

Precautionary measures taken re today's arrivals 13 November 2020

Earlier today, as a result of an email sent to all passengers regarding their movements in the Auckland CBD, two arriving passengers were identified as having visited one of the venues that the recently identified COVID-19 case in Auckland had visited. This discovery was made just before the flight had departed Auckland.

Discussion between Health Secretary Dr Aumea Herman and her NZ Ministry of Health counterparts suggested that while the “public health risk” was at the lower end, as a precautionary measure, both these passengers should be placed in Supervised Quarantine (SQ) for up to 14 days. A third passenger has also been placed in SQ, because he was seated next to one of the identified casual contacts.

“Due to the unfolding situation in Auckland we are taking precautionary measures, to mitigate the public health risk to the people of the Cook Islands” said Dr Herman.

As per current Cook Islands entry requirements, all passengers arriving on this afternoon's flight had earlier produced negative COVID test results prior to departure from Auckland. Immediately after this afternoon's flight landed, a Te Marae Ora doctor boarded the plane and explained the situation in a briefing to all passengers. Passengers were advised that as a precautionary measure, all arriving passengers would receive a swab to test for COVID-19. Results will be available later this evening. Follow up testing will also be conducted by Te Marae Ora over the next week or so. Meanwhile passengers have been advised to continue practising good public health measures and to wear face masks when out in public.

As an added precautionary measure, earlier today, Te Marae Ora began contacting all of the 70 passengers who arrived in Rarotonga on the last two quarantine-free flights, to test for COVID-19.

Te Marae Ora strongly encourages everyone to maintain physical distancing; wash hands regularly; cough or sneeze into your elbow, stay home if unwell and call the Healthline, wear a face mask if unwell with respiratory symptoms, and when in crowded or enclosed spaces, and keep track of where you've been. To that end everyone should if they haven't already, sign up with CookSafe and remember to check in at places that display the CookSafe scanner.

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