



Proactive Release

The following document has been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), on behalf of the Minister for COVID-19 Response, Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall:

COVID-19 Briefings - August 2022

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: 01082022 Assurance of System readiness Work Underway to Respond to a Variant of Concern

Title of paper: 03082022 Insights from Recommendations across COVID-19 Response System Reviews

Title of paper: 05082022 Review of New Zealand's COVID-19 Protection Framework and self-isolation settings - 5 August

Title of paper: 05082022 Public awareness campaign to support people who are unable to wear masks

Title of paper: 08082022 Meeting with Strategic COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Group 10 August 2022

Title of paper: 12082022 Preparation for Release of Haumaruru Briefing

Title of paper: 25082022 Meeting with Prof. Michael Plank

Title of paper: 26082022 All of Government COVID-19 System Readiness Exercise

Title of paper: 30082022 COVID-19 Community Panel, Chair's Report

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- Section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals;
- Section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials;
- Section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion; and
- Section 9(2)(h), to maintain legal professional privilege.

Progress on readiness activities

System readiness exercise

16. DPMC is preparing to run a system readiness exercise in the week 8-12 August 2022.
17. Participants in the exercise will include representatives from National Response Group (NRG) members and representatives of new health entities.
18. The exercise will be strategy neutral and will determine if the system is ready to respond to Scenario Four - High clinical severity, High immune escape (the worst case) of the Variants of Concern plan.
19. The exercise will test:
 - the current response system architecture as set out in the National Management Plan;
 - that there is a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities across the system to respond to Scenario Four of the Variants of Concern plan (high clinical severity, high immune escape), including in respect of newly established health agencies' functions.
20. Following the exercise, DPMC will provide you and the Prime Minister with a report outlining areas of success and any identified barriers (and mitigations for these) by the [redacted] CAB-22-MIN-0223 refers].

The National Management Plan and Catalogue of Measures

21. The National Management Plan (NMP) sets out high-level guidance for the all-of-government COVID-19 response system. As described above, the NMP will guide the readiness exercise, and will be updated to capture the changes to the response or roles and responsibilities that occur as a result of the transition.
22. DPMC has been updating the NMP iteratively as our response adapts to variants of concern. The most recent iteration (May 2022) included a refresh of the tools and measures (including latent measures, such as international border closures) that have been used to respond to COVID-19.
23. As part of that update, a Catalogue of Measures has been developed as a companion resource that contains the operational details for each of the measures. This catalogue will be updated to reflect the baseline and response measures in line with the new post-winter strategy [CAB-22-MIN-0223 refers].
24. DPMC will be seeking Chief Executives' confirmation that they are aware of the baseline and reserve measures that they are responsible for, and that their agency is ready and able to activate that measure should it be required for a response to a variant of concern.

Public Sector Chief Executives to review and report on readiness

25. Cabinet also agreed that Public Sector Chief Executives keep their variant readiness plans under review and fit-for-purpose across variant scenarios and provide to COVID-