

4 February 2020

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For action by

5 February 2020

## ONGOING CONSULAR ADVICE TO NEW ZEALANDERS IN CHINA

**BRIEFING** General Purpose

**PURPOSE** To provide information about ongoing consular advice to New Zealanders remaining in China.

## Recommended referrals

Prime Minister

For  
concurrence by

5 February 2020

## Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE	MOBILE PHONE
Andrea Smith	Deputy-Secretary	APEC2021	s9(2)(a)	
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## Minister's Office comments

## ONGOING CONSULAR ADVICE TO NEW ZEALANDERS IN CHINA

### Key points

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- On 31 January 2020 a decision was made to charter a flight to assist New Zealanders and their families to depart from Wuhan, Hubei province. Wuhan is the centre of the novel coronavirus outbreak, and travel restrictions mean New Zealanders cannot leave the city or province via commercial means.
- A significant number of New Zealanders will still be in China following the departure of the charter flight which is due to depart Wuhan on 5 February. As at 4 February there are 187 New Zealanders registered on SafeTravel as being in Wuhan, Hubei Province and 1385 in total in mainland China.
- In view of the number of New Zealanders remaining in China, our SafeTravel website will also include some practical steps that people can take to deal with the current situation based on Ministry of Health advice.
- On SafeTravel we are advising New Zealanders to depart China at the earliest opportunity and recommend that they contact the airlines directly for information. A number of airlines have cancelled or reduced flights to and from China but commercial flights are still operating from airports other than Wuhan.
- There are, however, some difficulties around this, as many flights to New Zealand transit through other countries, notably Australia, which has imposed border restrictions on foreign nationals arriving from China. New Zealanders travelling home from China will not be able to transit via Australia unless they are dual citizens, permanent residents or they usually reside in Australia.



Andrea Smith

for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

## ONGOING CONSULAR ADVICE TO NEW ZEALANDERS IN CHINA

## Recommendations

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It is recommended that you:

- 1 **Note** that a significant number of New Zealanders will still be in China following the departure of the Air New Zealand chartered flight from Wuhan. Yes / No
- 2 **Note** that while the number of commercial flights in or out of China has been reduced or cancelled, flights to New Zealand are still available as the main Chinese airports remain open. Yes / No
- 3 **Note** that there are restrictions on transit for travellers from China in a number of destinations. In particular, New Zealanders travelling home from China will not be able to transit via Australia unless they are dual citizens, permanent residents or they usually reside in Australia. Yes / No
- 4 **Note** that practical advice on how to deal with the current situation will be posted on the SafeTravel website aimed at New Zealanders who remain in China. This advice will also be sent directly to New Zealanders registered as being in China on SafeTravel. Yes / No

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

## ONGOING CONSULAR ADVICE TO NEW ZEALANDERS IN CHINA

### Report

1. A significant number of New Zealanders will still be in China following the departure of the New Zealand assisted flight from Wuhan to Auckland on 5 February. As at 4 February there are 187 New Zealanders registered on SafeTravel as being in Wuhan, Hubei province, and 1385 overall in mainland China. There are also a large number of New Zealand permanent residents living in China.
2. In line with like-minded partners, we propose updating our advice on our SafeTravel website to include advice to New Zealanders remaining in mainland China to take appropriate health precautions. This is in addition to the existing advice to leave China at the earliest opportunity.

### Flight options from China to New Zealand

3. New Zealand government travel advice to New Zealanders is “do not travel due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus and the associated health risks and travel restrictions.” Advice to New Zealanders currently in China is to depart at the earliest opportunity via commercial means. We are aware that some airlines have suspended flights to and from China. However, there are commercial flights to New Zealand still operating from major cities. As at 4 February, Air China, China Southern and China Eastern Airlines are operating direct flights between New Zealand and China (from Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou respectively).
4. New Zealand citizens who have been in China during the relevant period are no longer able to transit through Australia, due to border restrictions. There are two exceptions to this:
  - 4.1. Dual (Australian) citizens or Australian permanent residents,
  - 4.2. New Zealand citizens usually resident in Australia on 444 Special Category Visas (the standard visa available to all New Zealanders on arrival). Evidence of residency in Australia will be required.

Other than these exceptions, New Zealand citizens will be treated as non-citizens and will not be allowed to enter Australia or transit through Australia. New Zealand has placed the same restrictions on our border in regard to Australian citizens and permanent residents. We have included this in our updated travel advice.

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### Additional advice for New Zealanders remaining in China

5. We suggest advising New Zealanders remaining in China to:

- 5.3. Depart at the earliest opportunity via commercial means. They should consult their travel agents and airlines directly, as they have access to the most up-to-date flight information.
- 5.4. Should they remain in China, they should stay home as much as possible and limit external contact with others, including avoiding large gatherings.
- 5.5. Follow New Zealand Ministry of Health guidance for prevention, signs and symptoms, and treatment of the virus.
- 5.6. Consider stocking up on food, water and other essential supplies to limit movement outside the home.
- 5.7. Register their details on the SafeTravel website.

Note that in the event the situation deteriorates further, the ability of the New Zealand Embassy and Consulates in China to provide assistance to New Zealanders within China may be limited.

6. We plan to update our SafeTravel news feature about the novel coronavirus to add the following advice. This advice will also be sent directly to New Zealanders registered as being in China on SafeTravel.

*We recommend that New Zealanders currently in China depart at the earliest opportunity via commercial means. We are aware that some airlines have reduced or suspended flights to and from China but at this stage the major airports remain open.*

*Those remaining in China should follow the New Zealand Ministry of Health guidance for prevention, signs and symptoms, and treatment of the coronavirus which can be found here [insert link].*

*Please stay home as much as possible and limit external contact with others, including avoiding large gatherings.*

*Consider stocking up on food, water and other essential supplies.*

*Note that in the event that the situation deteriorates further, the ability of the New Zealand Embassy and Consulates to provide assistance to New Zealand nationals within China may be limited.*

*New Zealanders in China should register their details on SafeTravel.*

*New Zealanders in need of urgent consular assistance should contact the Consular Assistance line on: 0800 30 10 30 (in New Zealand) or +64 99 20 20 20 (from elsewhere).*