



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
HON HENRY PUNA
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

MEDIA RELEASE

11.15pm, 13 AUGUST 2020

A special meeting of Cabinet has just concluded after a two-hour session. The special meeting was called to discuss the latest developments in New Zealand with respect to the recent increase in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and the measures the Cook Islands is taking to mitigate any chance of the virus entering our country.

The Cabinet agreed that in response to the latest situation in New Zealand especially over the course of the day that the Cook Islands will be enforcing a temporary total air border closure for inwards passenger travel to the Cook Islands, effective from 11.59pm Thursday 13 August (CKT). This will remain in place until a further review by Cabinet on Monday 17th August.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Prime Minister – Honourable Henry Puna – reiterated what he had said earlier in the day, “We are taking very serious measures in order to protect our people and to control and keep this deadly disease away from our shores”.

During the late night discussions the Cabinet was advised that a decision had also been made by Air New Zealand to not allow any passengers on the Auckland to Rarotonga sector. However passengers from Rarotonga to Auckland would be uplifted. These passengers include a number of medical referrals that require specialist treatment and care in New Zealand. These passengers would still be required to enter 14 days of supervised quarantine in Auckland.

“It is in the interests of all of us to play by the rules to keep all of us safe. The reemergence of COVID-19 in the community in New Zealand is a reminder to us that we cannot afford to be complacent. I’m asking us all to double our efforts to keep the coronavirus at bay. Step up our hygiene practices, maintain physical distances and avoid crowded places; and be kind to each other, remember we’re all in this together.”

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