



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

Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Contact:

The Honourable Mark McGowan MLA
Premier of Western Australia
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CONTROLLED BORDER CONTROLS - VICTORIA

Dear Premier

On 11 May 2021, the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS) reported a case of COVID-19 in a returned international traveller who had recently completed hotel quarantine in South Australia. The man in his 30s returned to Australia from India via the Maldives on 19 April 2021. He isolated in the Playford quarantine hotel in South Australia before returning to his home in Wollert in Melbourne on 04 May. A positive case had been diagnosed on that floor in an adjacent room, who was then transferred to the SA MediHotel on the same day (04 May). The Wollert case had a negative PCR test on Day 13. He developed symptoms on 08 May and was tested on 10 May 2021. Genomic sequencing supported the hypothesis that this case acquired COVID-19 from a guest in an adjacent room.

On 25 May 2021, I provided you with an update on a new outbreak linked to this case. At that time, the Victorian DHSS had reported four new cases of COVID-19 in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, all part of the same family, living across three households in the Whittlesea area. Whole genome sequencing results indicated that they were genomically linked to the case outlined above and were infected with the B.1.617.1 strain. A fifth separate community case (Case 5), believed to be one the cases linking this outbreak to the Wollert case, and four of his house hold contacts had also been reported as confirmed cases by DHSS. Extensive contact tracing and testing was being undertaken.

Given the additional cases, and that this outbreak was linked to the more transmissible B.1.617.1 strain, I recommended the following measures, which were subsequently implemented:

- Effective from 18:00 hrs on 25 May 2021, all passengers arriving from Victoria should be required to get tested immediately (within 48 hours) and isolate until

they have received a negative result. Any passenger who refuses to get tested should be required to self-quarantine for 14 days.

- As per previous advice, anyone who had been at the listed venues should be required to self-quarantine for 14 days and be tested immediately (within 48 hours) and at day 11.
- Anyone from the Melbourne area who did not visit the venues and arrived in Western Australia from the 15-25 May 2021 should be advised to get tested if they developed any symptoms that may be related to COVID-19.

Airport testing was arranged for both domestic terminals and both public and private COVID Clinics were expanded to deal with the additional testing.

I can now advise that Victoria recorded twelve new cases of COVID-19 in the last 24 hours, bringing the outbreak to a total of 26 cases. All are locally acquired cases, and all are related to the two linked outbreaks, one centred on the family outbreak in the Whittlesea area and one centred on the workplace outbreak in the Port Melbourne area. These are genomically linked to the Wollert case; however, the exact epidemiological link to Case 5 has yet to be determined. One of the cases is now in intensive care in a Melbourne hospital.

The DHSS has expanded its contact tracing and testing, with 40,411 test results received in the 24 hours to midnight yesterday. Extensive contact tracing continues for all the individuals who have tested positive to COVID-19, and their close and casual contacts, and new public exposures sites are being identified. Victoria has declared more than 79 exposure sites, including the Melbourne Cricket Ground and Docklands Stadium, and a number of bars and restaurants. While most of these sites are in the greater Melbourne area, there has been one venue identified in Bendigo. Victoria has indicated that they do not require assistance with contact-tracing at this stage. In response, the Victorian government has announced a seven-day lockdown from midnight on 27 May 2021 in a bid to curb the growing coronavirus outbreak.

I am satisfied that the Victorian Government are taking all steps necessary to control and abate this risk; however, as there is an increasing number of cases, including non-household and non-work cases linked to exposure sites, nearly 80 identified exposure sites and this outbreak is linked to the more transmissible B.1.617.1 strain, I recommend that:

- From 10.00 hrs on Thursday 27 May 2021, Victoria should move from the Very Low Risk category to the Medium Risk category. This will mean that travellers from Victoria are not permitted entry unless an exemption is granted. All exempt travellers arriving from Victoria will be required to be tested for COVID-19 within 48 hours of arrival and on day 11 of quarantine, or at any point when symptoms develop, and to self-quarantine in suitable accommodation for 14 days from the date they were last in Victoria. As per my advice of 07 April 2021, a person, who has been in a restricted location in the 14 days before they enter WA, should be required to self-quarantine for a 14-day period from the day they left the restricted location, which includes time they have spent in a very low risk jurisdiction as long as they have spent the most recent period before coming to WA in a very low risk jurisdiction.

- As per previous advice of 25 May 2021, anyone who had been identified as a close or casual contact by the Victorian DHSS, or has been at the listed venues at the specified times, should be required to self-quarantine for 14 days and be tested immediately (within 48 hours) and at day 11.
- Anyone from Victoria who did not visit the venues and arrived in Western Australia from the 16-25 May 2021 should be required to get tested immediately (within 48 hours) and isolate until they have received a negative result.

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

27 May 2021