



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

Your Ref:  
Our Ref:  
Contact:

Mr Chris Dawson  
Commissioner of Police  
State Emergency Coordinator  
Western Australia Police Force

Dear Commissioner Dawson

## **EASING OF BORDER CONTROLS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA – VICTORIA**

On 12 February 2021, I wrote to you with my advice on the border arrangements with Victoria. At that time, I advised that there were 13 positive coronavirus cases linked to the outbreak at the Holiday Inn at Melbourne Airport. While there had been no reported associated community cases at that stage, there were concerns regarding a close contact case who had worked as an employee of the Brunetti Café, located in Terminal 4 of Melbourne's Domestic Airport, on 9 February 2021. While up to 28 Jetstar flights arrived at and departed from the terminal during the exposure period, no flights had departed to Perth. A further close contact case worked as a domestic cleaner at the domestic terminals of Melbourne Airport on 07 and 08 February 2021. The Department of Health and Human Services in Victoria was undertaking contact tracing related to these cases at that time.

Given the 13 cases involved, and possible exposure of travellers at Melbourne Airport, there was a significant risk that further cases could be detected related to the Holiday Inn outbreak over the following 5-7 days and such cases could present up to 14 days after infection. As the situation was still evolving, I recommended that Victorian travellers move from the Low Risk category to the Medium Risk category, under the 'Controlled Border for Western Australia Directions', as soon as possible.

On 15 February 2021, I advised you that Victoria should remain at Medium Risk until the end of the Victorian lockdown, which was anticipated to end at midnight on 17 February 2021, while the outbreak at the Melbourne Airport Holiday Inn and Coburg Function Centre was further assessed. On 17 February 2021, I advised that, while there had been further cases since the 15 February, they had occurred in close contacts in home quarantine. There had also been extensive contact tracing and testing. Victoria confirmed that they planned to lift the lockdown restrictions from midnight on 17 February. I further recommended that, given locally acquired cases were still occurring, Victoria should continue in the Medium Risk category until midnight on 19 February 2021 and then move to the Low Risk category from 00:01 on

20 February 2021. Three new cases reported on 19 February 2021 had all occurred in close contacts in home quarantine and I advised that this report should not delay the move to the Low Risk category. Victoria subsequently moved to Low Risk Category on 20 February 2021.

The Victorian 'Holiday Inn' cluster is now associated with a total of 24 cases, including 11 cases linked to the Coburg Private Venue exposure site. On the 26 February 2021, Victoria reported an additional 2 cases linked to this cluster. Both cases are primary close contacts of previously reported cases and have been quarantining during their infectious period. Genomic sequencing results for several cases in this cluster have confirmed that the cases are infected with the UK variant strain (B.1.1.7 lineage). The Department of Health and Human Services in Victoria is currently undertaking Day 11 tests for people linked to current exposure sites and Day 14 and 16 tests for some of the higher-risk close contacts, which has detected these cases in quarantine.

I can confirm that on 28 February 2021, Victoria recorded their 16<sup>th</sup> day without any community transmission of COVID-19. As a result, Victoria is expected to reach 28 days without a community case of COVID-19 on 12 March 2021. On this basis, I recommend that on or after the 13 March 2021, and subject to no further community outbreaks in Victoria, travellers from Victoria should move from the Low Risk category to the Very Low Risk category. As with the other jurisdictions where there is no community spread for greater than 28 days, the current 'Controlled Borders for Western Australia Directions' should be applied. This would remove the requirement for home quarantine and day 11 testing.

I am happy to re-consider the above advice should there be significant changes in the public health situation.

Yours sincerely



Dr Andrew Robertson  
**CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER**

28 February 2021