



## BRIEFING

### End to end process for urgent managed return flights from NSW

<b>Date:</b>	11 July 2021 (14:30)	<b>Priority:</b>	Urgent
<b>Security classification:</b>		<b>Tracking number:</b>	NSW-003

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Chris Hipkins <b>Minister for COVID-19 Response</b>	<b>Note</b> the ongoing operationalisation of managed return flights.  <b>Agree</b> to share this information with Border Ministers and Cabinet colleagues.	11 July 2021

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Christine Stevenson	Chair of the Border Executive Board		
Kara Isaac	General Manager, MIQ Policy	Privacy of natural persons	✓
Privacy of natural persons	Principal Policy Advisor		

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
The Ministry of Transport, MBIE Immigration, the NZ Customs Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Health, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Crown Law.

Minister's office to complete:

- |                                               |                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved             | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noted                | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seen                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn           |

Comments

## Background

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- P.
1. On Friday 9 July, Ministers announced that managed return flights for people in New South Wales (NSW) would begin from Tuesday 13 July.
  2. MBIE advised you that 1000 rooms will be available for these people, leveraging the 500 rooms set aside for Quarantine-Free Travel (QFT), cohorting underutilisation, and contingency capacity [MBIE briefing NSW-001 dated 9 July refers]. MBIE also sought your agreement to create a Ministerial exemption from the requirement for these people to have a confirmed MIQ allocation under the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Air Border) Order (No 2) 2020. That exemption is necessary to expedite the return of affected travellers.
  3. Ministers also asked for advice on whether access to managed return flights can be arranged for those with an urgent or special need to return. MBIE advised you that the managed isolation allocation system (either online or offline) is not a suitable way to prioritise access to managed return flights. You agreed to the process for withholding a small quota (20% of available flights) for travellers with urgent or exceptional need to return to New Zealand [MBIE briefing NSW-002 dated 10 July refers].
  4. This briefing provides further details on the end to end process for travellers in NSW wishing to return on managed return flights, including:
    - a. Information about how potential travellers will access information about managed return flights, and the process for managing access to the quota for those with an urgent or special need.
    - b. Screening of passengers before they board flights
    - c. An update on the scheduling and logistics of flights from NSW to New Zealand.
    - d. How airports (Auckland and Christchurch) will manage
    - e. Impact on MIQ facilities and workforce.
  5. There are a number of potential impacts and consequences associated with the proposed managed return; these are described in the second half of this briefing.

## **The operationalisation of managed return flights is well underway, although a number of details are still to be resolved.**

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### **People seeking information about managed return flights from NSW will have access to a number of channels.**

6. As for previous responses to outbreaks in Australia since QFT began, the Unite Against COVID (UAC) website will be the New Zealand Government's central source of information about the managed return process. This will be amplified through messaging to be sent out via MFAT's Safe Travel registration system.
7. As the UAC portal does not have a call centre function, MIQ's call centre and MFAT's call centre, which is being stood up to assist travellers with urgent travel applications, will receive calls from affected travellers with queries about the wider returns process. Call centre staff will refer callers back to the information on the UAC website wherever possible.
8. Officials are also working closely with airlines to ensure that they have relevant information to share with interested travellers. People will be encouraged to use government channels in the first instance.