




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus, Update; Coronavirus, Greater Sydney and Greater Melbourne

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.57 am): Queensland has smashed its vaccine record. With many of our recently announced community based vaccination locations up and running, yesterday we were able to administer more than 14,000 vaccinations. I want to extend my immense gratitude to all of the health workers who are working at our vaccine locations across the state, and the hardworking Queensland Health staff at the vaccine command centre. I would also like to thank all of the Queenslanders who are stepping up and getting vaccinated.

After news of a positive case in the New South Wales community broke yesterday, the Palaszczuk government has followed the advice of the Chief Health Officer and taken decisive action to protect Queensland from the COVID-19 virus. Importantly, any person who has been to an identified New South Wales exposure site and is currently in Queensland should go and get tested and then immediately return to their home or accommodation, via private transport, to quarantine. They should contact 134COVID and complete Queensland Health's online contact tracing form and await further advice.

Individuals who have been to a New South Wales exposure site and are planning to travel to Queensland should cancel their plans immediately as anyone arriving from interstate into Queensland from 1 am tomorrow who has been to an exposure site will be required to go into hotel quarantine for 14 days. I can advise that the New South Wales website is now reporting 15 close contact sites from Bondi Junction to Mascot, North Ryde, Redfern, Vaucluse and Zetland as well, and also another casual contact site, and now they have listed a public transport route as well. So we ask, please, anyone who has been in New South Wales to check the website and check it regularly for any updates.

We need to be vigilant. Since 11 June, we have had 493 flights from Sydney arrive in Queensland. There are 72 expected to arrive today. We cannot let our guard down. Given the increasing number of exposure sites being published by New South Wales Health, the Chief Health Officer has also advised that any Queenslanders who plan on travelling to Sydney should reconsider their travel.

I was pleased to hear that the Victorian government has somewhat eased its internal restrictions, particularly those in Greater Melbourne. This is great news for the people of Victoria. However, there are restrictions that remain in place for the people of Greater Melbourne. I have been advised by the Chief Health Officer that, at this stage, it would not be appropriate to roll back the current travel restrictions that we have in place for the Greater Melbourne region. The Victorian government has indicated they will consider whether to ease the remaining restrictions they have in place for Greater Melbourne in the near future. We will review the restrictions we have in place for Greater Melbourne at that time.

Today, I can announce some exciting news. The Palaszczuk government is taking an additional step to maintain the safety of Queenslanders whilst also ensuring that we can return to normal as soon as possible. Earlier this morning the Queensland government website went live with Queensland's new travel declaration pass. Any person travelling to Queensland from interstate or New Zealand, whether they are a Queensland resident or not, must complete the online Queensland travel declaration within three days of travelling to Queensland. This system will apply to any travellers arriving into Queensland after 1 am Saturday, 19 June.

The declaration system operates in a similar fashion to the Victorian system. Depending on the location that an individual is travelling from, they will be issued with either a green or amber pass permitting them to travel to Queensland. A green pass indicates the individual has not been to any COVID hotspot and can travel freely into the state. An amber pass will be issued in the circumstances where someone is travelling to Queensland and has been to an interstate exposure site and applies particular quarantine conditions on the person when they arrive. Declared hotspots will be red zones and no travel to Queensland will be permitted from those locations.

I want to make clear that this system will not be imposed upon border communities that often engage in cross-border travel in their daily lives. These cross-border communities are clearly identified on the travel declaration pass. However, where a declared COVID exposure site is identified in a cross-border LGA, there may be a requirement for those residents to complete the travel declaration for a short period of time. Of course, anyone living in those communities who has travelled to a jurisdiction that has exposure sites or is a hotspot should declare that.

The Queensland travel declaration will be extremely useful in ensuring that when interstate exposure sites are declared we can swiftly contact arrivals from that state, which includes Queensland residents, whom we know are in Queensland to provide them with the most up-to-date and accurate public health messaging. This is way the Palaszczuk government is continuing to keep Queenslanders safe.