

Dear Australian government pandemic response inquiry team

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concerns and critiques regarding the Australian federal government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. While I commend the swift action taken in shutting the borders to China, it is imperative to address the apparent shortcomings in dealing with the ongoing crisis, particularly in terms of long-term preparedness for the impacts of Covid-19, the lack of centralized lockdown criteria, and the overall responsibility bar.

Firstly, the absence of proactive measures and preparedness for long Covid is a pressing issue that demands urgent attention. The long-term health implications of Covid-19, also known as long Covid, have become increasingly evident, affecting a significant portion of the population. The government's failure to address this aspect of the pandemic, both in terms of medical research and healthcare infrastructure, is a serious lapse in its duty to safeguard the well-being of its citizens. A comprehensive strategy for the identification, treatment, and support for individuals dealing with long Covid is crucial for mitigating the long-lasting impacts on public health.

Furthermore, the lack of centralized criteria for lockdowns across different states and territories has led to confusion and inconsistencies in managing the pandemic. While a degree of flexibility is necessary to cater to diverse local conditions, a standardized and coordinated approach is essential to ensure effective containment and response efforts. The absence of a unified strategy has resulted in varying levels of restrictions and public health measures, causing confusion among the populace and hindering a cohesive national response.

However, it is only fair to acknowledge the commendable decision to swiftly close the borders to China early in the pandemic. This decisive action played a crucial role in preventing the rapid spread of the virus and undoubtedly contributed to Australia's initial success in controlling the number of cases. It demonstrates the government's ability to act decisively when faced with a significant threat. Recognizing and building upon such successes is essential for future crisis management.

The creation of the JobKeeper payments was a commendable and timely intervention that provided immediate relief to individuals and businesses grappling with the economic fallout of the pandemic. The speed with which this support mechanism was implemented demonstrated the government's ability to act decisively in the face of an unprecedented crisis. This financial assistance undoubtedly played a vital role in preventing widespread economic hardship, preserving jobs, and bolstering the overall resilience of the Australian workforce.

It is worth acknowledging the challenge of navigating uncharted territory during a rapidly evolving crisis. The government's ability to swiftly implement the JobKeeper payments is a testament to its commitment to supporting citizens during times of need. However, in the spirit of constructive feedback, it is essential to address certain aspects that could enhance the effectiveness of such initiatives.

While the JobKeeper payments provided immediate relief, there may be room for improvement, particularly in the inclusion of clawback provisions. Implementing mechanisms that allow for the recovery of funds from businesses that may have inadvertently received more than necessary could ensure a fair and equitable distribution of resources. This proactive approach would not only demonstrate fiscal responsibility but also enhance public confidence in the government's management of economic relief measures.

In conclusion, while acknowledging the government's prompt action in closing the borders to China, it is crucial to address the aforementioned concerns regarding the handling of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The absence of a proactive approach to long Covid, the lack of centralized lockdown criteria, and other identified shortcomings must be urgently rectified to ensure a more effective and cohesive response to the crisis. I trust that the government will consider these critiques seriously and take decisive actions to safeguard the well-being of the Australian population.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.