



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Health**

Your Ref:  
Our Ref:  
Contact:

The Honourable Mark McGowan MLA  
Premier of Western Australia  
13 Floor Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Premier

## **VENTILATION REVIEW OF QUARANTINE HOTELS**

The Review of Western Australia's Hotel Quarantine arrangements by Professor Tarun Weeramanthri was announced on 01 February 2021, in light of the infection of a hotel quarantine worker (Case 903) on 30 January 2021. On 04 February 2021, Professor Weeramanthri provided interim advice, which included advice on ventilation systems. The advice recommended that the Western Australian (WA) Government instigate an immediate independent expert review of airflow and ventilation in all WA quarantine hotels, to inform any risk mitigation strategy for airborne transmission from infected guests to quarantine workers and determine appropriate ventilation standards (Recommendation 1), and consider ventilation adequacy when requisitioning quarantine hotels (Recommendation 3). Glossop Consultancy was contracted to undertake an occupational hygiene assessment, initially of the Four Points Sheraton Hotel and then of the remaining 9 hotels (8 currently in use and 1 proposed replacement hotel – Adnate Hotel). PDF Engineering was also contracted to provide engineering advice as part of a mechanical services ventilation review.

On receipt and analysis of the initial report on the Four Points Sheraton, WA Health recommended to the State Government on 24 February 2021 that the Four Points be retained until at least the Adnate Hotel had been procured, the hotel be utilised for low risk seasonal workers from Pacific countries and the retention of the hotel be reconsidered once the review of all hotels had been considered. This was agreed, and two groups of seasonal workers have now completed hotel quarantine successfully, with a further group expected shortly.

The initial review was received on 10 March 2021 and, after initial analysis, WA Health representatives met with the consultants on 23 March 2021 to clarify different views between the consultants and the recommendations within the reports. A final report was provided on 31 March 2021. After analysis of the reports, a summary report (Attachment A) and SHICC assessment (Attachment B) was submitted to the Chief Health Officer for consideration on 08 April 2021.

The summary report notes that PDF Engineering and Glossop Consultancy have not identified flaws or faults in the air handling systems of any of the hotels that necessitate the removal of hotels from quarantine use. The recommendations are designed to maximise what is considered internally to be good practice supported by the World Health Organisation to minimise risk of transmission.

The following measures were recommended for implementation across all state quarantine hotels, but were seen to be particularly important to mitigate risks for hotels in the amber and red category identified in the Glossop Consultancy report.

**1. Administrative measures**

- a. moving or eliminating guard stations; and/or
- b. replacement of security guard by CCTV;
- c. connecting rooms to be used for family units or as single room occupancy (using one room of the two rooms); and
- d. Ongoing iterative review of training/education in infection control for security guards, hotel staff including the use of PPE.

**2. Engineering measures**

- a. use of HEPA units in rooms with positive cases;
- b. operable windows to be closed and secured, so as to maintain a consistent pressure in the rooms; and
- c. regular maintenance checks of supply and exhaust room ventilation systems.

After review, I provided further comments on the reports, assessments and the proposed next steps on 14 April 2021 (Attachment C). I noted that the SHICC assessment had provided a risk stratification of the 10 hotels concerned, including 3 moderate risk and 3 higher risk hotels, and that these risks could be mitigated either by closure or by application of various administrative or engineering measures, some of which have been or are being implemented. It was also acknowledged that the SHICC only has the capacity to manage up to nine hotels due to staffing, availability and other Covid-19 related priorities. It is also understood that the State Government wishes to bring in a further 900-1000 seasonal workers from low risk south-west Pacific countries, to supplement the 800 who have already arrived in 2021.

As the Adnate Hotel has now been procured and will be available from the beginning of May 2021, one of the higher risk hotels could be retired as a quarantine hotel. Assessment of the three higher risk hotels indicates that the Mercure Hotel is probably the most difficult to mitigate, given positive pressure rooms, opening windows and the age of the facility. The other two higher risk hotels (Four Points Sheraton, Novotel Langley) are easier to mitigate utilising measures already implemented and the recommended measures. The Mercure Hotel, however, could be utilised as a self-quarantine facility for lower risk cohorts.

On these grounds, and after assessment of the analysis and the reports, the following is proposed:

- the administrative and engineering recommendations are agreed and will be progressively implemented across all quarantine hotels;

- the Four Points Hotel will be retained, permanent Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) will be installed, to supplement the temporary CCTV in place, by mid-June and the Hotel will be transitioned back to a normal SHICC hotel;
- the Mercure Hotel will be closed as a SHICC hotel, but CCTV installation will be completed, and consideration will be given to its use, at least in the interim, as a contracted hotel for low risk international seasonal workers;
- further consideration will be given to the timing of the transition from these respective hotels, noting timings of CCTV installation and the Adnate Hotel coming on board; and
- I will consult with the State Emergency Coordinator on the next steps for the proposed transitions, including any amendments to Directions or Public Health Orders.

Yours sincerely



Dr Andrew Robertson  
**CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER**

16 April 2021