

Kay Swanston

From: The Premier <The.Premier@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 2 March 2021 3:49 PM
To: DCLO Admin; Denise Spinks; Jim Murphy; Mathew Cooper; Greg Fowler
Cc: 'wendy.bourne@ministerial.qld.gov.au'; Glenys Jenkin; Sarah Lakes; Nadia Cecil; Tina Culp; 'premcorro@ministerial.qld.gov.au'; Keirily Neal; Madison Cann; Courtney Jarrett; Kristopher Anderson; Alice Hannay; External - Julia Sheedy; Jon Persley; Jessica Collins; Andrew Burke; Alexandra Jensen; Danielle McAllister; Mark Cridland; Rob Lloyd-Jones; Joe Begley; Rebecca McGarrity; Michelle Parker; Karen Menigoz
Subject: PRIORITY MAIL - TF/21/4010 - Hon Scott Morrison, MP - responding to Premier correspondence for vaccination roll out in aged care facilities, noting ongoing Commonwealth, state, territory health department communication is underway
Attachments: MC21-020065 - PM to Palaszczuk - Vaccine Rollout.pdf; PRIORITYHon Scott Morrison, MP - respond~oing Commonwealth, state, territory health department communication is underway.EML

Good afternoon

Please find attached correspondence from Hon Scott Morrison, MP - responding to Premier correspondence for vaccination roll out in aged care facilities, noting ongoing Commonwealth, state, territory health department communication is underway

Due to the urgency, I have allocated the attached direct to Social Policy to draft an urgent response, due to PO 9 March 2021.

This has been added to the ECU watch list.

Please note this timeframe is subject to change.

Kind regards

Ange



Queensland
Government

Angela Nutt

Senior Correspondence Officer
Executive Correspondence Unit
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

P 07 3003 9178 M [REDACTED]
1 William Street, Level 29, Brisbane QLD 4000
PO Box 15185, City East, QLD 4002

From: DLO [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 2 March 2021 3:03 PM
To: The Premier <The.Premier@premiers.qld.gov.au>

Cc: DLO <[redacted]>

Subject: SIGNED: MC21-020065 - PM to Palaszczuk - Vaccine Rollout [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon,

Please see attached a letter from the Prime Minister.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Senior Departmental Liaison Officer

Office of the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP
MG 8, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

e. [redacted]

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Released Under FOI - DPC



PRIME MINISTER

Reference: MC21-020065

2 MAR 2021

The Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP
Premier of Queensland
PO Box 15185
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Premier

Thank you for your letter dated 24 February 2021 regarding vaccination roll out in aged care facilities.

The safety and welfare of all patients receiving COVID-19 vaccines is the highest priority for the Australian Government. The COVID-19 vaccination program has been built around robust safeguards to protect patient safety, ensuring that where issues occur they are rapidly identified and resolved.

The Australian Government is committed to monitoring the implementation of the program to ensure its integrity, particularly in its early critical stages. To monitor the implementation of the rollout, the Commonwealth Department of Health has established the Vaccine Operations Centre (VOC), to closely monitor the vaccine rollout and to identify and resolve issues as soon as they arise.

In relation to the event at the Holy Spirit Residential aged care facility in Carseldine, the Commonwealth Department of Health has instigated a comprehensive investigation. Australia's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Professor Michael Kidd, is leading the investigation and will make any recommendations necessary to ensure the risk of incidents of this kind are further mitigated.

Given the nature of this event, I understand the medical officer has also been referred to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. The VOC is working with the impacted provider, Health Care Australia, to implement further safeguards to ensure this cannot occur again.

Professor Kidd has advised me that both patients are doing well with no side effects. The fact that we had robust systems in place ensured the human error was picked up quickly and further vaccinations were stopped at the facility.

As you will be aware from our discussions at National Cabinet, the Commonwealth is working in close partnership with states and territories during the rollout to identify any critical issues, and resolve them if and when they occur. Detailed roll out plans were discussed and agreed at National Cabinet. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is conducting daily meetings with Deputy Secretaries across all first ministers' departments, to oversee the early stages of the rollout and ensure emerging issues are urgently addressed.

There is also constant communication between Commonwealth, state and territory health departments. The Head of the COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce is holding twice weekly meetings with her counterparts in the states and territories, and the VOC is meeting daily with state and territory health departments to identify and resolve key operational issues if and when they occur to ensure the integrity of the program is maintained.

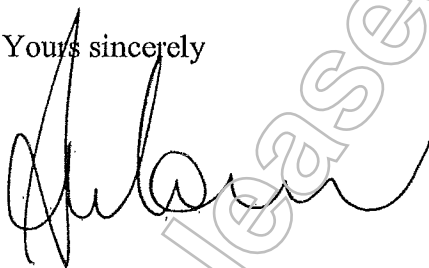
Australia's COVID-19 vaccination program is the largest logistical undertaking in Australia's recent history, and underscores the importance of reassuring the public we can safely and reliably deliver the program. To reinforce this, I have asked Minister Hunt to ensure key operational information is shared expeditiously with states and territories, particularly in relation to aged care data relevant to the vaccine rollout.

Mutual information exchange between the states and territories and the Commonwealth is essential for effective joint implementation of the vaccine rollout. I therefore ask that you take all necessary steps to ensure your vaccine team is uploading all missing information to the Australian Immunisation Register as quickly as possible. This will allow all governments to have an informed and up to the minute view of the status of the vaccine rollout.

Thank you for raising these important issues with me, and your shared commitment to the safe and reliable delivery of Australia's COVID-19 vaccination program. I also refer to our joint commitment at National Cabinet, public leadership in vaccine messaging is important to address public confidence in the vaccine roll out and mitigate vaccine hesitancy.

I look forward to discussing this in more detail at our next National Cabinet meeting on 5 March 2021. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will continue to conduct daily meetings with Deputy Secretaries across all first ministers' departments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Morrison', written over a large, faint, diagonal watermark that says 'Release under the RTIP Act 2010'.

SCOTT MORRISON

Zoe Bos

From: DCLO Admin <dcladmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 9 March 2021 3:00 PM
To: Premcorro
Cc: DCLO Admin
Subject: **PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/4010 - Hon Scott Morrison, MP - responding to Premier letter about vaccination roll out in aged care facilities, noting ongoing Commonwealth, state, territory health department communication is underway - GREG FOWLER

Attachments: ELECTRONIC LETTERHEAD Premier response to relation to vaccine rollout in aged care facilities and reporting requirements.DOCX; PRIORITY Hon Scott Morrison, MP - responding to Premier letter about vaccination roll out in aged care facilities, noting ongoing Commonwealth, state, territory health department communication is underway.EML; SIGNED VERSION OF DOC2135090 - Message for Prime Minister.PDF

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Good afternoon

Please find attached draft response and priority mail notification for review and approval to apply the PREMIER'S electronic signature.

This has been approved by DG Dave Stewart today – Tuesday, 9 March 2021.

Kind regards
Glenys



Queensland
Government

Glenys Jenkin

Manager, Departmental and Customer Liaison Office
Office of the Director-General
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

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PO Box 15185, City East, QLD 4002

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Premier of Queensland
Minister for Trade

For reply please quote: *SocPol/GO – TF/21/4010 – DOC/21/40972*
Your reference: MC21-020065

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PO Box 15185 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
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Email ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
PO Box 6022
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 2 March 2021 regarding vaccination rollout by the Federal Government in aged care facilities and reporting requirements for the vaccination program.

I am encouraged by the steps being taken to investigate the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination incident at the Holy Spirit Carseldine residential aged care facility. I understand from your letter that Australia's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Professor Michael Kidd, is leading the investigation and will make any necessary recommendations to ensure the risk of incidents of this kind are further mitigated. In the spirit of collaboration and ensuring we put the health and safety of all Australians first during the COVID-19 vaccination program, I ask that these recommendations be shared through National Cabinet as soon as possible.

The Director-General of Queensland Health, Dr John Wakefield, is currently giving consideration to Healthcare Australia's (HCA) declared COVID-19 vaccine provider status in Queensland under the *Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996* as a result of this incident and will advise HCA and the Federal Government on the outcome as soon as possible.

My Government welcomes the advice received to date and further sharing of operational information related to the Federal Government's vaccination rollout, including in aged care and disability facilities throughout Queensland. My Government is committed to sharing data on the vaccination program rollout in Queensland with the Federal Government. I am advised that Queensland Health continues to upload vaccination data, as required by Federal Government law, to the Australian Immunisation Register (the AIR) on a daily basis. Acknowledging the issue you have raised, I am advised that Queensland Health will seek further advice from Services Australia to explore this matter.

In addition to our commitments to report data into the AIR and fulfill other clinical information requirements, the Queensland Government will provide data daily to the Federal Government on important aspects such as previous 24 hours vaccination totals for Queensland Health-operated sites and a running total of vaccinations provided by Queensland Health since the commencement of the program.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your Government on this important and challenging undertaking.

Again, thank you for writing to me on this important matter.

Yours sincerely

**ANNASTACIA PALASZCZUK MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND
MINISTER FOR TRADE**

Released under RTI - DPC



Premier of Queensland
Minister for Trade

For reply please quote: *ODG/JS – TF/21/3647 – DOC/21/35090*

24 FEB 2021

1 William Street Brisbane
PO Box 15185 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7000
Email ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister *Scott*

Queensland authorities were advised overnight that two elderly residents of a nursing home at Carseldine had been given an overdose of the COVID-19 vaccine yesterday morning, 23 February 2021.

I have been advised that the couple were overdosed by a doctor employed by the Commonwealth Government's private contractor. It was only due to the intervention of a nurse on duty that prevented further overdoses being administered.

Queenslanders, and in fact, all Australians need full confidence in the integrity of the vaccination program being rolled out. Our residential aged care patients and their families need reassurance the vaccination program is reliable and safely administered. This has likely been compromised by the incident overnight.

I therefore request an urgent convening of National Cabinet to address this expeditiously.

Whilst I understand the doctor has been stood down and an investigation is underway, we need to act swiftly to ensure this does not happen again, including the Commonwealth implementing further safeguards if necessary.

I would like reassurances from the Commonwealth Government around the integrity of the rollout of vaccination program – including a detailed forward program that includes dates, locations and vaccine doses being administered.

Additionally, its vitally important States have full confidence in the private contractors being employed by the Commonwealth Government to administer the vaccinations, including sufficient training.

I have also asked my Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, the Honourable Yvette D'Ath to write to Minister Hunt on these matters.

I look forward to your reply as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



**ANNASTACIA PALASZCZUK MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND
MINISTER FOR TRADE**

Released under RTI - DPC

Zoe Bos

From: Greg Fowler
Sent: Thursday, 18 February 2021 1:35 PM
To: Premcorro; Shane Doherty
Subject: FW: **URGENT PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/2377 - Scott Morrison MP - advising of the unsuitability of proposed regional quarantine facilities - GREG FOWLER

Attachments: ELECTRONIC LETTERHEAD - Letter - Premier to PM - further on regional quarantine.DOCX; URGENT LETTER - Scott Morrison MP - advising of the unsuitability of proposed regional quarantine facilities.EML

OK to progress to Denise and Jim for the Premier's consideration.
Along with vaccine roll out, long term regional quarantine facilities are the key pandemic matter where the Federal government needs to meet its constitutional responsibilities.
Greg

From: Premcorro <premcorro@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 18 February 2021 1:00 PM
To: Greg Fowler <Greg.Fowler@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Subject: FW: **URGENT PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/2377 - Scott Morrison MP - advising of the unsuitability of proposed regional quarantine facilities - GREG FOWLER

Hi Greg

Do you approve to progress to the Premier?

Angela

From: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 18 February 2021 12:57 PM
To: Premcorro <premcorro@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Cc: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>; Mathew Cooper <Mathew.Cooper@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Subject: **URGENT PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/2377 - Scott Morrison MP - advising of the unsuitability of proposed regional quarantine facilities - GREG FOWLER

Good afternoon

Please find attached draft response and incoming correspondence for your review and approval to apply the PREMIER'S electronic signature.

This has been approved by DG Dave Stewart today, 18 February 2021.

Kind regards



Queensland
Government

Anita Trim

Customer Liaison Officer
Departmental and Customer Liaison Office
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

P 07 3003 9225 M [REDACTED]
1 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000
PO Box 15185, City East, QLD 4002

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Premier of Queensland
Minister for Trade

For reply please quote: *SocPol/SL – TF/21/2377 – DOC/21/26785*
Your reference: *MC21-007148*

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Email ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
PO Box 6022
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 4 February 2021 regarding a possible regional coronavirus (COVID-19) quarantine facility in Queensland.

The health, wellbeing and safety of our citizens remains the primary concern of the Queensland Government during the COVID-19 global health pandemic.

Our quarantine system remains at the very heart of our defence to COVID-19. It is the effective operation of this system that allows us to stop increasingly transmissible overseas virus variants spreading viciously throughout our communities, risking the lives of our citizens, and closing our economies.

In the continued absence of Federal Government leadership on this matter, we continue to work hard to manage the quarantine system. While government-managed hotel quarantine remains a key component of our system, the Federal Government-supported facility at Howard Springs in the Northern Territory illustrates a model that should be more widely considered to supplement the existing hotel systems.

The long-term sustainability of our systems and protecting the Queensland community from the new strains of COVID-19 being imported from overseas mean that the Queensland Government must continue to pursue all viable enhancements to our systems.

I note we are not alone in this regard, with the recent announcement from the Premier of Victoria, the Honourable Daniel Andrews MP, that Victoria will also be examining alternative models of mandatory quarantine, including a purpose-built accommodation hub outside of Melbourne, to address the changing threat posed by new COVID-19 strains.

It is now very clear that Federal Government responsibility and leadership cannot continue to be avoided on this critical issue.

With regard to the specific proposals that have been discussed between our respective governments, I appreciate the advice you have provided on the limitations of the Rockhampton Airport to regularly receive large international flights.

However, as I indicated in my previous correspondence to you and our direct discussions to date on this matter, the Queensland Government continues to seek in-principle Federal Government support for several matters integral to the establishment of any regional quarantine facility.

Before any detailed proposal can be properly assessed by the Queensland Government, a threshold question is whether the Federal Government will facilitate two international flights to Wellcamp International Airport. As you note in your letter, it is not likely that international commercial carriers will divert their flights to regional destinations.

Queensland is yet to receive in-principle agreement from the Federal Government on this issue. As I have indicated previously, and as officers in my department have reiterated in discussions with their counterparts, this is a fundamental, threshold question for the Federal Government, without which no regional proposal will be viable.

Queensland also requires in-principle commitment from the Federal Government to assist in providing resources and financial assistance for any proposal. While the details regarding the nature of this commitment must be negotiated between governments, an in-principle commitment is required from the Federal Government for any proposal to be assessed for viability.

I await your direct and clear advice on these matters.

Yours sincerely

**ANNASTACIA PALASZCZUK MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND
MINISTER FOR TRADE**



PRIME MINISTER

Reference: MC21-007148

04 FEB 2021

The Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk
Premier of Queensland
Minister for Trade
1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Premier

Thank you for your letters dated 22 and 29 January 2021 regarding the Queensland Government's proposal to establish a regional non-hotel COVID-19 quarantine facility.

I appreciate the Queensland Government's presentation of options to establish a regional quarantine facility to provide a means of supporting more Australians to return home, especially in emergency or overflow situation.

The Commonwealth Government's consideration of this issue is focused on delivery of supplemental capacity to hotel-based quarantine currently delivered by the Queensland Government with Commonwealth assistance. It is also important to recognise that it would service the quarantine needs for inbound charter flights arranged by the Commonwealth or other parties, rather than regular international passenger flights. I would again note that it is highly unlikely for regular commercial international passenger flights to be able to be redirected to particular airports. The Commonwealth would also need to ensure that any option for a new regional quarantine facility would provide a greater value for money outcome than alternative options, which expand the capacity of existing quarantine locations.

Following Commonwealth consideration of your proposal to utilise Homeground Villages as a quarantine facility, I am informed that there are several concerns which indicate it will not be fit for purpose as an additional quarantine facility. I note that Rockhampton Airport has limited capability to receive multiple wide-body aircraft, such as a Boeing 777, and lacks appropriate freight handling facilities. Further, the distance from Homeground Villages to an Intensive Care Unit and the availability of a clinical workforce makes it difficult to ensure appropriate clinical support for the facility. I am also concerned about the impact a loss of access to mining camp facilities would have on the resources industry and the unnecessary risk posed by the proximity of the camps to critical industry in the region.

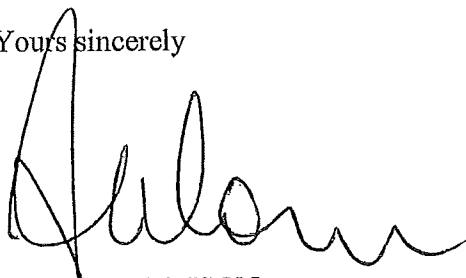
I note that the outline of the concept proposal you have provided for the Wellcamp option does not provide the detail necessary to make an assessment of the proposal at this time.

Parliament House CANBERRA ACT 2600
Telephone (02) 6277 7700
www.pm.gov.au

I have asked the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to work with relevant Commonwealth agencies to ensure that your officials have a comprehensive understanding of the information the Commonwealth would require to make such an assessment of the Wellcamp proposal. This will be provided to your officials through the established working group that has been meeting to discuss the viability of regional quarantine within Queensland.

I have provided a copy of our correspondence to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, the Hon Michael McCormack MP, the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, and the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, the Hon David Littleproud MP.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Morrison', written over a large, faint, diagonal watermark that says 'Released under RTI'.

SCOTT MORRISON

Zoe Bos

From: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 17 March 2021 11:41 AM
To: Greg Fowler
Cc: DCLO Admin; Premcorro
Subject: **NFA APPROVAL REQUIRED** TF/21/4666 - Letter to Prime Minister on PNG COVID-19 situation - GREG FOWLER
Attachments: ELECTRONIC LETTERHEAD Premier letter to PM on PNG COVID-19 situation and regional quarantine facility.DOCX

Hi Greg

Further to the below email, DPC have requested that this letter be NFA'd following the PM's announcement this morning.

The Office of the Director-General supports this NFA request.

Could you please review and advise if you are agreeable to this course of action.

Kind regards



Anita Trim

Customer Liaison Officer
Departmental and Customer Liaison Office
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

P 07 3003 9225 M [REDACTED]
1 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000
PO Box 15185, City East, QLD 4002

From: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 16 March 2021 2:30 PM
To: premcorro@ministerial.qld.gov.au
Cc: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>; 'Greg Fowler (greg.fowler@ministerial.qld.gov.au)' <greg.fowler@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Subject: **URGENT**PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/4666 - Letter to Prime Minister on PNG COVID-19 situation - GREG FOWLER
Importance: High

Good afternoon

Please find attached draft response and priority mail notification for your review and approval to apply the PREMIER'S electronic signature.

This has been approved by DG Dave Stewart today, 16 March 2021.

Kind regards



Anita Trim

Customer Liaison Officer
Departmental and Customer Liaison Office
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

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Released under RTI - DGG

Zoe Bos

From: Greg Fowler
Sent: Tuesday, 16 March 2021 2:36 PM
To: Premcorro; Jim Murphy
Cc: Mathew Cooper
Subject: Fwd: ****URGENT**PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/4666 - Letter to Prime Minister on PNG COVID-19 situation - GREG FOWLER**
Attachments: image003.png; ELECTRONIC LETTERHEAD Premier letter to PM on PNG COVID-19 situation and regional quarantine facility.DOCX

Please progress URGENTLY to Denise and Jim for the Premier's consideration.
Greg

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Date: 16 March 2021 at 2:30:32 pm AEST
To: Premcorro <premcorro@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Cc: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>, Greg Fowler <Greg.Fowler@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Subject: **URGENTPREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/4666 - Letter to Prime Minister on PNG COVID-19 situation - GREG FOWLER**

Good afternoon


Please find attached draft response and priority mail notification for your review and approval to apply the PREMIER'S electronic signature.

This has been approved by DG Dave Stewart today, 16 March 2021.

Kind regards

Anita Trim

Customer Liaison Officer
Departmental and Customer Liaison Office
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

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Premier of Queensland
Minister for Trade

For reply please quote: *IGR/JE – TF/21/4666 – DOC/21/49335*

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Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
PO Box 6022
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

I write to seek your assistance to ensure the safety of Queenslanders given the increasing risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) posed by Papua New Guinea (PNG). It is critical the Federal Government steps in to ensure the risk to Australia posed by COVID-19 cases in PNG is appropriately managed.

Queensland is heavily exposed to conditions in PNG through our proximity across the Torres Strait, the number of PNG mine workers who operate on a fly-in fly-out basis from Queensland, and the regular commercial flights from PNG into Queensland.

As you may be aware, the Queensland Government has been assisting PNG with testing and we are seeing very concerning results. I am advised that out of 500 recent tests we have seen a 50 per cent COVID-19 positive rate. Cairns Base Hospital has also seen a rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 positive cases emerging from PNG travellers in recent weeks and is at capacity to manage these cases.

The Queensland Government has quickly moved to enhance our roll-out of the vaccine in the Torres Strait, in partnership with the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, and vaccinations on Saibai Island have now commenced. These efforts must be supported by assistance from the Federal Government to support PNG's own vaccination program, especially in the western province bordering on the Torres Strait.

Furthermore, I seek your agreement to carefully manage incoming flights from PNG until conditions improve. In particular, it is important that we have no further flights from PNG into Cairns, including an ongoing continuation of the suspension of flights from Ok Tedi Mine for the foreseeable future. Similarly, I would appreciate your assurance that all PNG flights into Queensland will be kept to the bare minimum and halted altogether if possible. I understand officials from our respective departments have discussed the potential to redirect flights from PNG into Howard Springs in the Northern Territory, and I would support such a measure in the current circumstances.

Thank you for your collaboration to deal with this emerging public health issue. I know you share my commitment to keeping Queenslanders safe and I look forward to discussing these matters with you further.

Yours sincerely

**ANNASTACIA PALASZCZUK MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND
MINISTER FOR TRADE**

Released under RTI - DPC

Zoe Bos

From: Greg Fowler
Sent: Friday, 26 March 2021 11:28 AM
To: Premcorro; Jon Persley; Jim Murphy
Cc: Mathew Cooper
Subject: FW: **PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/4895 - Hon Scott Morrison MP regarding approach to managing COVID-19 positive cases and travel from Papua New Guinea - GREG FOWLER

Attachments: ELECTRONIC LETTERHEAD Premier to PM regarding approach to managing COVID-19 in PNG.DOCX; PRIORITY MAIL - TF/21/4895 - URGENT LETTER from the Hon Scott Morrison MP regarding approach to managing COVID-9 positive cases and travel from Papua New Guinea

OK to progress to Denise and Jim for the Premier's urgent consideration.
This letter may also alleviate some of the concerns of the Member for Cook.
It is likely the PM will share this corro with the Member for Leichhardt.
Greg

From: Premcorro <premcorro@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 26 March 2021 11:22 AM
To: Greg Fowler <Greg.Fowler@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Subject: FW: **PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/4895 - Hon Scott Morrison MP regarding approach to managing COVID-19 positive cases and travel from Papua New Guinea - GREG FOWLER

Hi Greg

For your action thank you.

Regards



**Queensland
Government**

Kay Swanston

Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
Office of the Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk MP
Premier of Queensland and Minister for Trade

P 07 3719 7015
1 William Street Brisbane QLD 4000
PO Box 15185 City East QLD 4002

From: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 26 March 2021 10:56 AM
To: Premcorro <premcorro@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Cc: DCLO Admin <dcloadmin@premiers.qld.gov.au>
Subject: **PREMIER LETTER FOR APPROVAL** TF/21/4895 - Hon Scott Morrison MP regarding approach to managing COVID-19 positive cases and travel from Papua New Guinea - GREG FOWLER

Good morning

Please find attached draft response and priority mail notification for your review and approval to apply the PREMIER'S electronic signature.

This has been approved by DG Dave Stewart today, 26 March 2021.

Kind regards



Queensland
Government

Anita Trim

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Premier of Queensland
Minister for Trade

For reply please quote: *SocPol/LAM-TF/21/4895-DOC/21/52190*
Your reference: *MS21-000407*

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The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 17 March 2021 regarding the Federal Government's response to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

PNG is the closest international border to Queensland. The escalating case numbers of COVID-19 in PNG have been of growing concern and I would like to thank you for your actions to date to enable Federal Government intervention.

As you are aware, due to the escalating risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the region, my Government has brought forward our COVID-19 vaccination program in the Torres Strait, with Queensland Health officials commencing vaccinations on Saibai Island on 15 March 2021, Dauan Island on 22 March 2021, and Boigu Island on 23 March 2021. These three islands are in closest proximity to PNG. The rollout of the vaccination program to the other Torres Strait Islands will continue as planned from 6 April 2021. Our aim is that the first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine will have been offered to all residents of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area of Queensland by 24 April 2021, extending to Cape York Peninsula by 14 May 2021.

I note advice from Federal Government officials that residents of PNG Treaty Villages will not be brought to Australia to receive vaccinations; rather, that the Commonwealth is seeking to provide vaccinations in the PNG Treaty Villages. This is entirely appropriate, and I understand that the Federal Government is engaging with the PNG and Western Province Governments (including the Western Province Provincial Health Authority) and Queensland Health to develop feasible options for vaccinations to occur in PNG Treaty Villages. Once these models are developed, I understand further conversations with Queensland will occur to confirm what support may be available from the Queensland Government to assist with the rollout of vaccinations to PNG Treaty Villages.

There is a significant risk that if the health services in PNG become overwhelmed with COVID-19 related health issues, PNG residents will travel to Queensland for healthcare which would put at risk local people and health service capacity. While there is currently a ban on cross-border travel for traditional purposes under the Torres Strait Treaty, it is expected people from PNG will still attempt to cross by boat into Queensland to seek health care. Strengthening border enforcement in this region will assist with mitigating these risks and I acknowledge the increased presence of the Australian Border Force to strengthen border patrols in the area.

I would like to again express my appreciation for the further measures announced by your Government to address the emerging issues in PNG in this regard. In particular, the suspension of flights between PNG and Cairns, a reduction in passenger capacity on flights between Port Moresby and Brisbane, and steps to limit small charter flights from PNG into Queensland are welcomed. Given the high rates of COVID-19 positive cases currently being detected, it will be critical that before lifting these restrictions, there are further discussions, including about appropriate options to quarantine arrivals from PNG to ensure the safety of Queenslanders.

I am of the view that alternative quarantine arrangements, such as the potential to use the Howard Springs Quarantine Facility to alleviate pressure on Queensland hospital and hotel quarantine systems, and allow Australians (including fly in fly out workers) to return home, should be considered in these discussions. It is also possible that should the spread of COVID-19 in PNG escalate, Australians currently living and working in PNG will be looking to return home immediately.

Thank you for writing to me about this important issue and your ongoing support to protect against the spread of COVID-19 through our international border with PNG.

Yours sincerely

**ANNASTACIA PALASZCZUK MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND
MINISTER FOR TRADE**

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