

## **Update re Auckland Community Cases 14 February 2021**

Secretary of Health Bob Williams has this afternoon provided an update with respect to the evolving situation around COVID-19 community cases in Auckland and any impact on the Cook Islands.

“My team and I are in regular contact with officials from the NZ Ministry of Health and Foreign Affairs in Wellington. We are encouraged that thus far no other community cases have been confirmed, but we are also realistic and know that there are still a lot of tests to be taken and results to come.”

“For this reason, rather than rush into making hasty proposals we are waiting another day during which time more information will be known about these three cases and potential chains of transmission in the community, before presenting an informed submission to the Prime Minister and Cabinet tomorrow. This proposal will cover off recommendations around the Air New Zealand flight scheduled to depart Auckland on Wednesday (NZ time).”

All fifty-five passengers who arrived on Friday’s flight were tested today and all have returned a negative result. The passengers have all been asked to self-isolate for 24 hours and to check the list of “locations of interest” for the most recent Auckland cases.

Passengers who arrived last Tuesday will undergo their day-6 test tomorrow.

“As I have said before, this situation we find ourselves in is the reality of the ‘new norm’ we are going to have to navigate. Te Marae Ora is steadily strengthening our systems and ability to rapidly respond to such situations to maintain our COVID-19 free status. The public has a role to play too; wash and dry your hands regularly, cover sneezes and coughs, practice physical distancing, tag in whenever you see the CookSafe sign.

ENDS: Enquiries to Jaewynn McKay +682 55486

Link to locations of interest for Auckland February cases:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest#auckfeb>