

COVID-19 Information Update 19

- There have been 8 cases of COVID-19 confirmed in New Zealand – all have been through travelers who have entered from overseas. There are no new cases today. Three people on a cruise ship off the coast of Akaroa are awaiting results.
- New Zealand has implemented strict border controls. For anyone entering the country from 1 am Monday morning (March 16th), every person including New Zealand citizens will need to self-isolate for two weeks from the time of their arrival except those traveling from the Pacific Islands. People leaving for the Pacific will be given a health assessment and no one with any symptoms will be allowed to go.
- The New Zealand Government has advised against any non-urgent international travel and is promoting social distancing.
- Cabinet is finalizing a business continuity package.
- The Reserve Bank lowered the official cash rate by 0.75% to an all-time low of 0.25%.
- Australia has implemented similar border conditions to New Zealand and is shutting down any large events involving over 500 people.
- There are over 300 cases in Australia with 52 new cases reported in the last 24 hours.
- Italy has over 3,590 new cases and remains in lockdown.
- Spain has also implemented a complete lockdown to try and control the over 2000 new cases they have experienced in the last 24 hours.
- Other countries across Europe are also closing borders and schools.
- The USA has 383 new cases, but many people are not being tested and the actual number may be out of control in many larger cities.
- The UK has 251 new cases and is advising elderly people over 70 to remain indoors and have food delivered due to the risk of infection.
- Hygiene requirements include:
 - Avoid large crowds and shopping malls
 - Regular hand washing for 20 seconds or longer with soap and running water taking particular attention to fingertips, thumb and index finger
 - Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are unclean
 - No handshakes, hugs or hongi
 - Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects including door handles and light switches
 - Flush toilets with the lid down to avoid microdroplets in the air
 - Keep toothbrushes in a drawer rather than on the top of the bathroom cabinet.
 - Shop online whenever possible
 - Cough or sneeze into your elbow or into tissues and then dispose in a bin, bag or toilet immediately
 - Avoid contact with those who are unwell

Please refer to the Ministry of Health Guidelines for self-isolation and health advice. <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>