
Media Release

Massive Surge In CookSafe Tag-In Numbers

25 August 2021

The number of people tagging in with their CookSafe QR cards around Rarotonga has surged dramatically after the re-emergence of COVID-19 in the New Zealand community and their subsequent Alert Level 4 lockdown.

A record total of 42,884 digital CookSafe tag-ins were recorded in the Cook Islands for the week of August 16-22, an increase of more than 34,000 tag-ins on the week before.

Additionally, that figure does not include many hundreds of manual tag-ins which have yet to be collated, meaning the final total will be even higher still.

Previously, the highest weekly number of tag-ins recorded this year was 15,779, which occurred during the week of May 17-23 when two-way quarantine-free travel was re-established with New Zealand and the vaccination rollout began.

As national facilitator of the CookSafe contact tracing system which includes the CookSafe QR cards and CookSafe+ app contact tracing tools, the Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce is of course very pleased with this increased uptake and would like to thank everyone in the Cook Islands who has made a habit of tagging in with their CookSafe card everywhere they go.

The Chamber's CookSafe Contact Tracing Supervisor Peka Fisher would also like to offer a special measure of gratitude to those businesses and other organisations who have made a point of actively encouraging their customers to tag in and in some cases have made tagging in mandatory before entry to their premises is granted.

"The effort made by some of our local businesses to ensure as many people as possible tag in with their CookSafe cards or via our Manual Tag In sheets is great to see and makes a huge difference to the work our CookSafe team does in providing Te Marae Ora with as much information as possible," says Fisher.

"The more people who are actively using their CookSafe cards, as well as the CookSafe+ app, the easier it will be for Te Marae Ora to quickly and securely contact trace should the need arise."

While happy with the latest CookSafe figures, Fisher says these are the sort of tag-in numbers the Cook Islands community should be clocking up anyway, regardless of what is happening in New Zealand.

"Judging by these latest figures, we can see that when people are motivated, the adjustment to tag in before entering a public place or event is not hard.

"While we understand that it is indeed an adjustment, it's one that by now we should all understand is necessary considering the global pandemic. We need to work together to ensure we are all doing our part, especially where contact tracing is concerned, to ensure we are giving Te Marae Ora the best chance of success when containing the spread of COVID-19."

If you have yet to sign up for a CookSafe QR card, or need to replace one you've lost, new cards are free and easily available from the Chamber of Commerce office on Tutakimoa Road in Avarua, or else you can pop in to Prime Foods, the Vodafone main office, CITC Supermarket, Oasis or the Cook Islands Tourism office.

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Media enquiries:

Shaun Bamber

Chamber of Commerce Communications Officer

Email: comms@commerce.co.ck

Phone: +682 54125