

In the last four weeks, there have been 63 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 6. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 24 January to 20 February 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	17 (27%)
Lebanon	5 (13%)
United Arab Emirates	4 (6%)
France	3 (5%)
India	3 (5%)
United Kingdom	3 (5%)
Canada	2 (3%)
Germany	2 (3%)
Spain	2 (3%)
Other	22 (34%)
Total	63 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States of America accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (17, 27%), followed by travellers returning from Lebanon (5, 13%), and the United Arab Emirates (4, 6%).

In the last four weeks, there have been 72 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 6. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the four weeks ending 6 February to 27 February 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	14 (19%)
Lebanon	8 (11%)
Canada	5 (7%)
India	5 (7%)
United Kingdom	4 (6%)
Egypt	3 (4%)
France	3 (4%)
Pakistan	3 (4%)
United Arab Emirates	4 (6%)
Other	24 (33%)
Total	72 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States of America accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (14, 19%), followed by travellers returning from Lebanon (8, 11%), and Canada (5, 7%).

In the last four weeks, there have been 145 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 6. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks (15 November–12 December)

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
United States	50 (35%)
United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man	16 (11%)
India	15 (10%)
Afghanistan	5 (4%)
Canada	5 (4%)
Indonesia	5 (4%)
Bangladesh	4 (3%)
Kenya	3 (2%)
Pakistan	3 (2%)
Lebanon	2 (2%)
Other	37 (26%)
Total	145 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas-acquired cases (50, 35%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (16, 11%), and India (15, 10%).

In the last four weeks, there have been 165 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 11. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 13 December to 9 January 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	60 (36%)
United Kingdom	16 (10%)
Lebanon	11 (7%)
India	10 (6%)
South Africa	10 (6%)
Pakistan	7 (4%)
United Arab Emirates	6 (4%)
Egypt	5 (3%)
Canada	3 (2%)
Netherlands	3 (2%)
Other	34 (21%)
Total	165 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (60, 36%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (16, 10%), and Lebanon (11, 6%).

COVID-19 Variants of Concern (VoC) in returned travellers

Mutations of the COVID-19 virus are the basis for new genetic variants and the changing prevalence of variant viruses over time. New variants of COVID-19 may be of concern if they demonstrate to be more infectious, spreading more quickly from person to person. In the last few weeks NSW Health Pathology has identified two Variants of Concern in returned travellers in hotel quarantine, B.1.1.7 and B.1.351. Both strains are defined by multiple mutations including a shared mutation in the spike protein that binds to the human ACE2 receptor. Emerging evidence suggests that both variants of COVID-19 are more infectious than the dominant strains currently circulating in NSW.

NSW Health has strict protocols in place for managing the health of returned travellers and staff which have been further strengthened to address the additional risk associated with the new variants. Since 30 November, 16 returned travellers have tested positive with the two Variants of Concern.

Table 12. Overseas travellers that have tested positive for Variants of Concern, 30 November 2020 to 9 January 2021

	Week ending (report date)						Total
	5-Dec	12-Dec	19-Dec	26-Dec	2-Jan	9-Jan	
Overseas acquired cases	39	34	36	49	44	36	238
Cases with VoC	1	1	0	4	3	7	16
B.1.1.7	1	1	0	4	3	3	12
B.1.351	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
% of overseas cases with VoC	3%	3%	0%	8%	7%	19%	7%

Interpretation: In the week ending 9 January, 19% of return travellers in hotel quarantine have been identified as having COVID-19 Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351).

In the last four weeks, there have been 144 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 9. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 02 January to 23 January 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	50 (35%)
United Kingdom	20 (14%)
South Africa	11 (8%)
Lebanon	9 (6%)
United Arab Emirates	9 (6%)
India	7 (5%)
Egypt	4 (3%)
Bangladesh	3 (2%)
Netherlands	3 (2%)
Pakistan	3 (2%)
Sweden	3 (2%)
Other	23 (16%)
Total	144 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (50, 35%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (20, 14%), and South Africa (11, 8%).

COVID-19 Variants of Concern (VoC) in returned travellers

Mutations of the COVID-19 virus are the basis for new genetic variants and the changing prevalence of variant viruses over time. New variants of COVID-19 may be of concern if they demonstrate to be more infectious than other strains. In the last few weeks NSW Health Pathology has identified two Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351) in returned travellers in hotel quarantine. VoC B.1.1.7 originated in the United Kingdom and VoC B.1.351 has origins in South Africa. Both strains can now be found in other parts of the world and are defined by multiple mutations, including a shared mutation in the spike protein that binds to the human ACE2 receptor.

NSW Health has strict protocols in place for managing the health of returned travellers and staff which have been further strengthened to address the additional risk associated with the new variants. Since 30 November, 27 returned travellers have tested positive with the two Variants of Concern.

Table 10. Overseas travellers that have tested positive by VoC and week reported, 30 November 2020 to 23 January 2021

	Previous four weeks (week ending)				4-week Total	Total since 30 November
	23-Jan	16-Jan	9-Jan	2-Jan		
Overseas acquired cases	18	46	36	44	144	295
Cases with VoC	3	7	8	3	21	27
B.1.1.7	2	5	4	3	14	20
B.1.351	1	2	4	0	7	7
% of overseas cases with VoC	17%	15%	22%	7%	15%	9%

Interpretation: In the week ending 23 January, 17% of return travellers in hotel quarantine have been identified as having COVID-19 Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351). Since 30 November, most return travellers acquired their VoC from United Kingdom (12) followed by South Africa (7) and Lebanon (4) and one case in India, Nigeria, United Arab Emirates. One case had acquired their infection from an unknown country of origin.

In the last four weeks, there have been 146 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW.

The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 6. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks (8 November–5 December)

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
United States	43 (31%)
India	15 (10%)
United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man	14 (10%)
Canada	7 (5%)
Afghanistan	6 (4%)
Indonesia	6 (4%)
Bangladesh	4 (3%)
Poland	4 (3%)
Turkey	4 (3%)
Lebanon	3 (2%)
Other	38 (26%)
Total	146 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travelers infected in the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas-acquired infections (45, 31%), followed by travellers likely infected in India (15, 10%), and the United Kingdom (14, 10%).

In the last four weeks, there have been 118 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 7. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 09 January to 30 January 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	44 (37%)
United Kingdom	16 (14%)
United Arab Emirates	11 (9%)
Lebanon	8 (7%)
South Africa	8 (7%)
India	5 (4%)
Bangladesh	3 (3%)
Pakistan	2 (2%)
Russian Federation	2 (2%)
Sweden	2 (2%)
Other	17 (14%)
Total	118 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (44, 37%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (16, 14%), and United Arab Emirates (11, 9%).

COVID-19 Variants of Concern (VoC) in returned travellers

Mutations of the COVID-19 virus are the basis for new genetic variants and the changing prevalence of variant viruses over time. New variants of COVID-19 may be of concern if they demonstrate to be more infectious than other strains. In the last few weeks NSW Health Pathology has identified two Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351) in returned travellers in hotel quarantine. VoC B.1.1.7 originated in the United Kingdom and VoC B.1.351 has origins in South Africa. Both strains can now be found in other parts of the world and are defined by multiple mutations, including a shared mutation in the spike protein that binds to the human ACE2 receptor.

NSW Health has strict protocols in place for managing the health of returned travellers and staff which have been further strengthened to address the additional risk associated with the new variants. Since 30 November, 30 returned travellers have tested positive with the two Variants of Concern.

Table 8. Overseas travellers that have tested positive by VoC and week of COVID-19 diagnosis, 30 November 2020 to 30 January 2021

	Previous four weeks (week ending)				4-week Total	Total since 30 November
	30-Jan	23-Jan	16-Jan	9-Jan		
Overseas acquired cases	18	18	46	36	118	317
Cases with VoC	2	3	7	8	12	29
B.1.1.7	1	2	5	4	8	21
B.1.351	1	1	2	4	20	8
% of overseas cases with VoC	11%	17%	15%	22%	17%	9.1%

Interpretation: In the week ending 30 January, 11% of returned travellers in hotel quarantine have been identified as having COVID-19 Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351). Since 30 November, most returned travellers acquired their VoC from United Kingdom (12) followed by South Africa (7), Lebanon (4), United Arab Emirates (3) and one case in each India and Nigeria. One case had acquired their infection from an unknown country of origin.

Country of acquisition of COVID-19 for overseas travellers

In the last four weeks, there have been 158 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW.

The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 8. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 6 December to 26 December 2020

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	64 (41%)
United Kingdom	17 (11%)
India	11 (7%)
Lebanon	9 (6%)
Pakistan	7 (4%)
United Arab Emirates	5 (3%)
Canada	4 (3%)
Philippines	4 (3%)
Bangladesh	4 (3%)
Egypt	3 (2%)
Other	30 (219%)
Total	158 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (64, 41%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (17, 11%), and India (11, 7%).

Country of acquisition of COVID-19 for overseas travellers

In the last four weeks, there have been 163 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 10. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 6 December to 2 January 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	62 (38%)
United Kingdom	17 (10%)
India	12 (7%)
Lebanon	9 (6%)
Pakistan	7 (4%)
United Arab Emirates	6 (4%)
Egypt	5 (3%)
Philippines	4 (2%)
South Africa	4 (2%)
Netherlands	3 (2%)
Other	34 (21%)
Total	163 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (62, 38%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (17, 10%), and India (12, 7%).

Hotel quarantine

The program of screening all overseas travellers after arrival in NSW commenced on 15 May 2020. From 30 June 2020, the program was extended to include screening on both day two and day ten after arrival. Testing is also carried out on individuals that became symptomatic in addition to the two mandatory tests.

Since hotel quarantine began on 29 March, a total of 149,662 PCR tests have been conducted with 760 overseas acquired cases and 4 interstate acquired COVID-19 cases detected while in hotel quarantine. In the last four weeks, 9,558 returned travellers received a day two swab in hotel quarantine; of these 2.6% reported symptoms at the time of screening. In the same time period, 9,851 returned travellers received a day 10 swab, and 1.1% reported symptoms at the time of screening.

In the last four weeks, there have been 175 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 9. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 30 December to 16 January 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	64 (37%)
United Kingdom	20 (11%)
South Africa	12 (7%)
Lebanon	10 (6%)
India	8 (5%)
United Arab Emirates	7 (4%)
Pakistan	5 (3%)
Bangladesh	4 (2%)
Egypt	4 (2%)
Netherlands	3 (2%)
Philippines	3 (2%)
Sweden	3 (2%)
Other	32 (18%)
Total	175 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (64, 37%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (20, 11%), and South Africa (12, 7%).

COVID-19 Variants of Concern (VoC) in returned travellers

Mutations of the COVID-19 virus are the basis for new genetic variants and the changing prevalence of variant viruses over time. New variants of COVID-19 may be of concern if they demonstrate to be more infectious, spreading more quickly from person to person. In the last few weeks NSW Health Pathology has identified two Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351) in returned travellers in hotel quarantine. VoC B.1.1.7 originated in the United Kingdom and can now be found in other parts of the world while VoC B.1.351 has origins in South Africa. Both strains are defined by multiple mutations including a shared mutation in the spike protein that binds to the human ACE2 receptor. Emerging evidence suggests that both variants of COVID-19 are more infectious than the dominant strains currently circulating in NSW.

NSW Health has strict protocols in place for managing the health of returned travellers and staff which have been further strengthened to address the additional risk associated with the new variants. Since 30 November, 22 returned travellers have tested positive with the two Variants of Concern.

Table 10. Overseas travellers that have tested positive by VoC and week reported, 30 November 2020 to 16 January 2021

	Previous four weeks (week ending)				Total since 30 November
	26 Dec	2 Jan	9 Jan	16 Jan	
Overseas acquired cases	49	44	36	46	284
Cases with VoC	4	3	8	5	22
B.1.1.7	4	3	4	3	16
B.1.351	0	0	4	2	6
% of overseas cases with VoC	8%	7%	22%	11%	8%

Interpretation: In the week ending 16 January, 11% of return travellers in hotel quarantine have been identified as having COVID-19 Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351). Since 30 November, the majority of returned travellers likely acquired VoCs from the United Kingdom (10), South Africa (7), Lebanon (4) and Nigeria (1).

Country of acquisition of COVID-19 for overseas travellers

In the last four weeks there have been 135 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of origin for travellers diagnosed in NSW.

Table 7. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
United States	33 (24%)
India	15 (11%)
United Kingdom	9 (7%)
Indonesia	7 (5%)
Turkey	7 (5%)
Afghanistan	6 (4%)
Bangladesh	5 (4%)
Poland	5 (4%)
Canada	4 (3%)
France	4 (3%)
Other	40 (30%)
Total	135 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas-acquired infections (33, 24%), followed by travellers from India (15, 11%), and the United Kingdom (9, 7%).

Country of acquisition of COVID-19 for overseas travellers

In the last four weeks, there have been 140 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW.

The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 8. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 22 November to 19 December 2020

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	54 (39%)
United Kingdom	15 (11%)
India	14 (10%)
Lebanon	6 (4%)
Canada	5 (4%)
Pakistan	5 (4%)
Bangladesh	4 (3%)
Turkey	4 (3%)
United Arab Emirates	4 (3%)
Egypt	3 (2%)
Other	26 (19%)
Total	140 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (54, 39%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (15, 11%), and India (14, 10%).

In the last four weeks, there have been 89 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 6. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the four weeks ending 13 February to 6 March 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
Lebanon	16 (18%)
USA	15 (17%)
India	8 (9%)
United Kingdom	5 (6%)
Canada	4 (4%)
Pakistan	4 (4%)
United Arab Emirates	4 (4%)
Egypt	3 (3%)
France	2 (2%)
Germany	2 (2%)
Serbia	2 (2%)
Other	24 (27%)
Total	89 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from Lebanon accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (16, 18%), followed by travellers returning from the United States of America (15, 17%), and India (8, 9%).

In the last four weeks, there have been 97 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 7. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 16 January to 6 February 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	40 (41%)
United Kingdom	11 (11%)
United Arab Emirates	9 (9%)
Lebanon	6 (6%)
India	4 (4%)
Bangladesh	3 (3%)
Russian Federation	2 (2%)
South Africa	2 (2%)
Sri Lanka	2 (2%)
Other	18 (19%)
Total	97 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States of America accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (40, 41%), followed by travellers returning from the United Kingdom (11, 11%), and the United Arab Emirates (9, 9%).

COVID-19 Variants of Concern (VoC) in returned travellers

Mutations of the COVID-19 virus are the basis for new genetic variants and the changing prevalence of variant viruses over time. New variants of COVID-19 may be of concern if they demonstrate to be more infectious than other strains. In the last few weeks NSW Health Pathology has identified two Variants of Concern (B.1.1.7 and B.1.351) in returned travellers in hotel quarantine. VoC B.1.1.7 originated in the United Kingdom and VoC B.1.351 has origins in South Africa. Both strains can now be found in other parts of the world and are defined by multiple mutations, including a shared mutation in the spike protein that binds to the human ACE2 receptor.

NSW Health has strict protocols in place for managing the health of returned travellers and staff which have been further strengthened to address the additional risk associated with the new variants. Since 30 November, 30 returned travellers have tested positive with the two Variants of Concern.

Table 8. Overseas travellers that have tested positive by VoC and week of COVID-19 diagnosis, 30 November 2020 to 6 February 2021

	Previous four weeks (week ending)				30 Nov – 9 Jan	Total since 30 November
	6 Feb	30 Jan	23 Jan	16 Jan		
Overseas acquired cases	15	18	18	46	238	335
Cases with VoC	0	2	4	7	17	30
B.1.1.7	0	1	3	5	13	22
B.1.351	0	1	1	2	4	8
% of overseas cases with VoC	—	11%	22%	15%	7%	9%

Interpretation: In the week ending 6 February, no returned travellers in hotel quarantine have been identified as having a COVID-19 Variant of Concern (B.1.1.7 or B.1.351). Since 30 November 2020, travellers with a VoC likely acquired their infection in the United Kingdom (12), South Africa (7), Lebanon (4), the United Arab Emirates (4) and one case in each India and Nigeria. For one case the likely country of acquisition was unable to be determined.

Country of acquisition of COVID-19 for overseas travellers

In the last four weeks there have been 138 COVID-positive travellers who have arrived in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of origin for travellers diagnosed in NSW.

Table 8. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
United States	24 (17%)
India	17 (12%)
United Kingdom	7 (5%)
Indonesia	6 (4%)
Turkey	6 (4%)
Afghanistan	5 (4%)
Bangladesh	5 (4%)
France	5 (4%)
Germany	5 (4%)
Iran	5 (4%)
Other	53 (38%)
Total	138 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States accounted for the largest number of overseas-acquired infections (24; 17%), followed by travellers from India (17; 12%), and the United Kingdom (7; 5%).

In the last four weeks, 69 travellers have tested COVID-positive after arriving in NSW. The table below lists the top 10 countries of acquisition for these travellers.

Table 6. Top 10 countries of acquisition for overseas travellers that have tested positive in the last four weeks, 23 January to 13 February 2021

Country of acquisition of COVID-19	Number (%) of cases in the last four weeks
USA	23 (33%)
United Arab Emirates	7 (10%)
United Kingdom	6 (9%)
Lebanon	4 (6%)
France	3(4%)
India	3 (4%)
Germany	2 (3%)
Spain	2 (3%)
Sri Lanka	2 (2%)
Other	17 (25%)
Total	69 (100%)

Interpretation: In the last four weeks, travellers returning from the United States of America accounted for the largest number of overseas acquired cases (23, 33%), followed by travellers returning from United Arab Emirates (7, 10%), and the United Kingdom (6, 9%).