



The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister

STATEMENT

Friday 10 July 2020

NATIONAL CABINET

The National Cabinet met today to discuss Australia's current COVID-19 response, easing restrictions, helping Australians prepare to go back to work in a COVID-safe environment and getting the economy moving again.

The Acting Chief Medical Officer, Paul Kelly, provided an update on the measures underway, the latest data and medical advice in relation to COVID-19.

There have been over 9,000 confirmed cases in Australia and sadly 106 people have died.

The Victorian outbreak has meant that there are now around 1,000 active cases in Australia. Daily infection rates have remained low in all states and territories, other than Victoria. Testing remains high, with more than 2.9 million tests undertaken in Australia.

National Cabinet discussed the Victorian outbreak and the health response underway and recommitted to providing as much support as is necessary.

Localised response plans are part of the Three-Step Framework for easing restrictions agreed by all jurisdictions. Victoria is responding well, including expanding testing and tracing, with the support of Commonwealth and other states and territories.

National Cabinet recommitted to the strategy of suppression of COVID-19 and to the Three-Step Framework to a COVID-safe Australia.

We need to continue to have the right controls in place to test more people, trace those who test positive and respond to local outbreaks when they occur. These are Precedent Conditions to enable Australia to relax baseline restrictions and enable Australians to live and work in a COVID-safe economy.

The National Cabinet noted that there had been a relaxation in community attitudes towards social distancing in some states and territories. Despite the success in suppressing the virus, the Victorian outbreak has shown that social distancing rules must be maintained at least until a vaccine or effective treatment is found. The reduction in adherence to social distancing amongst younger Australians is a particular concern, recognised by the AHPPC.

National Cabinet welcomed Queensland's decision to reopen borders to all states and territories, apart from Victoria.

Michael Brennan, Chair of the Productivity Commission, provided an overview of deregulation opportunities to deliver economic growth and jobs. National Cabinet referred the matter for consideration by Treasurers through the Council of Federal Financial Relations.

National Cabinet will meet again on 24 July 2020.

Victorian Outbreak

The news from Victoria remains very concerning. The Commonwealth and all states and territories reiterated their support for Victoria, and their offers of support, especially in relation to border crossings with South Australia and New South Wales.

States and territories continue to provide further support to Victoria including through clinical staff and contact tracing. The Commonwealth is providing support and national coordination, with around 265 ADF personnel and additional Commonwealth staff in Victoria assisting the COVID-19 response, in response to Victoria's request.

Hotel Quarantine

National Cabinet agreed to a national review of hotel quarantine arrangements. The review will be undertaken by the former Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Health, Jane Halton AO, in consultation with states and territories. AHPPC recommends, and National Cabinet has agreed, that a review should address:

- Infection prevention and control training (clinical, hotel and security staff)
- Compliance with infection prevention and control requirements (clinical, hotel and security staff)
- Evidence of community cases attributed to cases in international travellers in hotel quarantine (including cases in hotel and security staff)
- Rates of compliance with testing
- Legislative or contractual basis for mandatory testing
- Management of suspected and confirmed cases
- Provision and effectiveness of support services (medical, mental health, social services, financial support)
- Management of vulnerable people
- Management of cultural diversity
- Logistics arrangements
- Administrative arrangements
- Changing capacity requirements related to changes in border restrictions

States and territories are moving toward a model of charging for hotel quarantine. Further details will be provided by states and territories in the coming days, with National Cabinet agreeing to work toward a uniform model across the country.

Caps on international passengers flows

Since 13 March 2020 more than 357,000 citizens and permanent residents have returned to Australia.

In order to manage and maintain quarantine arrangements across the jurisdictions of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia, National Cabinet agreed to implement further caps on international arrivals, and an extension of current international passenger flight restrictions into Victoria.

From Monday 13 July, the following will apply:

- Perth - a cap of 525 international arrivals per week will apply.
- Brisbane - an overall cap of 500 international arrivals per week will apply.
- Sydney - a cap of 450 international arrivals per day will continue, as announced on 4 July with a view to further reductions in subsequent weeks.

Flexibility remains within these caps to as much as possible minimise disruptions to returning Australian citizens and permanent residents.

These arrangements will be subject to a review by the National Cabinet before the end of July.

Restrictions on outbound travel by Australian citizens and permanent residents remain in place, in accordance with the health advice to the Government.

Additional Papers

National Cabinet endorsed a number of papers to enable reopening under a Three-Step Framework for a COVID Safe Australia:

- Updated Management and Operational Plan for People with Disability
- Management of Health Risk related to COVID-19

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