



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
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WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Premier

CONTROLLED BORDER – NEW SOUTH WALES

On 16 August 2021, in response to the significant and sustained outbreak of the Delta variant of COVID-19 in New South Wales (NSW), I recommended that the State Emergency Coordinator (SEC) amend Western Australia's (WA) Controlled Border arrangements to put additional restrictions on travellers from 'high risk' jurisdictions to protect the WA population, while reserving mandatory quarantine at a state quarantine facility for the very highest risk travellers in a new 'extreme risk' category. As NSW had a 5-day moving average of 392 cases per day and a 14-day moving average of 312 cases per day at the time, I also recommended that NSW move from the 'medium risk' category to the 'high risk' category on or after 0001 hours on 17 August 2021. These recommended changes came into force on 17 August 2021.

In my letter of 16 August 2021, I also outlined the 'extreme risk' category and the proposal to move to such a category when a jurisdiction had greater than 500 new community cases per day on a 5-day or 14 day rolling average. In the development of the requirements around this new 'extreme risk' category, the SEC wrote to me on 20 August 2021 to clarify the rationale for the conditions within this category and their application to certain groups. Those clarifications are included within this response.

I can advise that NSW have reported 644 new community cases today, Friday 20 August 2021, and, as at 19 August 2021, has a 5-day moving average of 531 cases and a 14-day moving average of 408 cases per day. Most of these cases, on investigation, remain infectious for some or all the time within the community. The outbreak has also spread regionally, particularly in the Dubbo and Wilcannia areas, and into the Australian Capital Territory, with 12 community cases reported today.

On this basis, I recommend that NSW move from the 'high risk' category to the 'extreme risk' category on or after 00.01 hrs on Thursday 26 August 2021 and that this be made public today. It is anticipated, based on NSW's current case trajectory, that they will reach 500 cases per day on 14 day rolling average by this date. This 5-day

notification period will allow any person who usually resides in WA, but is currently in NSW, to arrange to return to their home prior to the border arrangements changing. As outlined on 16 August 2021, when NSW moves to the 'extreme risk' category, travel from NSW will not be permitted unless approved. Approvals will be limited to Diplomats, Members of Parliament, Commonwealth officials and specialist functions, as determined by SEC or CHO, only. Where an approval is granted, and except for some groups outlined below, all travellers arriving from NSW will be directed to undertake 14 days hotel quarantine at a State quarantine facility at their own expense and required to be tested for COVID-19 on days 1, 5 and 13 of hotel quarantine. The current requirements that apply to those in the 'high risk' category will continue to apply, including vaccination with at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine unless ineligible, a PCR test and negative result prior to travel, use of G2GNow where appropriate and a 200-kilometre restriction to travel, as outlined in my advice of 16 August 2021.

Commonwealth Officials and Contacts

It is noted that special arrangements will be required for certain allowed cohorts. Diplomats, Members of Parliament and Commonwealth Officials will be allowed to quarantine at home or in suitable premises for 14 days. I would advise that:

- this cohort should be required to undergo COVID-19 testing on arrival (within 48 hours) and at days 6 and 12 of their quarantine period;
- household members remaining in the suitable premises must also quarantine for the 14 days from the time the traveller left NSW, use G2G Now app and undertake day 12 testing in accordance with the requirements of the 'high risk' category;
- while those performing a function of Commonwealth Law are permitted to do so (including outside of the quarantine premises), they will be required to wear a mask at all times outside their suitable premises and any person they have direct contact with during their quarantine period should be required to quarantine and be tested for 14 days at days 2, 6 and 12; and
- SEC, on the advice from CHO, should have the discretion to vary these conditions depending on extenuating circumstances.

Specified Arrangements

The existing Transport Freight and Logistics (TFL) specified arrangement, which allows those undertaking TFL duties to enter Western Australia, should continue subject to changes to the testing regime and the current Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hygiene and quarantine requirements. Evidence of a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of entry (as opposed to the current 5 days) should be required if they are coming from an 'extreme' risk jurisdiction. If this condition is not met, the driver would be required to test within 48 hours.

The existing specified arrangements for flight crew, which permit WA based flight crew who travel to a restricted location and remain in the airport for the duration of their layover before boarding their return flight to WA, to return without being subject to

quarantine or testing requirements should be limited to layover durations of 4 hours or less to further mitigate this risk.

Travellers from Supervised Quarantine

WA residents and other travellers coming to WA, who have returned from overseas and are currently completing their supervised quarantine in NSW state run quarantine facilities, should be required to self-quarantine for 14 days on arrival and be tested on arrival (within 48 hours) and at day 12. This is primarily to mitigate the infection risk from the airport and commercial air travel to Perth. The current requirements to travel directly from quarantine to the airport and to arrive in WA not more than 12 hours after completion of their quarantine would still apply.

Refused Travellers

With regards to travellers from an 'extreme risk' location who arrive in WA without approval, they should be required to leave. If they are required to remain in quarantine whilst a return flight is organised, they should be required to be tested immediately at the airport prior to entering quarantine. They should remain in hotel quarantine until a negative test result is received. If negative, they can return to NSW. If positive, they will be managed in the hotel quarantine. This is to mitigate them infecting other passengers on a return flight.

I will continue to monitor the situation in NSW and 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

20 August 2021