



The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister

TRANSCRIPT
PRESS CONFERENCE
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EO&E...

PRIME MINISTER: Good afternoon, everyone. Today I'm joined by Professor Paul Murphy - sorry, Professor Paul Kelly. I've got Brendan Murphy still on the brain. You are not far from us, Brendan. But it is great to have Professor Kelly with us today, he has taken over, of course, the role of Chief Medical Officer and attended his first National Cabinet meeting today. It is the 23rd time the National Cabinet has met in the last 4 months.

Before I go to the details of that, I just wanted to note that last night I held a very productive summit meeting with Prime Minister Abe from Japan. We had a very warm and constructive discussion. Very aligned on our goals, both for the region and more broadly on the global issues that we discussed and had further discussions regarding our ongoing defence cooperation and particularly following on from the agreement we signed this week on space cooperation, there are many other topics that we covered. But it was about an hour and a half long meeting which is well over what we had originally planned and I think that just goes to the depth of relationship that we have been able to establish. Of course, we discussed at length our various experiences with COVID-19 and Japan currently has been experiencing an uptick, a spike in their numbers in not too dissimilar way we are seeing in Australia, which I will come to now.

The news from Victoria remains very concerning. The Premier will stand up later today and he'll update the situation there, but it is concerning. They have called for help, they are getting help, but the key here is that all states and territories again reaffirmed their support for Victoria in providing whatever resources they needed to deal with the outbreak in Victoria. To stick to the plan, to stick to the strategy, and to ensure that is well resourced and well implemented. And that was the focus of the briefing that Premier Andrews gave to National Cabinet today and he received strong support from all of his colleagues. The resourcing that is being put in, whether it is in testing or tracing or the support particularly in New South Wales and in South Australia in managing the border town issues is significant, and of course, the Commonwealth is supporting that strongly as well.

Another key part of the discussion today was that we need to be very careful to protect against complacency in other parts of the country. Now, this is particularly true behind closed doors, not just out in the open. This is a lesson outside of the Victorian experience. It is important that we're seeing in organised venues, those sorts of activities, in the main, although there are some examples to the contrary, that the rules are seeking to be followed. But when we're at home and there are people around, we still have to practise the social distancing. It is still not OK for hugs and handshakes. It's important to maintain

the discipline of the social distancing behind closed doors, not just out in the public space. The restrictions on people being able to go to each other's houses have been eased, right across the country, with the obvious exception of Victoria. And to ensure that continues, then it is important that social distancing is the norm, it is not the exception, it is the norm and it is going to be the norm with us for a very long time, until at least we have a vaccine that can be mass-produced and made available across the population. So even in places like in Western Australia, for example, where there is a considerable easing of restrictions, it is very important that the social distancing practices, the washing the hands, the no handshakes, all of these things, downloading of the COVIDSafe app, is important. Because if there were to be an outbreak in any of those places in Queensland, in South Australia, in Northern Territory, Western Australia, Tasmania, then if social distancing is no longer the habit then we would see outbreaks in those places spread more rapidly. So just because everything's okay now does not mean you go back to the way you were doing things before in terms of social distancing. So I say that as an encouragement and I say that as reflecting the views of the National Cabinet. We will do everything we can to ensure the protections are in place should those things occur, but the community also has a role to maintain their discipline when it comes to social distancing and the things that are attendant to that. That is also true, particularly for the younger population, particularly for the younger population. And we would encourage that disciplined practice to continue. Of course, welcome the Queensland reopening today which is now effective, to all states and territories except for Victoria, obviously, and that is another reminder as to why it is important to maintain the discipline around the social distancing protections.

We also agreed today a reduction in the number of inbound arrivals into Australia across those ports that are able to accept visitors- sorry, I should say returning Australian citizens and residents. Of course, there are no flights going into Melbourne, into Victoria, for obvious reasons, and to ensure that we are mitigating and managing that risk, they will be cut by just over half across all the various ports that are taking those visitors. Sorry, those residents returning to Australia. There is also a view across the National Cabinet that they are all effectively moving to a charging system for the hotel quarantine that is in place for those returning visitors. Some states already have it, some states are moving towards that, and I will leave that to them to make their announcements at the appropriate time and where possible, we will seek to have some sort of national uniformity across those pricings and we are sharing that information with the states and territories.

We also agreed today that there would be a nationwide review of hotel quarantine. That will be undertaken by the former Health Secretary Jane Halton, she currently sits on the COVID commission. As part of that group, she will be undertaking that review working with states and territories and that again is an important step in providing reassurances, making sure that as we look into each of the states and territories and how they are managing their quarantine, that it is meeting the standards that the AHPPC have advised upon, and as our country opens up again, with the exception of Victoria, that we can ensure we have even greater confidence in those quarantine arrangements as they are being put in place.

Other issues that were discussed, we had a very productive discussion today on economic issues around skills and the skills needs and skills training needs for Australians over the next 6- 9 months. Also we had Michael Brennan from the Productivity Commission come and present on the regulatory challenges. He made I think very important points that more flexible economies would be the most successful in recovering from the COVID-19 recession around the world and how we manage regulation and deregulation is very important to maintaining and achieving that flexibility to support our economic recovery. We have referred a series of recommendations that he has made to the Treasurer 's grouping, the council of federal financial relations, in particular, we have asked them to come back to us as quickly as possible on the, what they call the time-based deregulations that have been in place. The changes that have been made to regulation for a limited time in relation to COVID-19 across a whole range of economic

activity, and the potential for those to be extended out further and potentially even extended indefinitely. Because in many cases they have had quite a positive economic impact.

Just finally, I also took the opportunity while I had Premiers and Chief Ministers with me to update them on the announcement I made yesterday in relation to arrangements for Hong Kong, and that we were not anticipating large volumes of people seeking to enter the country following the announcement we made yesterday. As I explained yesterday, that is not the nature of the arrangements we put in place yesterday. But it received a strong encouragement for the actions and decisions that we've taken and in addition to that, a keenness for states and territories to work with us as we seek to attract footloose businesses and industries that may be seeking to relocate. And we will work closely with the state and territory governments to ensure we can give effect to that plan.

And with that, I will hand you over to Professor Kelly.

PROFESSOR PAUL KELLY, ACTING CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER: Thank you Prime Minister. So we are in a very different phase compared with the last National Cabinet meeting. As the Prime Minister said, this is my first one but I think it is very clear now that there is a community transmission issue in Melbourne. The good news there at the moment, it is confined to Melbourne and all of the things that have happened in the last week or two in relation to controlling that pandemic, we are very much all of one mind as to what needs to be done. The Prime Minister mentioned that all of the states and territories, in terms of public health response are assisting, particularly in this very difficult and time-consuming contact tracing exercise, for every case that we see and we have seen many in the last week, there are contacts that also need to be phoned, given advice and also isolated for their own protection and the protection of the wider community. So this increase in cases, particularly locally acquired cases, particularly those that are not related to known clusters, are a concern. There are differences compared with that first peak that we had back in March - April, in terms of the people that are being affected by the virus, there are many more younger people. This reflects one large cluster in a particular college in Melbourne, but also the fact that there are large families and interrelated clusters as well as in those public-housing towers that we know about in north Melbourne. They are doing a lot of testing, that is leading of course to finding cases and that will continue to be a major focus. The Prime Minister mentioned, we have good modelling advice now about this which backs up that issue. We are all at risk regardless of whether we are living in Perth, if we are living in a rural area, those messages we have been giving all throughout about the physical distancing, the hand hygiene, the cough hygiene, etc, people need to continue to listen to that. We can see what happens very quickly, with this incredibly infectious virus. It can spread throughout the community and unless we're taking note of those very simple but effective ways of stopping that transmission, then we are all at risk. So we are all in this together, we know that what we need to do and we are well prepared and now we're enacting those plans in Victoria and all states and territories and the Commonwealth are here in support. I might leave it there. PM?

PRIME MINISTER: Thank you very much Paul. I'm happy to go to questions.

JOURNALIST: How quickly do you want to see the results from Jane Halton's review of what's been going on, and I'm assuming that you are not waiting for that review before you offer more Federal assistance on hotel quarantine or on contact tracing? Can you just step us through what more you will do?

PRIME MINISTER: Sure, on hotel quarantine, in Victoria that issue is more moot because there are no planes coming in. So that is not a pressing issue in Victoria. The pressing issue in Victoria, and Paul might want to add to this, is on the tracing. That support is there right now and that support is being provided by every State and Territory jurisdiction has offered those resources. New South Wales is doing the lions share of that. They have an excellent capacity there. It means that a lot of this resource presently, in a lot

of States and Territories where there are virtually no cases, certainly in community transmission, only as a result of returning travellers, a lot of that capacity has sat idle which means it doesn't need to sit idle now, it can be put to work in Victoria and is being put to work in Victoria. The challenges of those many months really did create a very capable workforce in this area and that is now at the disposal of any State or Territory that could find themselves in this situation. There is no hesitation in the standing offer that the Commonwealth has for all States and Territories. The decision that we took to reduce the number of returned travellers to Australia at this time was to ensure that we could put our focus on the resources needed to do the testing and the tracing and not have to have resources diverted to other tasks. We will review that as the weeks go by but for now, that is where we have reduced it. It is a reduction of over 4,000 people coming each week and that is spread across those ports of entry and that will take effect from Monday.

But Paul, did you want to add anything to that?

PROFESSOR KELLY: Just to say that there are, we have developed guidelines at the national level at the AHPPC in relation to quarantine. They are very detailed. We have had close looks at this at the national level already through the AHPPC and also the communicable diseases network of Australia. Various states have done their own internal reviews and just to be clear that the quarantine is with the States, but this is a way of looking at quarantine in a more detailed fashion and we have given some suggestions to Jane Halton about the types of things that we would really like to have checked. To be clear, there have been a lot of people who have come into hotel quarantine, there have been very few breaches but we have seen, as has been reported in Victoria, a single breach, even if it's low risk can lead to a catastrophic outcome. So we absolutely need to know that this is working as best as it can and that is the reason why we definitely support that.

PRIME MINISTER: Just to be specific, what has been recommended to be included in the review by the AHPPC, the medical expert panel is infection prevention and control training for clinical, hotel and security staff, compliance with infection and controlled requirements of the same staff, evidence of community cases and attributed to cases in international travellers in hotel quarantine including cases in hotel and security staff, rates of compliance with testing, legislative and contractual basis for mandatory testing, management of suspected and confirmed cases, provision and effectiveness of support services in medical, mental health, Social Services and financial support. Management of vulnerable people, management of cultural diversity, logistics arrangements and administrative arrangements and changing capacity requirements related to changes in border restrictions. So you can see there it is a very comprehensive set of issues that Jane, who was well known and well respected in this field and she will give us a, I think a very good steer early on about the time she will need to conduct that review effectively.

JOURNALIST: Dr Kelly, What is the advice now on wearing masks?

PROFESSOR KELLY: The advice has, for places where there is ongoing community transmission, so this for the moment is greater Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire, is that people - of course, the overarching advice is people should stay at home unless they need to go out. But assuming that people do need to go out, what has not changed is if people have symptoms and they need to go for a test, for example, which we would definitely encourage, they should wear a mask. Other people, where physical distancing cannot be guaranteed, they should also wear a mask in Melbourne and Mitchell shire.

PRIME MINISTER: The National Cabinet - in those circumstances that the Chief Medical Officer has outlined, it is not a broad application across the country but in designated areas that have been affected in the way that they have in those parts of Victoria, that is the advice and that was adopted by National Cabinet today.

JOURNALIST: Just to be clear Prime Minister, if you're going out in Melbourne today, you should be wearing a mask?

PRIME MINISTER: Paul?

PROFESSOR KELLY: That is the advice if you cannot guarantee physical distancing. So in these circumstances, some of you might want to consider that. But from here to where you are, no.

PRIME MINISTER: Paul and I don't need to. However, you are all clustered together as usual.

JOURNALIST: [Inaudible] is there a hard figure as to how many people are allowed to come into Australia? Will that change when Victoria begins to reopen its borders and do you concede it will be more difficult for people to come home?

PRIME MINISTER: It will be more difficult because there will be a reduction in the available capacity for people to be coming back to Australia. So that is the consequence of this decision today by the National Cabinet. More broadly, when Victoria is in a position at some stage in the future to resume receiving flights, well, that will obviously change the capacity at that time. I would say also, at a time when Victoria was able to take flights again, then obviously the challenges to the system presently caused by the outbreak in Victoria would have subsided and that then, of course, would mean that there would be less pressure on the system nationally. So until that is under control, or even beyond that, it has been under control and Victoria is able to take up those flights again, then we will be in a restricted capacity for the foreseeable future.

JOURNALIST: Could you just detail some of those recommendations?

PRIME MINISTER: Which recommendations?

JOURNALIST: Michael Brennan's? And what was the response from the premiers to those recommendations?

PRIME MINISTER: Very welcoming. This was the presentation we had hoped to have a fortnight ago but we were obviously dealing with the Victorian situation which was as acute then as it was today. But it went across a series of areas from heavy vehicle arrangements, planning and development approvals, ease of starting a new business. These were the areas that were highlighted...

JOURNALIST: Industrial relations?

PRIME MINISTER: No, these were, they were not measures he put on his agenda today. They are matters that are dealt with by the Federal Government. This was a report to states. It was focusing largely on state government approval processes and business regulation processes. And I think there is quite a bit more work to do there. He gave a very good summary of a lot of the work that is already taking place in the states and territories and gave some good examples of those initiatives, whether they be in Queensland, New South Wales or WA or anywhere else. But his point was that if you want to have a stronger recovery, then your economy needs to have flexibility and the regulation that can constrain that flexibility can constrain job creation and the economic performance of the country.

Greg?

JOURNALIST: With JobKeeper, will you extend that based on the level of distress of a business, or will it be extended based on the sectors that are suffering the most in this crisis? And Professor Kelly, do you know why the Victorian health officials did not conduct follow-ups with, daily follow-ups, with the close contacts of COVID-19 cases and is that out of line with best practice?

PRIME MINISTER: I'll let you deal with that first Paul, if you want?

PROFESSOR KELLY: So, as I mentioned earlier, there, with a large number of cases, there are a large number of contacts. That is particularly in the case where people are moving more around the city and in close contact with people. So every single case can generate 20, 30 other people that need to be called. So this is a large logistic exercise. It is the reason why we have come in with support from all of the other contact tracers from around Australia and now as of today from the National Incident Room, as well, in the Commonwealth. We are giving all the support we can. Definitely the key performance indicator here is finding the people that have proved to be positive and making sure that they know about that and that they are isolating themselves at home as quickly as possible. So we are doing everything we can to support the Victorians in this effort and we will continue to do so.

PRIME MINISTER: On the other question, just as when we initiated what has been the largest ever level of income support any Government has ever provided to the Australian community at any time, it was targeted for those who needed it most. The next phase of our support will also be targeted nationally to those who need it the most and we haven't and when we're...

JOURNALIST: Is that based on a loss of revenue rather than...

PRIME MINISTER: The details of our decisions will be set out at the time of releasing the economic statement, as I have been saying for some weeks, and there is no change to that timetable. I do note today, regrettably, that the Labor Party has engaged in fearmongering during a pandemic and I think this is disgraceful. They are saying things that are blatantly untrue. I have made it very clear that there would be a further stage of income support and to make people feel more uncertain in this climate I think is disgraceful and I think it reflects badly on their leadership.

JOURNALIST: PM, the cap on Australians returning home. How will that actually be administered? Have the airlines been told, been given quotas that they can only return so many people? Will there be a sort of a triage system, priority given perhaps to women, children, the elderly, the sick, things like that? How do you envisage that?

PRIME MINISTER: In the same way that it has been put in place until now. So there will be no changes. There already are restrictions on it right now and it will be handled the same way with the airlines and the priorities that are done through the Australian Border Force that exist right now.

JOURNALIST: Isn't the effect of the cap that Australian citizens will be effectively barred from coming to Australia? Is that unfair to some, do you share frustrations of people...

PRIME MINISTER: Well, you have to make judgements in the national interest. There will be capacity for people to return to Australia, as there has been now for months, for many months. So there will be continuing access to Australia but the number of available positions on flights will be less and I don't think that is surprising or unreasonable in the circumstances that we find ourselves in. We have to put the national interest first and the health of Australia first and Australians and that is the basis of the decision we have taken. And if we are in a position to expand that capacity again in the future then we will do so, but we will do that on the basis of the advice that we are receiving, on the quarantine task that is there,

but the many other tasks which right now are focused more on the issue of testing and tracing to contain the outbreak. So we will respond to the health needs.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, the ADF has been offered to boost Victoria's tracing and monitoring team. Has that offer been taken up by Daniel Andrews yet, and if not, are you confident that they have the ability to control this outbreak? And just on the review of hotel quarantine, do you have any reason to believe that any other states have had any significant breaches, do you believe that there is any issues in other States?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, I have no reason to. The review is not being initiated because of that suspicion, the review is being initiated on the basis of good advice from the medical expert panel and good practice. That is why we are initiating that review. If there are issues that are identified as part of that process, that would be its purpose, to discover those things and to address them where necessary. I think that is a matter of good practice. In relation to testing and tracing support, the Victorian Government will have everything they need, not just from the Commonwealth, but also from all states and territories. So they are not short of anything they need, from any part of any government in Australia. That was reaffirmed to them today and which requirements the Victorian Government seek to be filled is a matter for them and that question is better directed to the Premier.

JOURNALIST: It still seems that the gold standard is human beings rather than technology. Do you think that you oversold the benefits of the app, is there any emerging signs in Melbourne that the application is becoming more useful? And if Professor Kelly could also answer in relation to those claims that the two clusters in the towers and in the college are linked, do we know where it started?

PRIME MINISTER: In relation to your first question Sam, no, I don't share your view. I think the two work together. They were always intended to work together and they are working together. That is why I would continue to encourage people, wherever you happen to be, to download the COVIDSafe app. In most parts of the country, I mean, there are no community transmission cases, so therefore, you wouldn't expect it to be having a high level of use. It is being used in Victoria and the other methods of tracing are also being used and the two work together.

Paul?

PRIME MINISTER: So firstly, on contacts, with the lock down restrictions that have come into play this week in greater Melbourne and Mitchell Shire, there will be less movement around towns. So those incidental contacts will be less. Having said that, the app has been used. It is being used in Victoria. At this stage, it hasn't actually led to a large number of contacts over and above what has been captured by the other...

JOURNALIST: [inaudible] any contacts?

PROFESSOR KELLY: Yes, it has, but it has been a very minimal number because it has really been that person to person contact by phone that has given most of the detail.

JOURNALIST: So 19 aged care facilities in Victoria have positive cases, what are you doing to prevent another Newmarch?

PRIME MINISTER: Paul, did you want to respond to that?

PROFESSOR KELLY: So aged care facilities, obviously, are a major concern to us and we have seen issues, very few issues, so Newmarch and Dorothy Henderson Lodge, pretty much the only large outbreaks we've seen. Very different to many other countries. And we should be clear about putting this in context. Yesterday in the US there were 60,000 new cases. We are nowhere near that at the moment. But in terms of aged care facilities in particular, yes, we are remaining very vigilant with that. I get a daily report, our Victorian colleagues and also the Commonwealth officials in Victoria are very closely monitoring the situation. We have regular contact with the aged care sector and specifically with aged care facilities in those areas of concern, so Greater Melbourne. At the moment it is going very well.

PRIME MINISTER: Michelle?

JOURNALIST: We have heard a lot of discussion about schools at these press conferences. So I wonder whether you're surprised or even shocked at the extent of the outbreak in the school in Melbourne and what are your thoughts about schools more generally now in light of that?

PROFESSOR KELLY: So there are several aspects to that question, and I will go through each of them. There is an outbreak in one particular college in Melbourne and some smaller ones related to other schools. I didn't answer your other question about those linkages, I don't have the details of the linkages, but I know our Victorian colleagues are looking very closely at the various clusters and as they look more closely, they are finding linkages. So it is possible they are closely linked. In terms of schools, I'll just reiterate my position which I am absolutely certain of on the basis of evidence, and we look at this continually, about the risk to children. So the risk to children of this virus is much less than in adults and that is very clear right around the world in terms of the severity of the illness. In terms of this particular cluster in this college in Melbourne, most of that appears to be related to family interactions rather than interactions at the school. After all, they are on school holidays in Melbourne.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, what does this mean for plans for a trans-Tasman travel bubble and international students coming to Australia? Is there any modelling in terms of the cost to the economy and keeping international borders closed and on returning travellers, is there any support for those that can't afford two weeks in a hotel?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, on the latter point, that's a matter that would be addressed by the states and territories as in terms of any hardship support that they wish to provide to offset any of those arrangements, then that is a matter entirely for the states and territories and I will leave that to them. In relation to the trans-Tasman safe travel zone, I will be speaking to Prime Minister Ardern about that again this afternoon. We had contact this morning, in particular, because I was pleased to see that Helen Clark had been appointed as part of the independent panel for pandemic preparedness and response, to lead the evaluation of the international response to COVID-19. We had a brief text exchange on that and we will discuss that further this afternoon. There is no sort of imminent starting date. There is still a lot more work to be done to get to a point of having that trans-Tasman safe travel zone. We discussed that today at National Cabinet about what states and territories could or would participate in that so there is a bit more work to do there. Obviously the Victorian situation, although it is isolated, I mean the rest of the country's seven states and territories would be potentially in a position to be involved in that. But we will hear further from the New Zealanders. It is an issue of interest in terms of how we can engage again with the rest of the world, but I think we will have to be very patient about that. It is a topic that Prime Minister Abe and I discussed last night and it is pleasing to know that Japan, for example, would be seeing Australia as a potential place where there might be opportunities to reopen some very, very restricted and limited form of travel. I mean, particularly for scientists, business interests, these sorts of things. So we welcome that. But I think there is still quite a bit of way to go. What will determine this ultimately, Brett, is the health advice and the arrangements that can be put in place to achieve that. Now, I think it is self-evident

that the fact that Australia cannot have international flights is damaging to our economy. That is obvious. You don't need modelling to tell you that, and the sooner we get some arrangements that are workable and safe, well obviously we would seek to achieve that.

JOURNALIST: Overnight, China Daily came out with an editorial saying that Australia is not irreplaceable. Obviously the Chinese...

PRIME MINISTER: With what, sorry?

JOURNALIST: Australia is not irreplaceable, in regards to the announcement yesterday in relation to Hong Kong. How concerned are you that we will see further retaliation in relation to trade from China in consequence of the announcement in relation to Hong Kong?

PRIME MINISTER: Australia will just continue to stand up for our interests and we will continue to pursue our policies consistent with those interests.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, just on Malaysia, there are five Australian journalists that are facing potential sedition charges for their reporting in Malaysia at the moment. How concerned are you about those developments and have you had conversations with your Malaysian counterparts over that?

PRIME MINISTER: I haven't been briefed on that matter so I am not in a position to respond.

JOURNALIST: Professor Kelly, could I ask, what did the medical advice say about the current capacity of hotel quarantine and did the AHPPC recommend a cut of just over a half in international arrivals, to focus on testing and tracing?

PROFESSOR KELLY: Well, firstly I'd say the absolute focus needs to be at the moment the situation in Melbourne and as I've said the testing, tracing and isolation component is a key component to that. So in terms of public health elements, that needs to be the main focus. Not only in Victoria but everyone else that is assisting with that process right throughout Australia. In relation to hotel quarantine and its capacity, that is a really a matter for the states and the Prime Minister has discussed that and the discussions that happen in Nat Cab and they will be worked through on the public health capacity but also other capacity, security and so forth, which is outside of my remit.

JOURNALIST: [Inaudible] the current number of arrivals?

PROFESSOR KELLY: Well, the advice was that we should be concentrating where the main game is and the main game is in relation to the community transmission that is happening in Melbourne. That is the way to protect the Australian public's health.

PRIME MINISTER: Okay last one, Clare?

JOURNALIST: Professor Kelly, given that Victoria has just recorded 300 new cases today, when will we know for sure what the impact might be on the New South Wales border towns and should there be more targeting testing on those areas where Victorians cross the border a lot?

PROFESSOR KELLY: So certainly there is more targeted testing. That is happening not only on the border but in rural and regional Victoria. The key component of that will be whether it can be contained in Melbourne. At the moment, 99 per cent of the cases are in greater Melbourne and Mitchell Shire. So at the moment that appears to be holding. There have been some cases in rural Victoria. They are all related

to Melbourne. There's been a couple of cases as you know, a small number of cases here in the ACT related to Melbourne and so that is what we need to keep a close focus on.

JOURNALIST: How long will it take epidemiologically to know if it has crossed the border?

PROFESSOR KELLY: Oh I see. So we know that the usual incubation period is about a week so within a week we may be seeing, be able to see something. But it will take a couple of incubation periods, even four incubation periods, to know whether this is under control. Hence the six week lockdown in Melbourne.

PRIME MINISTER: Okay. Now, just on a practical issue. As you know, it is school holidays and Jenny and the girls are going to be taking some time next week on the outskirts of Sydney but given the changing and critical situation we have got, a serious situation in Victoria, I will not be joining them for that full time. I also won't be standing aside from the tasks I have each day. We have the capacity now with technology where I can be with them where they are and at the same time continue to take the briefings and the calls and meetings that I need to in the middle of dealing with the situation, whether it be Victoria or the many other situations that we are facing around the country. Look, as a dad, as you'd expect, I will take some time if I can get it during that period to wet a line or whatever the girls want to do, but at the same time I can assure you that we will remain absolutely focused on the things we need to focus on over the next week. We are in the final stages of preparing the economic statement for the following week. I will be returning back here to Canberra late next week, where I am sure you will get to see me again out here. But as I am sure people know who may be watching at home, just because I am not standing in front of a camera it does not mean I am not behind my desk or doing what I need to do on a daily basis. So I would ask for people's understanding on that, and a lot to do over the course of the next week and I thank you again, Professor Kelly, for joining me here on this occasion.

And a reminder everyone, again, to everybody down in Victoria, the whole country is with you. All of the country is with you. The resources of the nation are there to support you at this very, very difficult time, to do what is necessary to get life as closely back to normal as we possibly can in the shortest period of time. But it will require your continued patience and your continued discipline which you are showing, in the research that we say today from Professor Kelly, we saw that there was an immediate response from those in the outbreak zones and those areas when these measures were announced and there was a very swift response from them, and we appreciate that. And for the rest of the country who are not in that situation, let's guard against complacency, let's make sure that we maintain the social distancing, following all of those good habits when it comes to a COVID safe community and a COVID safe economy. Lives and livelihoods, of course, depend on it. Just because there may be very few cases where you live, do not think for a second that there aren't sets of circumstances that could see the virus outbreak again and find its way. So we all continue to have this important responsibility and this important discipline that we have to be able to maintain. Thank you all very much.

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