

National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response

National Cabinet agreed to formulate a national plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response from its current pre vaccination settings, focussing on continued suppression of community transmission, to post vaccination settings focussed on prevention of serious illness, hospitalisation and fatality, and the public health management of other infectious diseases

Phases triggered by the achievement of vaccination thresholds expressed as a percentage of the eligible population (16+), based on the scientific modelling conducted for the COVID-19 Risk Analysis and Response Task Force

A. Current Phase: Vaccinate, Prepare and Pilot

Continue to suppress the virus for the purpose of minimising community transmission

Measures may include:

- Implement the national vaccination plan to offer every Australian an opportunity to be vaccinated with the necessary doses of the relevant vaccine as soon as possible;
- Temporarily reduce commercial inbound passenger arrivals to all major ports by 50% from current caps by 14 July to reduce the pressure on quarantine facilities, due to the increased risks of the Delta strain of the virus;
- Lock downs to be used only as a last resort;
- Commonwealth to facilitate increased commercial flights to increase international repatriations to Darwin for quarantine at the National Resilience Facility at Howard Springs;
- Commonwealth to extend additional support through the International Freight Assistance Mechanism to ensure maintenance of essential freight supply lines impacted by the reduction of commercial caps at international airports;
- Trial and pilot the introduction of alternative quarantine options, including home quarantine for returning vaccinated travellers;
- Expand commercial trials for limited entry of student and economic visa holders
- Recognise and adopt the existing digital Medicare Vaccination Certificate (automatically generated for every vaccination registered on AIR);
- Establish digital vaccination authentication at international borders;
- Prepare vaccine booster programme; and
- Undertake a further review of the national hotel quarantine network.

B. Post Vaccination Phase

Seek to minimise serious illness, hospitalisation and fatality as a result of COVID-19

Measures may include:

- Ease restrictions on vaccinated residents - such as lock downs and border controls;
- Lock downs only in extreme circumstances to prevent escalating hospitalisation and fatality;
- Restore inbound passengers caps at previous levels for unvaccinated returning travellers and larger caps for vaccinated returning travellers;
- Allow capped entry of student and economic visa holders subject to quarantine arrangements and availability;
- Introduce new reduced quarantine arrangements for vaccinated residents; and
- Prepare/implement Vaccine booster programme (depending on timing).

C. Consolidation Phase

Manage COVID-19 consistent with public health management of other infectious disease

Measures may include:

- No lock downs;
- Continue vaccine booster programme;
- Exempt vaccinated residents from all domestic restrictions;
- Abolish caps on returning vaccinated travellers;
- Allow increased capped entry of student, economic, and humanitarian visa holders;
- Lift all restrictions on outbound travel for vaccinated persons; and
- Extend travel bubble for unrestricted travel to new candidate countries (Singapore, Pacific).

D. Final Phase

Manage COVID-19 consistent with public health management of other infectious diseases

Measures may include:

- Allow uncapped inbound arrivals for all vaccinated persons, without quarantine; and
- Allow uncapped arrivals of non-vaccinated travellers subject to preflight and on arrival testing.