



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

MEDIA RELEASE
Reaction to community case in Northland

24 JANUARY 2021

Cook Islands Prime Minister Mark Brown today reassured the Cook Islands people that every person who has arrived in Rarotonga since 13th January 2021 will by tomorrow morning have been tested at least twice for COVID-19.

“A short time ago the New Zealand COVID Recovery Minister Chris Hipkins confirmed the community case in Northland is the South African strain. And that the source of the infection is highly likely to be a fellow returnee during the person’s stay at the Pullman Hotel in Auckland.”

“As Minister Hipkins said, this is good news as it means they now know where the source of infection is”.

“What we also know is that the infected person upon leaving managed isolation on 13th January was incredibly vigilant with her use of the Covid contract tracing app and scanning everywhere she went. Because of this NZ authorities have been able to rapidly identify where she had been in the days leading up to her taking the test.

Whilst we are not aware that any people who arrived this last week were in Northland, here is the list of venues of interest as released by the NZ Health ministry <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest#current>

In a precautionary move Te Marae Ora today tested all 40 passengers who arrived on Friday’s flight. All test results came back negative. Further those passengers who arrived on 15th and 19th January all provided negative tests results before departing New Zealand. Those who arrived on the 15th were swabbed last week and those swabs were sent to New Zealand yesterday and the handful of passengers who arrived on Tuesday will be tested tomorrow.

Te Marae Ora is keeping in daily 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 are received.

ENDS.

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