



Australian Government

Department of Health

Chief Medical Officer

20 February 2020

Dear tourism industry operators,

Following previous correspondence last week, I am writing to provide further advice regarding the coronavirus disease outbreak (COVID-19).

There are signs the spread of the virus in Chinese provinces outside Hubei province is slowing. However, cases and mortality rates continue to rise in Hubei province, which remains locked down by Chinese authorities.

There appears to be a slower growth of cases in other provinces of mainland China. However, we have seen cases occur in Hong Kong and there is some growth in exported cases to a number of countries including Thailand, Singapore and Japan.

We have also seen the infection spread significantly through the Diamond Princess cruise ship.

Given this, and the success of the travel restrictions that have helped Australia to contain the virus, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee has recommended the current travel restrictions and advisories remain in place, to be reviewed in another week.

The Australian Government has accepted these recommendations.

My colleagues and I recognise the significant impact on the tourism industry of our recent decisions to protect the Australian population from this virus.

We have not made these recommendations lightly and are very focused on ensuring our advice is proportionate.

Reducing entry into Australia by people who have been in mainland China has contributed to the effective management of self-isolation of recent arrivals.

To summarise, the following arrangements remain in place:

- Australia will continue to deny entry to anyone who has left or transited through mainland China in the last 14 days, with the exception of Australian citizens, permanent residents, and immediate family members of Australian

citizens and permanent residents including spouses, minor dependants and legal guardians.

- Australian citizens who have left or transited through mainland China in the last 14 days must isolate themselves for 14 days from the date of leaving mainland China.
- People who have had close contact with a proven cases of novel coronavirus must isolate themselves for 14 days from the date of last contact.

I would note again that the risk of transmission of the virus from people who are well is very low as most people are likely to only be infectious when they develop symptoms. It is as a precautionary measure that we are isolating people who remain well.

For those hotels which have guests that require isolation, we have factsheets for hotel management and staff and hotel guests with the latest health advice and details on what actions to take. These are available to download and distribute from health.gov.au.

We hope that these fact sheets will reassure staff and guests that the risks imposed by self-isolation of well people are very low.

If you or your staff do become aware of someone who should be in isolation and is not following health advice or have other public health concerns, contact your state or territory public health authority on the below numbers:

- ACT call 02 5124 9213 during business hours or (02) 9962 4155 after hours
- NSW call 1300 066 055
- NT call 08 8922 8044
- Qld call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- SA call 1300 232 272
- Tas call 1800 671 738
- Vic call 1300 651 160
- WA call 08 9328 0553

We will continue to provide regular updates at www.health.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Professor Brendan Murphy
Chief Medical Officer

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