator-initiated research projects with terms of up to 12 months and up to a maximum value of \$500,000.

Manatū Hauora received 116 registrations of interest, of which 75 were submitted as full proposals. An internal evaluation panel met on 12 July 2022 to select the top ranked proposals based on scientific merit, Te Tiriti responsiveness, equity considerations, and impact.

The steering group, chaired by Professor Ian Town, met on 18 July 2022 to consider the recommendations made by the evaluation panel. The steering group agreed on 23 proposals to put forward to the Director-General of Health for approval. The steering group made its recommendations based on the strategic alignment of each proposal with Manatū Hauora-identified priorities, and the likely impact of each project on the COVID-19 response and NIP.

Given the quality, strategic alignment and impact of the proposals, NIP (now in the National Public Health Service, Te Whatu Ora) made an additional \$600,000 funding available for this research round.

The Director-General of Health approved all 23 proposals for funding, a total of \$9.6 million.

#### **Next steps**

Manatū Hauora will send Ministers an aide mémoire in the week of 15 August 2022 detailing the successful proposals and next steps for your information and decision, respectively.

Manatū Hauora will discuss with your office the approach to announcing the successful applicants with the intent of making these announcements soon. Once the approach to announcements have been agreed, Manatū Hauora will inform the applicants of the outcome. Contract negotiations will then begin with the successful applicants.

It is anticipated that funded projects will be underway in September 2022 subject to meeting contract conditions.

#### 2.1.2 Technical Advisory Group: update

##### **COVID-19 TAG**

The COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group (COVID-19 TAG) did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled for 12 August 2022.

##### **CV TAG**

The COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CV TAG) did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled for 16 August 2022.

##### **Therapeutics TAG**

The COVID-19 Therapeutics Technical Advisory Group (Therapeutics TAG) did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled for 5 August 2022.



## CT TAG

The COVID-19 Testing Technical Advisory Group (CT TAG) met on 2 August 2022. An update from this meeting will be available in this report next week.

## 2.1.3 Communications Issues and Activities

*As at 2 August 2022*

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement
4 August	Release of Statistics New Zealand Peer Review of Health Survey User (HSU) data and release of 2021 HSU Dataset.	Manatū Hauora and Statistics New Zealand	Communications plan being drafted by National Immunisation Programme	TBC
9 August	COVID-19 Protection Framework review – possible announcement about settings staying the same.	Manatū Hauora	TBC	TBC
For information	Getting some queries on whether or not travellers will get COVID-19 treatment if they get sick and are/aren't from a country with reciprocal agreement.	Te Whatu Ora	FYI	FYI

### 3. Te Whatu Ora

#### 3.1 Items to Note/Updates

##### 3.1.1 COVID-19 Vaccination Insights

##### *Second booster uptake by age band and ethnicity*

The table below shows second COVID-19 booster uptake.

Age Group	Māori	Uptake %	Pacific Peoples	Uptake %	Non-Māori / Non-Pacific	Uptake %	Total	Total uptake % <sup>1</sup>
12 to 17 <sup>2</sup>	s9(2)(a)							
18 to 24	278		169		3,332		3,779	
35 to 49	888		603		9,240		10,731	
50 to 64	7,340	18.3%	3,301	15.8%	64,016	19.2%	74,657	18.9%
65 and over	11,009	33.1%	3,940	25.7%	221,509	42.8%	236,458	41.7%
Grand total	19,517		8,013		298,098		325,628	33.6%

##### *Aged Residential Care facilities*

Aged Residential Care (ARC) facilities continue to roll-out second boosters across the motu. As of 3 August, 264 of 673 scheduled visits have been completed. Health Districts are reporting fortnightly with the next update due 5 August. Early feedback from Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley confirms 82 percent of the ARC facilities in their region have had their visits completed.

##### *Workforce vaccination engagement*

The Programme is working with the essential service sectors to encourage workforce vaccination uptake and immunisation education. The sectors include Supermarkets, Freight, Logistics, Government, Telecommunications, Energy, Construction, and Education. Sectors have requested immunisation information and collateral, which will be facilitated.

##### *Communications activity*

- A communications plan has been prepared to support the release of Statistics NZ's review of the Health Service User (HSU) dataset used to report COVID-19 vaccination coverage. The joint Te Whatu Ora/Manatu Hauora announcement is scheduled for Thursday 4 August and will also announce the shift to the 2021 HSU dataset for future reporting.
- Promotion of second boosters targeting those aged 50 and over continues with radio and targeted digital adverts.
- New messaging and creative is being prepared to promote boosters, particularly second boosters, to those eligible. This new messaging will be informed by research beginning this week to identify the most effective motivators for our priority audiences.
- A targeted communications programme with providers and Districts in Northland and Bay of Plenty, involving clinician-led messaging, is planned from mid-August.
- Pacific providers are being supported with a 'Back to the Islands' campaign which is the focus of this weekend's Pacific vaccination events in Auckland and Christchurch, reflecting the opening of Pacific borders.
- Bespoke collateral and campaigns are being finalised with Te Aupouri (iwi), Tuwharetoa (iwi), and the iwi in Levin and Palmerston North, along with Te Arawa whānau ora collective.

<sup>1</sup> Uptake percentage has not been captured for those under 50, as it is not possible to determine who in those age groups are immunocompromised, and/or healthcare workers as these eligibility criteria are not able to be captured in our reporting systems.

<sup>2</sup> At times, an authorised prescriber considers the use of vaccine as a first or second booster for a 12-to-17-year-old at high risk of severe health outcomes from COVID-19. This is 'off-label' prescribing of a COVID-19 vaccine under section 25 of the Medicines Act 1981. It requires individual-level risk-benefit decision between the individual, their caregiver, and their authorised prescriber, with documentation of informed consent recommended and a prescription required to access the vaccine.

### 3.1.2 Incidents

s9(2)(a)



### 3.1.3 Equity

#### **Māori update**

A number of vaccination events continue to be held across the motu. There remains an increasing focus on running events which centre on collective aspects of whānau hauora and wellbeing. A number of these events also provide support in the form of kai vouchers, movie vouchers and winter wellness packs.

Events held in the last week include:

- A drive-thru vaccination clinic at Northland Event Centre on 30 July, with all COVID-19, flu and MMR vaccinations available. This event achieved a 200 percent increase on vaccinations provided to each of the previous Saturdays in July, with eight first doses, eight second doses, 237 first boosters, 74 second boosters, 44 paediatric doses and 26 flu vaccinations delivered. Given this success, Te Tai Tokerau is considering running a second drive-through.
- A vaccination event was held on 28 July at Waikawa marae in Marlborough, with 22 boosters provided at the event.

Upcoming events include:

- The programme is working on implementation planning for kura-focused hauora days as part of the Mā Te Kōrero Ka Eke education strategy and will be furthering this mahi to support running these events.
- Te Ngaakau a Kiwi Trust, a budding health provider in the Waikato, have engaged with Te Whatu Ora Waikato to establish themselves as a mobile services provider and will be hosting their first vaccination event on 7 August. This event has been planned in partnership with the local Kapa Haka rūpu and will have a mobile vaccination clinic, along with other hauora services such as health checks and mirimiri.

#### **Pacific update**

Over the weekend of 29 to 31 July, two Pacific providers delivered three community-led vaccination events in South Auckland. Pasefika Family Health Group delivered a drive-through vaccination event on Friday 29 July at the Manurewa flea market and a pop-up vaccination event on Saturday at the Clevedon Community Centre where walk-ins were welcomed. The Tongan Health Society worked in collaboration with one of South Auckland's largest Tongan churches to set up an on-site pop-up vaccination event targeting hesitant and hard-to-reach families within the church community.

843 vaccinations were delivered in total across these three events - 434 were COVID-19 vaccinations, and 409 influenza vaccinations. Across all three events, COVID-19 booster doses were the most popular vaccinations administered with 361 of the 434 being boosters.

#### **Disability update**

Vaccination rates for all people supported by Disability Support Services (DSS) funding have remained consistent for the past few weeks, at 90 percent for primary doses, and 78 percent uptake for booster doses. For 5 to 11-year-olds who receive DSS funding, uptake has also remained consistent at 29 percent fully vaccinated, and a further 22 percent partially vaccinated.

This cohort of disabled people supported by DSS funding represents a very small proportion of New Zealand's estimated 1.2 million disabled people. When considering vaccination rates of disabled people more broadly, research by the Social Wellbeing Agency revealed that vaccination rates for disabled people are higher than those for the general population, a trend which has held across ethnicities. For disabled children aged 5 to 11 years, the Social Wellbeing Agency has also found that vaccination rates are higher compared to non-disabled children. This difference was most significant when looking at vaccination rates for disabled Māori tamariki and non-disabled Māori tamariki.

As has been the trend for some time, uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine is higher for those who solely access mental health services than for those who solely access Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) services. 87 percent of those who solely use mental health services are fully vaccinated, while this figure is 82 percent for those who solely use AOD services. This trend holds for booster uptake, with 60 percent of those who solely use mental health services having received a booster compared with 50 percent of AOD service users.

The programme has developed a range of initiatives to lift vaccination uptake among these populations. This includes \$350,000 in funding to develop a suite of Social Stories and communications tools to support neurodiverse and disabled New Zealanders through the vaccination journey, and the funding of 19 peer support mental health and AOD organisations across the motu through the COVID-19 vaccine and immunisation peer support fund. Additional funding has also been allocated within the programme's equity budget to support high-needs populations.

#### **3.1.4 Monkeypox Update**

As of 2 August 2022, there is one suspected active Monkeypox (MPX) case in Aotearoa. This case, and the two previously confirmed cases of MPX, are all isolated cases. Infections for all three cases were likely acquired overseas and there is no evidence that suggests there is community transmission within New Zealand.

Te Whatu Ora is expecting a smallpox vaccine appropriate for MPX pre-and post-exposure treatment to arrive in Aotearoa within the next few months. This is only produced in low volumes and is not currently available in Aotearoa, therefore import permission is being sought through the Ministry for Primary Industries. There are limited stocks of earlier generation smallpox vaccines in Aotearoa, and Te Whatu Ora will be seeking advice on its safety and efficacy in the interim. Pharmac have not approved the use of these earlier generation smallpox vaccines yet.

Te Whatu Ora is prepared for testing of acute cases, however national capacity for widespread testing is limited due to laboratories experiencing delays.

Te Whatu Ora and Manatū Hauora continue to work closely to monitor the zoonotic disease. A Monkeypox report will be provided to the Minister of Health and Associate Minister of Health weekly, beginning today (5 August 2022).



## 4. Managed Isolation and Quarantine Weekly Report

### 4.1 Transition and Readiness

#### 4.1.1 Workforce

As of 1 August, the new MIQ operating model is in place. MIQ will go through a period of transition as it moves from the leadership of Deputy Secretary Andrew Milne to Deputy Secretary Chris Bunny.

The formal change process of our regional and national offices continues which includes the appointment of people into roles and any mitigation of capability gaps.

#### 4.1.2 Decommissioning of Facilities

The final three facilities (The Waipuna, Jet Park Auckland and Holiday Inn) were handed back on 29 July.

All MIQ facilities have been now decommissioned and handed back.

### 4.2 Operational Update

#### 4.2.1 Invoicing

MBIE-MIQ has noted an increase in requests made under the Official Information Act seeking data about Invoicing, Debt Recovery, and/or Waivers. Some of this interest continues to come from the news media, and some is from individuals who potentially feel aggrieved about some aspect of having to pay for their MIQ stay.

The table below shows the number of invoices issued up to 31 July 2022.

INVOICES ISSUED	INVOICES PAID	INVOICES ISSUED - NOT YET DUE	INVOICES OVERDUE	INVOICES WRITTEN OFF
56,811	43,996 (77% of invoices issued)	173 (0.1% of invoices issued)	9,691 (17% of invoices issued)	2,951 invoices (5%)
TOTAL VALUE OF INVOICES ISSUED	PAID (BY VALUE)	ISSUED - NOT YET DUE (BY VALUE)	INVOICES OVERDUE (BY VALUE)	INVOICES WRITTEN OFF (BY VALUE)
\$217M	\$181M 84%	\$218K 0.1%	\$24M 11%	\$10.5M 4.8%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are 13,942 unmatched records in the database that need to have their liability determined before invoicing.</li> <li>A project team has been established to investigate the most effective way to invoice the unmatched data.</li> <li>Data analytic approaches are underway and manual matching trials have been successfully completed</li> </ul>			<p><b>90+ days overdue</b></p> <p>5,650 invoices \$16.6M (by value) 7% (by value of all invoices issued)</p>	

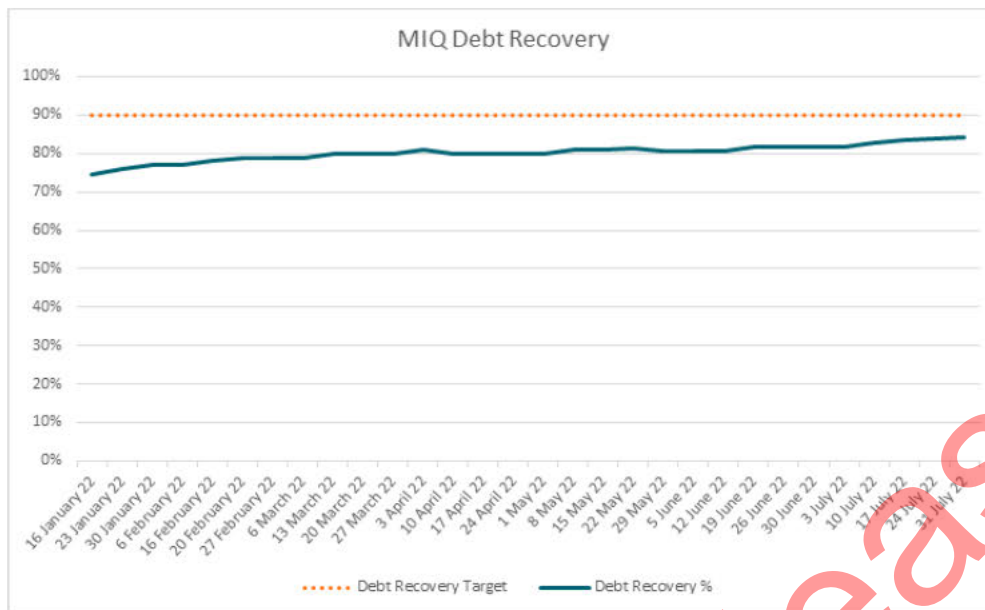
#### 4.2.2 Debt Recovery

The debt recovery percentage remains at 84 percent, which is against our nominal target recovery of 90 percent.

As of 31 July, 14,850 invoices worth \$45m have been passed to our debt partner. In addition:

- \$17.2m has now been paid (an increase of \$516k).
- A further \$628k of debt is under instalment and is expected to be converted to payments over coming weeks.
- Of the invoices sent, 604 customers worth \$1.4m have now submitted waiver applications. While applications are processed, they are recorded as outstanding debt.

The following chart shows the weekly MIQ debt recovery percentage since 9 January compared against MBIE's nominal recovery target.



#### 4.2.3 Fee Waivers

The table below breaks down the waiver application information between 11 August 2020 and 31 July 2022. The numbers below relate to all waiver applications; waivers can be applied for before, during and after an individual has stayed in managed isolation.

All Waiver Applications Received	Received and not progressed	Total Completed	Approved Waiver Applications			Declined Waiver Applications		
			Financial Hardship	Special Circumstances	BOTH	Financial Hardship	Special Circumstances	BOTH
19,443	3,441	15,758	103	10,046	134	2,074	2,860	541
			Overall Approved 66.5% (of completed applications)			Overall Declined 33.5% (of completed applications)		

#### 4.2.4 Reducing the Fee Waiver backlog

The table below shows the total number of backlogs for Fee Waivers, comparing numbers from the current week with the week prior.

	Fee Waiver Backlog as at 31 July 2022	Fee Waiver Backlog as at 24 July 2022
Total Fee Waiver backlog	244	318
Fee Waiver processing or to be processed	141	227
Waiting for customer	103	91

#### 4.3 Ombudsman Complaints

As at 1 August there are 10 active investigations:

- one is on policy advice;
- four are on emergency allocations;
- two are on exemptions from managed isolation;
- one relates to a declined fee waiver;

- one is about facilities; and
- one is the Chief Ombudsman's self-initiated investigation.

To date, 202 investigations have been closed, with the Chief Ombudsman issuing 90 opinions in MBIE's favour and eight final opinions against MBIE.

There are 70 preliminary enquiries. Preliminary enquiries are cases where the Ombudsman requests the file to assess the complaint and determine next steps.

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## 5. Border Executive Board Report

### 5.1 Items to Note/Update

#### 5.1.1 Border Executive Board Meeting

The Board met on 4 August 2022. The focus of the meeting was on how the border agencies can support the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) manage the risk of foot and mouth disease arriving into New Zealand. MPI have established a Foot and Mouth Taskforce to respond to the risk.

##### **New Zealand Traveller Declaration**

The Board discussed how the New Zealand Traveller Declaration (NZTD) could support MPI to manage the risk of foot and mouth disease from air passengers. The Board were advised that the current legislative settings require passengers to arrive in New Zealand before MPI can collect and use bio-security information.

The Board asked agencies to explore the option of seeking changes to primary legislation to collect and use information. The Board noted urgent changes to biosecurity legislation could be required if foot and mouth disease arrives in Australia.

The Board agreed that MPI will lead a briefing to the Ministers of Customs and Biosecurity on the options for using NZTD, the collection and use of information offshore, and changes to primary legislative settings which could be needed quickly. MPI will engage with the Privacy Commissioner.

MPI will continue its multi-layered approach at the border, including using Customs e-gates to screen passengers, along with working with other agencies and the private sector through its Foot and Mouth Taskforce.

The Board will receive an update later in August 2022 on using NZTD to manage risks at the maritime border.

The Board acknowledged that where practical, border agencies should aim to manage risk offshore and supported extending this capability while balancing legal and privacy considerations. s9(2)(f)(iv)

##### **Foot and Mouth Disease**

The Director General of Primary Industries updated the Board on the risk of foot and mouth disease and the implications of the disease being found in New Zealand and Australia. The Board noted and acknowledged the significant impact its arrival in New Zealand would have on farming and the economy, and the implications for Pacific nations.

The Board noted the range of activity underway through the MPI Taskforce which included managing the risk at maritime ports (including currently managing a vessel from Indonesia) and exploring options to increase workforce capacity. s9(2)(g)(i)

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 August 2022.

#### 5.1.2 Maritime Border Programme update

##### **Coverage of the re-opening**

There was some positive media reporting of the re-opening of the maritime border this week although coverage focused on the re-opening of the air border to students and visitors. Both the New Zealand Customs Services and Health New Zealand have been approached by media for interviews. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Tourism continues to engage with Regional Tourism Operators. The Unite Against COVID-19 website has been updated with information for maritime travellers.

Border agencies are prepared for the first cruise ship passengers to arrive in the coming days and are having fortnightly meetings with the cruise industry. All small vessels will be met by Customs officials and currently



must arrive at Opuā. From 31 August 2022, small vessels will be allowed to arrive at all seven ports that were open pre-COVID-19: Opuā, Whangarei, Auckland (Westhaven Marina), Auckland (Harbour Viaduct Marina and Silo Park Marina), Tauranga, Picton, and Lyttelton.

#### **New Zealand Traveller Declaration**

The primary outstanding policy issue is that the New Zealand Traveller Declaration is not mandated in the Maritime Border Order and so it cannot be used to verify the vaccination status of arriving passengers. Instead border agencies will be checking the advance passenger information sent by cruise ships prior to arrival and will be sampling a small proportion of arriving passengers. The compliance and verification processes will need to be further refined before large volumes of passengers arrive later in the year, including when cruise companies have used a third-party company to verify passengers' vaccinations. The first cruise ship due on 12 August 2022 will provide the first chance to test our systems, and we will provide an update to you. Border agencies are also preparing for different scenarios that might arise when larger volumes of ships arrive.

#### **Managing COVID-19 on board**

Guidance about managing situations where COVID-19 outbreaks have occurred on board will be provided to the cruise industry and Public Health Units with the clear expectation that positive cases will isolate on board. The COVID-19 Protection Framework will apply to passengers, including isolation requirements for positive cases and those that share a cabin with them. The Director-General of Health has issued several directions to:

- Provide clear legal authority to allow Pratique to be granted where COVID-19 exists or existed on a vessel.
- Specify the form and content of notice of arrival for ships.
- Specify what constitutes "vaccinated" at the maritime border.
- Specify evidence of vaccination at the maritime border.

#### **Future vaccination requirements**

If there is any change to the vaccination requirements for passengers arriving by sea as a result of the post-Winter strategy, there are likely to be some operational challenges if there is a short lead in time as passengers may have boarded a cruise ship up to a month before it arrives in New Zealand. If vaccination requirements are retained beyond September 2022, a legal basis for the use of the New Zealand Traveller Declaration for maritime arrivals needs to be found, possibly within the Maritime Border Order.

#### **Biosecurity**

Separately, the Ministry for Primary Industries has been working closely with the cruise industry to strengthen awareness of and compliance with the biosecurity requirements given the length of time since many of the crew and ships have operated here.

## 6. New Zealand Customs Service Weekly Report

### 6.1 Items to Note/Updates

#### 6.1.1 Compliance Checking at the Air Border

As part of the Reconnecting New Zealanders programme, the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Air Border) Order 2021 came into force on 28 February 2022.

The requirement for passengers to undertake pre-departure testing was removed at 11.59pm on 20 June 2022. Customs staff continue to undertake compliance checks for all passengers for evidence of vaccination verification or exemption or a New Zealand Travel Declaration (NZTD). Customs Airline Liaison Officers are reporting increased numbers of manual Traveller Declaration forms being given to passengers who have arrived at the airport with a valid and completed NZTD. Travellers who do not provide the required evidence may incur an infringement offence fee between \$500 and \$1,000 depending on the nature of the offence.

For the period 1 July 2022 31 July 2022 (both dates inclusive), a total of 307,489 passengers travelled to New Zealand. Of this number, seven were considered to not meet the requirements for air travel into New Zealand. As a result, the seven travellers were issued with an infringement offence fee for not meeting vaccination verification requirements.

#### 6.1.2 Re-opening of the Maritime Border to Foreign Flagged Vessels and Cruise Ships

##### **Return of foreign vessels**

The maritime border opened to foreign flagged vessels at 11.59pm on 31 July 2022. This allows foreign-flagged vessels, including cruise ships, recreational vessels (yachts, super yachts, and small craft), and specialist vessels used in research and exploration, to arrive into New Zealand.

All people arriving on cruise, passenger and recreational vessels are required to be vaccinated to arrive into New Zealand, unless they are excused or exempt, while people arriving on all other vessels e.g. cargo, fishing, specialist craft are still required to undertake mandatory testing before entering the community.

The Pacific Explorer, operated by Carnival Australia is scheduled to arrive into Auckland from Australia on 12 August 2022 with 1,160 passengers and 860 crew on board. There will be no passenger exchange, with only a very small number of crew expected to disembark in Auckland.

On 1 August 2022, Customs along with multiple agencies and stakeholders attended a full walk-through of the arrival berth at Ports of Auckland. This allowed all agencies to input and provide advice around arrival requirements and layout for passenger processing and vaccination verification. The walk-through went extremely well with all government agencies confirming the facility and floor plan is suitable for facilitation and enforcement requirements. The walk-through also gave the cruise industry representatives an opportunity to further engage with agencies to confirm arrangements.

The vaccination requirements outlined in the Maritime Border Order require cruise passengers and crew to be either vaccinated, exempt, or excused. Assurance processes are being developed alongside other agencies. Customs continues to work with the Ministry of Transport, Maritime New Zealand, Health New Zealand, other agencies and the cruise industry on operational requirements and readiness to manage the return of cruise vessels once the border reopens for all foreign-flagged vessels.

##### **Small craft**

Agreement has been reached that from 31 August 2022 small craft will be able to arrive at all ports that were approved prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to Opuha, this will see the return of small craft arriving in Marsden Cove, Auckland, Tauranga, Picton and Lyttelton.

Engagement was undertaken and agreement on this proposal was reached by Customs, the Ministry for Primary Industries, Maritime New Zealand, the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment, and

external marina stakeholders. Engagement with local iwi engagement in those regions are ongoing to ensure that they are kept well informed and to provide reassurance that the risk of COVID-19 being introduced by small craft is mitigated.

Vaccination provisions required by amendments to the Maritime Border Order require small craft passengers and crew to be either vaccinated, exempt, or excused. One hundred per cent of small craft passengers and crew will have their vaccination status verified upon arrival. Verification and compliance assurance processes are currently being confirmed.

#### **Commercial craft**

The amendments to the Maritime Border Order in May 2022 resulted in a shift to how Public Health Units generally manage cases of COVID-19 on board maritime vessels, and as such it became less likely for a vessel to be formally placed under quarantine notice. As a result, minor amendments have been made to the Vessel Management Framework, to expand its use for vessels that have positive cases on board. The framework now includes considerations for cruise ships.

Maritime New Zealand and Customs have sought agreement from Health New Zealand to the amendments and once this is received it will replace the currently published version.

s9(2)(f)(iv)

[Redacted text block]

#### **De-escalation**

The Maritime Group is moving through the change management process of de-escalation, and are tracking ahead of proposed timeframes with no issues emerging.

The proposed structure will be in effect from 22 September 2022, with reduction of physical port presence beginning from 1 August 2022.

## 7. COVID-19 Chief Executives Board

The COVID-19 Chief Executive Board did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled for 23 August 2022.

## 8. Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group


The Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group did not meet this week, with the next meeting scheduled for 10 August 2022.

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## 9. Upcoming Cabinet Papers

s9(2)(f)(iv)



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