

POST-CABINET PRESS CONFERENCE: THURSDAY, 26 MARCH 2020

PM: Good afternoon. To anyone who's tuning in at home, I hope day one of New Zealand's lockdown is going OK for all of you so far. I want to thank people for their commitment to staying at home and contributing to our efforts to break the chain of COVID-19. The reports that I have had to date is that everything, broadly, is running as smoothly as could be expected at this time. I do just want to pause on that for a moment. On Monday, we said we needed to shut New Zealand down, and here we are on Thursday, with our streets, essentially, empty. That is a remarkable feat, and I want to thank the nation for that.

I've been advised that supermarkets are, generally, orderly and that the panic buying we saw in recent days seems to have settled down as people observe the isolation requirements. I expect, over time, people will continue to build their confidence that those essential services will remain available to them, and that people's behaviour will change as a result. This is how it should be from now on. I do again just remind people: only shop when you need to. It is preferable that there is just one person per household, and that they follow the instructions of staff. They are keeping us safe. Remember always to act like you have COVID-19. So stay clear of others so that you don't put them in harm's way, in the same way we expect them to stay clear of you.

I do want to make special mention of all our front-line workers: our nurses, our doctors, our police officers, our ambulance officers, our firefighters. They are joined now by a new front line: our supermarket workers, our bank tellers, our cleaners. I was once a checkout operator. I can tell you that it is a thankless job at the best of times. I cannot imagine what some of those individuals will have experienced in the last few weeks, but, on behalf of all New Zealand, I say thank you to them for what you're doing for us now and what you'll continue to do for us over the weeks ahead. There will be the odd issue here and there as we move through this unprecedented time in New Zealand's history, but I want to acknowledge the start that everyone has made—the commitment that people are showing—because, ultimately, we will only be able to do this if we do it together.

Now, I wish to update you on some decisions the Government has made to particularly focus on supporting vulnerable New Zealanders through the lockdown. This morning, we have approved a \$27 million package for social sector services and community groups supporting New Zealanders to stay well and safe during our fight to break the chain of transmission of COVID-19. As has been the case in countries around the world, there have been increases in demand for services from those in need at this time. The package supports services that ensure people have access to the food and other goods they need to survive, provide a place for people to live, support disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing, and keep families safe from domestic violence and offer crisis support.

I've been advised that Auckland City Mission, for instance, who usually do around 500 food parcels per week, had a 50 percent increase in demand from Friday through to yesterday. They've now moved to operating through requests via phone rather than in person, and then drop off or pick up. I spoke just yesterday with mayor Phil Goff around the work council is doing to support some of the food that is being packaged up and provided to those in need, and so far that system appears to be working well, but we want to make sure it's well supported. Salvation Army did 3,100 parcels last week, with significantly higher demand in the Auckland and Northland region. This package will support providers to keep up with the demand.

I'm also acutely aware that this month will prove difficult for families, staying in a confined space with each other for a long period of time. Women's Refuge will be a service that will receive additional funding, and we're also working with them in securing additional accommodation for women and children that may need to leave their current home. I expect that we will have more to say on some of the specific outcomes of this package over the coming days and weeks, and I'll work to keep you updated on any new developments or indeed demand that we see that we're trying to meet.

And, finally, as you know, Parliament is now adjourned until 28 April, as the country stays at home to fight COVID-19 and to save lives. However, a special select committee to be led by the Leader of the Opposition is being set up to operate across this time to ensure there continues to be an accountability on the big decisions the Government is making or has made. This type of constructive scrutiny is vital for the health of democracy and also brings forward valuable insights from across the country to continually ensure our response is made better and stronger.

The Speaker, Office of the Clerk, and Leader of the Opposition have been working together to arrange how this will work, and today I can confirm the committee's first meeting will be next Tuesday at 10 a.m. It will be held remotely. This will be a planning meeting, after which composition and greater detail will be announced, including how often it will meet. At this stage, the composition is likely to be 11 members: two-thirds Opposition, one-third Government. I look forward to this important check and balance being established.

Finally, at this time, New Zealanders and New Zealand businesses are doing what they do so well: offering help and support. To help facilitate some of this, I have appointed Rob Fyfe to work alongside Commissioner Bush in his all-of-Government team to be a liaison with the private sector, including to support them, to bring forward innovative ideas to help fight the virus, and to help support New Zealanders through self-isolation and keep everyone informed.

Now, though, I'd like to hand over to the finance Minister to update us on the implementation of the wage subsidy scheme and support for business and workers.

Hon Grant Robertson: Thank you very much, Prime Minister. I just thought I'd give some statistics. As at 9 a.m. this morning, a total of \$1.5 billion has already been paid out under the wage subsidy scheme for 244,887 workers, 72,913 applications have been paid out, 111,898 applications have been approved and are about to be paid out, and 47,434 are to be processed. This is, and has been, the result of an extraordinary effort by the Ministry of Social Development, and I want to thank their staff, who are under enormous pressure. Minister Carmel Sepuloni and the chief executive, Debbie Power, have been working around the clock with officials from across Government to ensure that we have adequate staff processing and working in the call centre. I do understand, for people who are calling in particularly to the Work and Income phone line, that phone line has been under pressure, but their calls will be answered. Everybody in this situation just has to be patient.

I also want to reiterate that the wage subsidy scheme is available to all businesses: self-employed, sole traders, contractors, NGOs, charities—in a sense, most organisations in New Zealand outside of the public sector. The scheme is designed for employers to make their best endeavours to pay their employees 80 percent of their income, but, acknowledging that this is best endeavours, let me be very clear: we would rather that people stayed employed than not. We are continuing to work on updated guidance on the scheme, and we urge businesses to take the time to talk to employees, to their banks, and to make a plan to get through this. We do not want people to be laid off. We do not want employers to think they have to lay off their staff, and the scheme is designed to prevent that.

I just also want to finish, if I may, Prime Minister, briefly, to clarify anyone who wants to on the question of rent freezes and tenancy changes which were made yesterday. It is relatively simple on the rent freeze front. Rents are frozen. Increases in rent are prohibited for the next six months for any reason. In terms of the process around terminations, there is a little bit more detail. Landlords will be unable to terminate existing tenancies unless limited and specific, justified reasons apply. The Tenancy Tribunal will act as a check to ensure that the limited and specific termination grounds are being used lawfully. These reasons are: where the tenant substantially damages the premises; or assaults or threatens to assault the landlord, their family, or their neighbours; abandons the property; or engages in significant antisocial behaviour; or is 60 days behind in rent, and that is an increase from the current law of 21 days. These measures take effect within the next 24 hours, and to be

clear, the rent freeze is for a period of 6 months; the terminations will apply for an initial period—policy—will apply for an initial period of 3 months.

If I can also just add, this, obviously, is for the case of residential tenancies. I have been getting feedback from the business community about some commercial landlords not being prepared to offer flexibility when it comes to their rental payments. Can I please urge landlords of commercial properties to speak to your tenants and ensure that you work together. You will all be far better off as commercial landlords if those businesses are able to continue to operate and restart paying you, or paying you all of the rent they owe, when they begin operating again.

PM: Thank you. All right.

Media: Prime Minister, what's your reaction to the Christchurch gunman changing his plea, and is the timing problematic given that the families of the victims can't come together?

PM: And look, I know that that will be something that is deeply disappointing for those victims—of course, in the same way that we weren't able to hold a memorial, this is a time when usually the community, I imagine, would've wanted to gather together. But I know that there will still be, I'm sure, a certain sense of relief that the whole nation, but particularly our Muslim community, are being spared from a trial that could've otherwise acted as a platform. Nothing will bring their loved ones back, but this is a small reprieve.

Media: And—I've forgotten what I was going to say.

PM: I'll come back to you.

Media: What happens from now? Do you start looking at deportation, possibly, now that he has pled guilty?

PM: Yeah, you'll forgive me for being overly cautious at this point, because we're still in a period, of course, where we are awaiting sentencing. And so the focus still for the community and for the courts will be allowing and establishing a process that allows victims, victims' families, those affected to be able to pull together their statements in preparation for that process. So I need to let that play out and make sure that before we make any decisions about the future, we actually see this through to the end, and that means sentencing.

Media: How did you react when you heard that a guilty plea had been entered?

PM: I let out a massive sigh of relief.

Media: And will you still refuse to say his name?

PM: Yes.

Media: Have you seen reports of price gouging?

PM: I have seen some commentary online. I've seen some social media commentary around whether or not that is indeed occurring. It is something we will be keeping a very keen eye on. So I called and spoke specifically to Minister Kris Faafoi, who, obviously, holds responsibility in this area, and we talked through the specific examples we have seen. He has spoken already directly to supermarket chains to seek their assurance that that is not happening. In each case that has been raised publicly, there has been a very specific explanation for what has happened there. In the case, I believe, of chickens, there was an error in the loading of the weighting of those products. But that is the degree we are willing to go to to protect consumers. We will be following up on those reports. Our expectation from everyone at this time is that New Zealanders are treated fairly.

Media: Are you hearing anecdotal evidence of businesses not acting in good faith in terms of the wage subsidy—not passing it on to their employees?

Hon Grant Robertson: One or two, including from the media, and I've made very clear that if we get the name of that business, we will follow it up immediately. When

businesses took on this responsibility of taking the wage subsidy scheme and supporting their workers, they signed a declaration. So if they are not upholding that declaration, we have the ability to treat that as fraud.

Media: Just on that, just as a specific example, a supermarket worker who has underlying health conditions and will be too exposed, they think, to be working—is the expectation that they would be able to choose not to work and get paid? Because we have a situation where the employer has said, “No, for choosing not to work you will not get paid.”

Hon Grant Robertson: Look, that is dealt with—as you know, there were two schemes, and that is dealt with under the sick leave scheme, and we are continuing to follow that up right now for essential workers.

PM: Yeah. Ultimately, of course, the sick leave scheme was always designed so that individuals who were having to self-isolate, in particular, and because of public health guidance, were supported to do that. So, obviously, there’s a need for us to put further guidance out there for that workforce, but we are following up on that because we have heard similar reports.

Media: Has any consideration being given to whether we need to release low-risk prisoners or prisoners that are nearing their release date anyway to minimise spread in what the Director-General of Health has said is a high-risk environment in prisons?

PM: No, that hasn’t been considered by Ministers or by Cabinet. Again, our expectations on our corrections system—that they maintain essential hygiene practices, in particular the use of appropriate PPE and, of course, all of the basic measures we’re expecting of those who continue to work through this period.

Media: Are you confident that front-line health workers, midwives, nurses, doctors have enough PPE that it is reaching the people, and that there is enough to be able to deal with this [*Inaudible*]?

PM: Yep, good question. Yes, we do as a nation have enough PPE. What I am seeking are ongoing assurances from is that that distribution chain is working as it should—something I followed up again just this morning, again, having seen a bit of commentary around this issue. So as per our pandemic plan, we have millions of masks available in New Zealand. I’m checking as we speak the distribution network of that personal protective equipment.

Media: The Mad Butcher has been trading as normal today. What consequence is there for businesses that flout the rules?

PM: Two—under two areas. Under the pandemic, the epidemic, notice, my recollection is fines upward of \$4,000, and the prison sentence, the potential sentence if charged, my recollection is that between the civil defence national emergency it’s between three and six months.

Media: Butchers are having to throw out piles of meat, having had the list of essential businesses change and discount them at the last minute last night. Is that fair?

PM: Oh look, ultimately, we would ask people to work in the same way that all New Zealanders have. That notice period that we gave—our intention was to reduce as much food waste as possible, and in my mind there is no reason for food waste right now. Yes, you may be closing your doors, but there is plenty of need out there where I’m sure we could appropriately use food that someone’s no longer able to sell across the counter as we all work to break the chain of COVID-19.

Media: Did the Government reconsider making butchers, bakers, and local greengrocers essential, especially in small towns?

PM: Again, for small towns, we’ve been very clear we’ve got to make sure those areas do have access to the same essential services and foods that other parts of the country do.

So in those areas where there's no supermarket, then superettes, dairies, and so on—then special consideration is given to that. But the basic principal remains: essential services but nothing else.

Media: [*Inaudible*] how eerie, how creepy it almost is to see the streets so empty, and does that actually give opportunity for roadworks or other public works that could actually keep the economy ticking over as well?

PM: Again, the whole goal of this period is for people to limit their contact with one another, and so that includes people who would otherwise be working in construction or road-working—they're, ultimately, still working together. We need to be as mindful about their public health as we are anyone else's, so we are limiting people's contact with one another and keeping that to the bare minimum, otherwise this simply won't work.

Media: How plausible is it for Kiwis to tell police that they didn't know about the lockdown? Commissioner Bush said that was something that's been happening.

PM: I certainly can't see that being the case for long. People will be stepping out of their homes and if they haven't heard about what's happening they'll be at least thinking there's some kind of apocalypse right now. I mean, I can't imagine how you could not know that New Zealand is locking down and why. But I think what the police are doing is at least giving people the chance to have that information shared with them using warnings, not escalating until they need to—just using their discretion in the way that they do day to day when they're policing in New Zealand.

Media: Has the Government considered any kind of relaxations around student loan repayments during this crisis?

PM: Of course, there are thresholds. Are you talking specifically about those offshore, because there's thresholds based on how much you earn as to when you need to pay?

Media: You might be just over that threshold and you're still paying.

Hon Grant Robertson: Yeah, at this point we haven't because of the exact reason the Prime Minister says, that if your income drops then you will be in a position—if it drops below the repayment threshold level—not to pay. Where we have had some feedback is from people overseas, where, of course, interest is charged on loans when you are overseas. At this point we haven't made a change to that. It's quite a hard thing to quantify, but clearly it's in the order of things we will look at over time.

Media: Did you get an approach—did the Government get an approach from Virgin Australia about potentially money on top of any wage subsidy, and what was the response, if any?

PM: The approach, as I understand—I understand we have been approached by Virgin Australia. That was in regard to staff particularly potentially being able to meet capacity issues within call centres and so on. If they have made offers more specific than that, that's not something I've been familiar with. One thing I will point out is of course we've had a number of different companies making different offers. That is why we are using Rob Fyfe, specifically to play a role helping to support the liaison with the private sector, different offers that are coming in, and making sure that we're able to make the most of those. When it comes to the wage subsidy, though, I'll leave that to the Minister of Finance, but that's not something I'm familiar with.

Hon Grant Robertson: My understanding is that Minister Twyford, as the Minister of Transport, has been meeting regularly with the aviation industry at an industry-wide level. We've been continuing to talk to them about, you know, what's possible, what we need in terms of freight movements in particular. The question around redeployment, as the Prime Minister says, of airline staff into other activities is one that's been actively pursued by the Ministry of Health.

Media: [*Inaudible*] contact with Virgin Australia—are they included in that—

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, they are part of that aviation industry organisation.

Media: Prime Minister, 109 Kiwis are stuck on a cruise ship near Perth. Will we send a mercy flight to go and get them?

PM: We still have had flights operating out of Australia, so those routes are still open.

Media: So those people can get home?

PM: That would be my understanding. Those routes are still open coming through from Australia. Air New Zealand are still operating routes on a semi-regular basis—obviously, not as frequently as before, but the ability of New Zealanders to come home from Australia still exists.

Media: You said the other day that tens of thousands of New Zealanders could die if you didn't take these drastic, unprecedented measures. The modelling that you're basing that on is still not really public; you said it would come out eventually, but do [*Inaudible*] see it sooner rather than later?

PM: Well, of course there's so much variation, and those variables make it very, very difficult, which is why I've given a very general range—because of the lack of certainty. It depends on your country's transmission rate, the impact of measures that you take. I've seen, though, the same modelling as other New Zealanders, and drawn from the likes of Michael Baker and his modelling, but there are others, equally, who have done a very good job of trying to make an assessment of New Zealand's trajectory. Our goal is to change that, though. All I know is that even though it may be imprecise, I was not going to tolerate tens of thousands of New Zealanders losing their lives.

Media: [*Inaudible*] unprecedented moves into people's lives—this is a huge, you know, power grab by the Government—

PM: Yep.

Media: Don't you think Kiwis need to see that modelling for themselves?

PM: The modelling that I'm using has often been used in the public domain as well. The likes of Michael Baker is one such modeller; there are others. But those Cabinet papers will be publicly released as well.

Media: We've been told of landlords who have been hiking rents, issuing eviction notices, and telling people that they'll be kicked out as soon as the lockdown is over—

PM: Can you pass on the names, Tova? I mean, ultimately, we are changing the law here to ensure people act compassionately and respond to the environment we're in. I've seen plenty of stories of landlords who are taking extraordinary measures to look after their tenants at this time. When that is not the case and they are acting outside the law, I want to know about it.

Hon Grant Robertson: Just one large agency, who you might be referring to, put out some information about what they thought they could do. They hadn't caught up with the law change, and they've been informed now that they have to obey it.

Media: How frustrating is it when you hear about these businesses flouting the wage subsidies, or landlords flouting the tenancy protections—how frustrating is that when you're telling people to be out there and be kind and be strong?

PM: Yeah. Oh look, it is, obviously, frustrating when we have a small number of cases where, for instance, tenants aren't being treated with the compassion that all New Zealanders would expect at this time, or, for instance, when we hear stories of the wage subsidy being used inappropriately. But I don't think people should lose sight of the vast majority of landlords and employers who are actually working really hard to do the right thing, just like all New Zealanders.

Media: Given how slow people were to react to your messages around panic buying, are you actually almost surprised by how much the lockdown seems to have actually [*Inaudible*]?

PM: No, actually. I think what we're dealing with is simple human behaviour. So as soon as we said, of course, that we were changing our alert level, I think that caused people to think that they needed to prepare, and when they went to do that they reacted to empty shelves, and it caused a vicious cycle. But I was always of the view that once we started, once people saw the supermarket would still be open, once they saw that essential services would be there, we would start to see some of that fall away, and so far, it looks like that's what's happening.

Media: There's concern that freight from non-essential businesses is starting to pile up and restrict movement in and out of other essential goods. What's being done around the movement of [*Inaudible*]—

PM: We need to clear what's coming through—that's clear—because otherwise then that restricts the entire supply chain. It means the ports and, of course, what needs to be unloaded so that we're able to continue to bring in new shipments all backs up. So that needs to be unloaded. We need to get rid of the distribution that's already there and then focus on essential lines.

Media: To the finance Minister, from interest.co.nz, who are responsibly working from home: what work is under way in terms of raising debt through selling Government bonds direct to the Reserve Bank?

Hon Grant Robertson: At the moment, obviously, the Reserve Bank made their announcement about their programme—starting to lose track of the days now, aren't I, but earlier in the week—around what they would do in terms of quantitative easing, and that initial programme of \$30 billion has been unleashed. That'll be put in, over time, into the system. The New Zealand Government continues to issue Government bonds, as we always have. In fact, I believe they did one this morning and it was oversubscribed again, which means that the bond market is continuing to work. That means New Zealand is in a position to be able to continue to take on debt.

PM: Look, I understand some of you will be asking questions on behalf of others. Feel free to do that. You only need to give who you're asking on behalf of if you feel like you want a disclaimer for why you're asking the question.

Media: Secondly, the mortgage holiday scheme is only being offered by retail banks, so why not non-bank lenders as well?

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, this was an agreement negotiated with the New Zealand Bankers' Association. We're continuing to work closely with others, including building societies, which I'm sure is where the question comes from—working with the Reserve Bank to see how we can best include them in the scheme. The vast majority of New Zealanders' mortgages are through the members of the New Zealand Bankers' Association, but we're actively working on what we can do in terms of building societies.

Media: When can we expect to see some detail on that and on the guaranteed business lending scheme?

Hon Grant Robertson: Imminently.

Media: By the end of the week?

Hon Grant Robertson: By the end of the day, I hope.

Media: Prime Minister, do you expect there will be some leniency by police given to the homeless if they're caught up, potentially, outside of the lockdown?

PM: No, I generally expect us to be particularly mindful of the homeless under any circumstance. Right now, what we're working on—and you will have heard me reference

the package—is making sure that we can support particularly those who do not have shelter at this time. We have MHUD, who are working on finding temporary additional support housing for individuals who either may find themselves without a home because of violence or who are in need of shelter because they're homeless or have an abrupt change in their circumstances. So we have hundreds of units who have been identified across New Zealand for those purposes.

Media: Given that butchers have been decreed to be non-essential, should the Mad Butcher shut up shop immediately?

PM: Yes. I mean, one of the reasons that they've been determined in that way is because, yes, food is essential, but if we simply allowed every food outlet in New Zealand to open, we wouldn't achieve what we need to achieve, which is as little contact as possible between one another. We also need to reduce down the risk to as many workforces as we can.

Media: Prime Minister, [*Inaudible*] that Air New Zealand is going to fly a couple of dozen flights between Vancouver and places in Germany. Are you still sure that there's not an opportunity to bring New Zealanders back from—particularly from Europe?

PM: Well, as I've said, there are still some transit routes that are open, but the ones that traditionally many New Zealanders use are not. But that doesn't mean there aren't ways back, and I have heard of New Zealanders particularly using that route through Canada to get home. So I think that does demonstrate that there are options available.

Media: [*Inaudible*] look into the possibility of charter flights [*Inaudible*]

PM: Well, I have looked at the consular cases we have at the moment. Again, unlike other countries, we are not talking about thousands of New Zealanders stranded in one place; we're talking about smaller numbers scattered across multiple places. That's where it becomes very difficult for us to create tailor-made solutions for smaller numbers of people. What we've asked, of course, is those New Zealanders to make contact with SafeTravel, let us know their circumstances. But ultimately, the message to those New Zealanders abroad has been: find shelter and a place to be for this period of time, because it has become very difficult for us to get them home.

Media: How long should New Zealanders be looking to find shelter for?

PM: Well, it's ultimately not just our decisions that impact whether those routes will open again and when they will open, and so whilst we still have Air New Zealand operating in a number of quarters, there will be still those who are affected by the fact that countries have closed down transit. So until that reopens—that is why we are asking New Zealanders to find secure places to accommodate themselves for the time being.

Media: What are you expecting the unemployment level to raise to?

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, yeah, that's a very difficult question to answer, as you can imagine. Clearly, from the beginning, we said that this would be worse than the GFC, and in the GFC unemployment went to 6.7 percent. This is going to be significantly worse than that. I've seen some numbers in the media today from economists making projections. Those are very difficult projections to assess, but we've said from the beginning we're here to cushion the blow. We cannot save every job, and we cannot save every business, and so this is going to have a very, very large effect. We're working as hard as we possibly can to reduce that number to as low as it can possibly be.

Media: That 30 percent, is that realistic, or is that just—

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, that's the outside of the predictions I read today. There were ones that were significantly lower than that too, but all of them are much, much larger than what we've seen in New Zealand in recent years, and that's an indication of the significance of the shock. You've heard from the numbers I gave today around the wage

subsidy scheme: hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders' jobs are being saved, but, sadly, there'll be some that will be lost as well.

PM: Just to make sure, if there's any questions you need to ask on behalf of others, I'll just give you the chance. We'll ask a couple more.

Media: Wage subsidy scheme and the COVID leave scheme are obviously quite complicated. Does that make something like a UBI a bit more attractive given the simplicity of it?

Hon Grant Robertson: Well, the piece of work that we're doing at the moment is looking at what does our support for New Zealanders' income look like in the future. You'll understand our main focus has been on making sure people can get through the next 12 weeks, but beyond that, yes, we are looking at options for what New Zealand's income support would look like, because we're entering into a period where there will be far more volatility in the labour market, either caused by COVID-19 itself and the fact the levels may go up and down and from the overall economic impact. So that's a piece of work that's, effectively, only just begun, so we aren't in a position to be able to give details on it, but I certainly recognise that income support is going to be an important issue over the coming months.

PM: It doesn't help immediate needs, though, and that needs to be where our focus is right now—the people who are immediately affected by COVID-19. Last couple of questions.

Media: Do you think MPs have a role here as, sort of, intermediaries for people who think they've got an exceptional circumstance or, you know, should be an essential service?

PM: For MPs—did you say MPs?

Media: MPs doing their constituency work.

PM: They, naturally, will receive feedback for anything that the Government is involved in. I just think it's completely understandable that they'll get those cases. They're known locally. People often will just look for the fastest way to find information or to answer questions. For things like essential services, though, all of that we're making sure that we're getting consistent responses coming from MBIE. We have a specific phone line established. They're working through all of the queries that are being asked that are coming through either via email or phone, and MPs have those contact details too so that they can assist where necessary.

I just want to acknowledge—I've just had a little note telling me that some of the groups who may not have known about the lockdown have been members of our homeless community, and so I just wanted to acknowledge that it's understandable that the police may have found individuals who weren't aware given their circumstances. But I believe, as our New Zealand police do, that they'll be treating those situations with compassion.

Media: Are you in regular contact with other leaders apart from Scott Morrison?

PM: From time to time, with some. It's been a little while, but I have had contact with Prime Minister Trudeau. But very regular contact with PM Morrison—but that predominantly has been the contact I've been having. OK, thanks, everyone.

conclusion of press conference