



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### COVID-19 Review of Temporary Border Measures: 9 March 2020

Portfolio                      Health

On 9 March 2020, Cabinet:

- 1        **noted** that the global situation regarding COVID-19 continues to develop rapidly, with a high degree of uncertainty and rapid increases of cases in countries outside of China;
- 2        **noted** that, with the confirmation of COVID-19 cases, New Zealand is still in the 'Keep it Out' phase, but is starting to shift to the 'Stamp it Out' phase;
- 3        **noted** that:
  - 3.1      the overall public health risk from this event remains high, and that the current border measures remain effective in slowing the importation of COVID-19 cases in New Zealand;
  - 3.2      however, widening border restrictions is increasingly unlikely to be effective in slowing the importation of COVID-19;
- 4        **noted** that the current temporary border restrictions are part of New Zealand's wider response to the global outbreak, and are due to expire at 23:59 on Tuesday, 10 March 2020;
- 5        **agreed** to re-introduce the current temporary border measures for an additional seven-day period, expiring at 23:59 on Tuesday, 17 March 2020, limited to cover people who have been present in or transited through specified areas in the 14 days departing for New Zealand;
- 6        **noted** that New Zealand has adopted a categorisation approach to border measures:
  - 6.1      specified areas in Category 1A, with travel restrictions, currently include mainland China, Iran and the Diamond Princess cruise ship;
  - 6.2      locations in Category 1B include Northern Italy and the Republic of Korea;
  - 6.3      locations in Category 2 include Hong Kong, Italy (other areas), Japan, Singapore, and Thailand;
- 7        **agreed** that the temporary border measures continue to be reviewed regularly, and that officials will provide immediate advice should any information emerge that has a substantial impact on these measures;

- 8 **invited** the Minister of Immigration to give effect to the decision in paragraph 5 above regarding Category 1A areas through issuing Immigration Instructions;
- 9 **noted** that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will inform affected countries and jurisdictions and key Pacific partners of the decisions in paragraphs 5 and 6 above ahead of public communication;
- 10 **noted** that the Ministry of Health will inform Australia and the World Health Organization of the decisions in paragraphs 5 and 6 above ahead of public communication;
- 11 **noted** that officials will prepare further advice on the border measures for Cabinet consideration on Monday, 16 March 2020 on whether to extend, lift, or change the border measures.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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**Hard-copy distribution:**

Prime Minister  
Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister of Health  
Minister of Immigration