



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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Dear Premier

### **EASING OF CONTROLLED BORDER CONTROLS - VICTORIA**

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 (Wollert case). 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 (Kappa) 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.

On 27 May 2021, I provided advice on the border arrangements with Victoria. At that time, I advised that there were 26 positive coronavirus cases linked to outbreaks in the Whittlesea and Port Melbourne areas. Both outbreaks were linked to the Wollert case. DHSS was undertaking contact tracing related to these cases at that time. Given the number of cases involved, and possible community exposure at a significant number of identified exposure sites across Melbourne, further COVID-19 cases were anticipated. As the situation was still evolving, I recommended that Victorian travellers move from the Very Low Risk category to the Medium Risk category, under the 'Controlled Border for Western Australia Directions' from 10 am on 27 May 2021, which was implemented. The Victorian government also announced a seven-day lockdown from midnight on 27 May 2021, which was extended to midnight on 10 June 2021, in a bid to curb the growing coronavirus outbreak.

Over the last 2 weeks, a further 64 cases of COVID-19 have been linked to this outbreak, bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 90. Of these cases, 75 cases are associated with the Kappa variant outbreak involving the Whittlesea area, Port

Melbourne workplace and Arcare Maidstone Aged Care facility. On 04 June 2021, Victoria reported that several cases previously thought to be associated with the Whittlesea Community Cluster were not genomically linked, but rather have the Delta variant (B.1.617.2 variant) of concern. This cluster is currently associated with 15 locally acquired cases. This outbreak has now been genomically linked to an overseas acquired case that arrived in Victoria on the 8 May 2021, tested positive on the same day and was released from quarantine on 23 May 2021. The link between this traveller and families in west Melbourne is still being investigated.

The last case in the community was on 09 June 2021, with 12 of the 19 cases diagnosed between 6 – 9 June 2021 already in quarantine. There are currently around 5500 primary close contacts quarantining and Victoria performed 17,604 COVID-19 tests in the last 24 hours. There have been no new cases since the 09 June 2021. Two Victorian cases who travelled to Queensland via NSW between 01 and 05 June 2021 have not produced any secondary cases at this stage, with both NSW and Queensland reporting no new locally acquired cases today. As a result, Victoria currently has less than 5 community cases per day on a 5 and 14-day rolling average. Based on the contact tracing and testing that is being undertaken by the DHHS, this rolling day average is not expected to increase over 5 community cases per day.

I am confident that the Victorian DHSS are taking all the steps necessary to control and abate this outbreak; however, given the 90 cases involved, there remains a low risk that further cases may be detected outside quarantine related to the two outbreaks over the next 5-7 days and may present up to 14 days after infection. Further contact tracing and testing over the next week will be critical in providing reassurance that there is no further community spread. As there has been no community cases since 09 June 2021, I would recommend that Victorian travellers move from the Medium Risk category to the Low Risk category, under the 'Controlled Border for Western Australia Directions'. This will still require passengers to home quarantine and be tested at Day 11, but will remove the requirement for exemption categories. This amendment to the Directions should become effective on or after 18:00 on 11 June 2021. Other jurisdictions are now easing their various border restrictions with Victoria and the Australian Government Department of Health has now removed the 'hotspot' designation for greater Melbourne.

Given continuing changes in the epidemiology in other States and the situation in Western Australia, 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**

11 June 2021