

48-hour review of travel restrictions

Purpose

- To provide health advice on continued requirements for travel restrictions. This is the **second** such review and is current at **1400 on 6 February 2020**.

Key messages

- The Ministry recommends that current travel restrictions **remain in place** because:
 - there is no evidence of a sustained decrease in the number of confirmed cases and deaths
 - our latest intelligence shows no softening of risk assessment levels and other countries have not softened or lifted travel restrictions.
- This advice has been reviewed by the Ministry's and Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisors, Dr Ian Town and Professor Juliet Gerrard.

Further information

- As at 6 February 2020 there are 27,557 confirmed cases in mainland China (up 13,177 from 4 February) and 561 deaths in mainland China (up 256 from 4 February).
- Our latest intelligence review suggests that there is no new evidence published internationally that would lead to risk assessment levels being downgraded.
- Our case definition is broad and adopts a cautious, pre-emptive approach due to the severity of the illness. The numbers provided below therefore reflect this precautionary approach.
- There are **0** suspected and **0** confirmed cases in New Zealand. Since becoming a notifiable disease on 31 January 2020 the national notifiable disease database (EpiSurv) has:
 - recorded **9** cases that have returned a negative result
 - closed **20** as 'not a case' (e.g. patient diagnosed with non-nCoV disease or recovered from illness)
 - **16** cases currently under investigation. None of these appear to have a high likelihood of being confirmed as a case.
- The international picture has not significantly shifted from when the travel restrictions were announced. The risk remains high and there is no evidence of a sustained decrease in the number of reported cases in mainland China and internationally; and there is no suggestion that the overall risk profile is reducing.

- Our assessment against the high-level review criteria is:

#	High-level criteria	Ministry comment
1	Evolving epidemiology of the outbreak	<p>There is no evidence of sustained decrease in the number of confirmed cases or the number of deaths worldwide. In recent days there has been a large spike in the number of confirmed deaths in mainland China and a second death outside China.</p> <p>More positively, the number of recovered cases is steadily increasing.</p>
2	Emerging evidence about transmissibility	<p>No new evidence has emerged that conclusively shows a reduction in the risk of transmission.</p> <p>s 9(2)(g)(i)</p>
3	Emerging evidence about severity of illness	<p>No new evidence has emerged that conclusively shows a reduction in the severity of illness. The latest WHO severity rate is 13.2% and mortality rates remain largely static at ~2%.</p>
4	WHO advice on travel restrictions	<p>WHO continues to advise that no travel restrictions are required.</p>
5	Public health measures in other countries	<p>Multiple countries continue to enforce travel restrictions and international risk assessments remain high.</p> <p>Australia has 14 confirmed cases and a further 165 under investigation (this includes cases that meet the case definition AND people tested by clinicians who may not meet the case definition).</p>