



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
HON MARK BROWN
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

MEDIA RELEASE
Cook Islands Cabinet Decision re Friday's Flight

27 JANUARY 2021

The Cook Islands Cabinet has just met for a second time in as many days. As with the meeting on Monday evening, this meeting focused on the ramifications of the widely reported COVID-19 cases on Auckland's North Shore and Northland, New Zealand.

Cabinet noted New Zealand's Director General of Health Dr Ashley Bloomfield's comment that there was still no evidence of community transmission. And that New Zealand will have a "very good picture tomorrow" as to whether there has been community transmission."

Cabinet further noted that the two additional cases appear to have been infected during their managed isolation stay at the Pullman Hotel in central Auckland.

Cabinet has decided to allow the passengers booked on the next flight (arriving Friday afternoon) to enter the Cook Islands. However, these passengers may be required to enter supervised quarantine at the Edgewater Hotel in Arorangi for a period of up to 14 days.

Arriving passengers will also be required to undertake a COVID-19 test not long after arrival in Rarotonga and possibly again after 6 days.

Prime Minister Mark Brown noted he had confidence in the New Zealand systems and testing and contact tracing regime. With this in mind if New Zealand confirms no evidence of community transmission after all the test results are known (expected in the next 48 hours), those in supervised quarantine may be released sooner, and after an in-country negative COVID-19 test result.

Cabinet appreciates that this decision may not be one that passengers are entirely happy with, and if that is the case those passengers are encouraged to defer their travel. Air New Zealand has advised they will rebook passengers with no additional cost.

Te Marae Ora is keeping in close contact with the NZ Ministry of Health and will implement further measures as required if the situation changes.

Further updates will be provided once additional tests results in New Zealand are known.

ENDS.

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