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(Hipkins, 2021f) [26 Jun 2021]

26 JUNE 2021

Quarantine Free Travel with Australia paused for 72 hours

HON CHRIS HIPKINS(/MINISTER/HON-CHRIS-HIPKINS)

COVID-19 Response (/portfolio/labour-2020-2023/covid-19-response)

Quarantine Free Travel from all Australian states and territories will be paused from 10.30pm (NZT) tonight until 11.59pm (NZT) on Tuesday 29 June, COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins has announced.

The decision follows updated public health advice from officials this evening.

There are now multiple cases and outbreaks in Australia in differing stages of containment and the health risk for New Zealand in response to these cases is increasing.

As a result the Government has taken the precautionary step of temporarily widening the current pause with New South Wales to include all of Australia.

This short pause will give us time to get a better understanding of the developing situation and to consider the potential implementation of a range of measures to make the bubble safer, such as the introduction of pre-departure testing for all flights from Australia to New Zealand.

The Government will continue to monitor the situation closely and the decision will be reviewed on Monday. We remain committed to Quarantine Free Travel with Australia.

The pause is necessary given the growing number of COVID-19 cases being reported across Australia, Chris Hipkins said.

"I acknowledge the frustration and inconvenience that comes with this pause, but given the high level of transmissibility of what appears to be the Delta variant, and the fact that there are now multiple community clusters, it is the right thing to do to keep COVID-19 out of New Zealand."

New Zealand travellers in Australia should follow the health instructions of the state or territory they are in.

Anyone who was in Australia from June 21 onwards should monitor their health, and be aware that the number of locations of interest are increasing and they should be checking these regularly.

It is also important that people contact Healthline should they develop any symptoms.

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