

PRIME MINISTER'S 10.30 AM PRESS CONFERENCE: WEDNESDAY, 12 AUGUST 2020

PM: Kia ora koutou katoa and good morning. There are a range of things that Dr Bloomfield and I wish to run through this morning to ensure that everyone has access to the most up-to-date information as we, together as a team, work to stamp out COVID-19.

We are taking a rapid response to break the chain of transmission, through contact tracing, testing, and the gathering of information. In that regard, I'm going to begin by handing over, as I did last night, to Dr Bloomfield for an additional update on the cases that we are dealing with. I'll then come back and expand on some of those issues and questions that came up overnight, just to make sure that we're reminding people of the expectations of those in Auckland and everyone across the rest of the country. Then we'll be happy to take questions, and I'll also outline updates that will be happening over the course of the day.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Thank you, Prime Minister. Kia ora koutou katoa. I just want to give you an update on the public health response that has rapidly scaled up since we found out about these cases in the community yesterday afternoon. The family are still in isolation at home, and we are working with them about whether some or all of that family might go into one of our quarantine facilities, a quarantine facility in Auckland. That's an active conversation. Meantime, they are in strict self-isolation.

Now, following further interviews by the public health unit with the people who have tested positive, that has revealed that one of the cases, a woman in her 20s, travelled to Rotorua on Saturday while she was symptomatic. So there's actually a family of four that travelled to Rotorua. We are working with urgency to find out what places the family may have visited while in Rotorua over the weekend, but the important thing is here people in Rotorua, and indeed around the country, should be vigilant about their health and seek advice if they have any symptoms. We know Rotorua is a popular tourist destination. We expect that people will have been there from around the motu, and we fully expected, because we were in alert level 1, with freedom of movement and people moving around the country, that should we get a case it would, in fact, require a nationwide response.

What I can say is in Rotorua there are currently testing sites available and also in Taupō. So in Rotorua at the moment it is in Vaughan Road and there will be a pop-up testing centre in addition opening tomorrow, and that site will be announced for locals. But, again, it's not just for locals in Rotorua but anyone who may have visited Rotorua over the weekend.

A reminder once again: this virus does not discriminate. There is no shame or stigma in having contracted it. We want to find the virus, and we will, as we are with this family, support anyone who has it to ensure that their health and wellbeing are looked after and that we stop it spreading further in the community. This is a New Zealand family that is cooperating fully and who deserve to have their privacy respected. None of the people who have tested positive there, or indeed any of our other current cases in managed isolation or quarantine, requires hospital-level care presently. So plans are in place to protect our communities and, if we all do our bit, we will get through this.

I know that the virus re-emerging in our community has caused alarm, and the unknown is scary. It causes anxiety for many of us. We have been here before. We can get through it if we work together. We are working hard to put together the pieces of the puzzle about how this family became infected, and work is progressing apace to look up the movements, follow the movements of those people who have tested positive, and to contact trace anyone who may have had, or been in, contact with them. We are testing all close and casual contacts of the people who have tested positive for COVID-19. None of the workplaces where there is a risk are public-facing ones, and all appropriate health actions are being taken.

Just an update on those workplaces, all the staff in the first case's workplace are considered close contacts, and that's a total of 130 people. The person only has close contact in a small team, but we are treating everybody in the workplace, which has now been shut down. It's a finance company. It has been shut down, and all are being followed up and tested. That follow-up will happen from our national contact tracing centre here in Wellington.

There are three of the husband's, or the partner's, colleagues who are symptomatic and being tested, isolated, and their households are in isolation as well. That workplace is in four sites across Auckland, with a total of around 160 staff. They are all shut down now, and there is both testing of all those who work there, and also of the environment in that workplace. We want to see if possibly the environment is implicated here. I should add that we are also doing genome sequencing on all those who have tested positive, and our recent cases and current cases in managed isolation and quarantine, so that will help us track where this virus may have arisen from and then got out into the community.

So our national contact tracing centre has 140 people on standby to support Auckland Regional Public Health, and Healthline has been very busy, as we anticipated, with very high volumes of calls. They have an extra 60 staff on already and will be increasing that. Please, if you want general information, go to the website and leave Healthline to be able to provide advice to people with symptoms who may need testing.

We're prepared to test tens of thousands of people in coming days so we can see if there are any more cases of COVID-19 in our community. Staff from the district health boards in Auckland are being redeployed to testing centres, both in the community and to do testing in our managed isolation and quarantine and at the border. We have stocks of more than 270,000 tests available across the country, with more stock coming in at all times, and at the moment we can process more than 12,000 tests per day and are looking to increase that over the next few days. So the best thing we can all do now is to face this together, to be aware of and get back very strongly in the habit of complying with those key public health measures around hand hygiene, physical distancing, and we are also recommending the use of masks, particularly in the Auckland region. The Prime Minister will talk more about that shortly.

Finally, we've heard a little bit of confusion about what is considered an essential worker. Again, the Prime Minister will speak to that. If you are in Auckland and have questions about that, please do talk to your employer to clarify whether or not you are an essential worker.

So we have seen in other countries and jurisdictions like in Victoria, in Hong Kong, and in Vietnam, where a resurgence occurs, that it is incredibly important to act early. The alert level that we are implementing here in New Zealand was not implemented in Victoria till some weeks after their first cases reappeared in the community. That is why we are responding strongly and quickly again. We have the systems in place to help stamp out the virus and stop it spreading. And, once again, we have done this before, and we can do it again.

PM: Thank you, Dr Bloomfield. As you will hear from Dr Bloomfield, the fact that we have some contact with the family that have been identified as having COVID having travelled to another region reinforces why the whole country has moved to alert level 2. And that is that, of course, everyone across the country outside of Auckland, we're asking for social distancing, we're asking for those limits on mass gatherings again, and we're asking everyone to keep track of where they have been. Some may ask why it is that we only have Auckland at level 3. Obviously, that is currently the source and the centre, as it were, of this particular outbreak. And so, at the moment, those who are we are investigating in Rotorua, primarily we are looking at potentially casual contacts, whereas obviously in Auckland we are looking for the source of the infection at this point in time.

As Dr Bloomfield has said, testing will play a very important role over the next three days as we gather further information. As I said last night, and I have extra information on testing

stations in Auckland, they are available at Northcote, Eden Terrace, Henderson, New Lynn, Wiri, and Ōtara. And they will operate from 8 or 9 a.m., depending on the site, until 5 or 6 p.m., seven days a week. We ask that you check the Auckland Regional Public Health Service's or DHB website for local details.

However, I do have a special request. In order for us to trace where this outbreak stems from, it is really important that we increase the number of people being tested, but that does not mean we just want to randomly test across Auckland people who have no symptoms. In fact, that runs the risk of creating longer queues, more tests to process, without us being able to hone in on those we need to test the most.

So what we're asking is that, if you have any symptoms or if a medical professional or Healthline recommend you are tested, then, please, get tested. If you have no symptoms and if you don't work in MIQ and you don't work at the border and you have no connection to any of those places, and you are perfectly healthy and well, then, please, just comply with the requirements around level 2 restrictions in Auckland. We do have the ability to scale up our testing over the next few days and bring on additional testing lab capacity. We also have the ability to bring in pooling of testing, which means we can scale up—and that is what we are working to do.

I want to come back to the issue of aged care. We all know that people in our aged-care facilities are some of our most vulnerable, and so we must take those extra precautions to look after them. For this reason, all aged-care facilities throughout New Zealand will close their doors to everyone but staff and essential deliveries from noon today. This is something that the sector themselves has felt very strongly about. We're working with the sector, also, to help ensure that staff don't work across multiple sites and across multiple facilities—that's another lesson that's been learned from overseas, and we're working with the sector, as we speak, on limiting working across sites. I realise how incredibly difficult this will be for those who have loved ones living in these facilities, but it's the strongest way that we can protect and look after them. Our own experience, and that from overseas, teaches us that this is the safest approach, particularly at this stage, where we still have limited information.

I want to come to alert levels and some reminders around what the alert levels mean, particularly for Auckland. Now, you can find all the details of the requirements—a refresher, as it were—around alert level 2 for the rest of New Zealand and alert level 3 for Auckland on the COVID website, at covid19.govt.nz. It has information in a range of languages. But, just to reiterate here for you today, for Auckland, who are at level 3: under alert level 3, you should continue to stay or re-form your household bubbles whenever you are not at work or in school. Only the children of essential workers or those who fall into the category of being able to be in a workplace should be in education facilities, and many people will remember the guidelines we used at level 3 last time in that regard. We're asking that you don't invite over, or allow over, social visitors such as friends, family, and whānau to enter into your home. When you're out, we ask that you maintain physical distancing of two metres outside your home, including on public transport, when buying groceries, or when exercising.

A reminder on workplaces—because level 3, of course, was different to level 4—workplaces should only open if workers cannot work from home; if workplaces are operating safely, so that's fulfilling all of the standards and expectations around social distancing; and if customers are not allowed on the premises. So businesses can trade without physical contact with customers; you'll remember that, at level 3, that can happen through phone or online orders, delivery, pick up, drive through, click and collect. So you'll remember that was a major difference between alert level 3 and alert level 4. Supermarkets, dairies, petrol stations, of course, can have customers on their premises. Retail is possible through delivery and non-contact collection, including of prepared food. Public venues should close; this includes libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, playgrounds, and markets. Gatherings of up to 10 people can continue, but only for wedding services, funerals, and tangihanga. And you'll remember you can do low-risk recreation activities in your local area—for instance, go for a walk, a run, a swim at the

beach, or you can fish from a wharf. Again, this is just a refresher; all of the same obligations and rules of level 3 that we've all experienced before apply once again.

And for level 2—for level 2, which is the rest of New Zealand—we're asking for social distancing; we're asking to limit large gatherings to no more than 100; we're asking that you maintain the practice of handwashing, staying home if you're sick, and making sure you're keeping track of where you've been. Keep an eye on those websites, as they'll give you official information; help make sure that you're doing the right thing with your family, with your friends, and supporting fellow New Zealanders.

Now, I know we came up against the issue yesterday of people who have been in Auckland in recent days, and you'll be wanting more information about how you should behave. The ongoing advice from Dr Bloomfield and the Health team is that you should remain vigilant for any symptoms. There is no requirement at this stage for you to self-isolate, but as we learn more about the cases we have, we will keep reviewing that advice. But, again, if you are sick, you should be at home regardless, and that continues to be the advice for everyone across the country.

Latest numbers show Healthline has received over 2,000 calls since late yesterday. We are responding to them. We are boosting staff numbers. I understand that many people will have questions around alert levels, travel, and a range of other issues thrown up by what we're asking people. If you have general questions, please visit the COVID-19 website rather than call Healthline. It means that we can make sure that people who need immediate health advice can access it.

I want to come to the issue of face coverings, just to share again our request of everyone around their use. You'll recall we recently asked people to prepare for any possible resurgence by having a face mask or a face covering on hand. If you are in Auckland, please cover your face if you leave your home to access those services that are operating at level 3. A mask or any face coverings such as a scarf or a bandanna covering your nose and mouth will suffice. Now, while we are not mandating their general use at this stage, we are strongly encouraging their use in the Auckland region.

For the rest of New Zealand, if you are in an environment where social distancing is an issue—say, for instance, public transport—we are also encouraging their use. In terms of the supply of masks, Countdown and Foodstuffs have supply. We are also releasing 5 million masks from our central supply to support distribution into the areas they're needed. We're also looking at provision of masks in, for instance, food parcels and via social services for those who may be more vulnerable and less able to access masks. I again remind people, though: you can fashion your own face covering if needed. So, if in your area you find your supermarket does not have them available, I encourage you to fashion your own face covering.

We have mandated mask use in one environment at present; that is for flights leaving Auckland. Air New Zealand will be providing these on departure, remembering that you are able to depart Auckland if you are going to your place of residence if you are not an Aucklander and you live outside of Auckland. So there will still be a bit of movement while people get back to their place of residence.

I want to come now—and I will finish very shortly. I want to come now to the matter of Parliament. A number of questions have been raised around the issue of the dissolution of Parliament. Now, while our primary focus, of course, is on the response in these immediate stages over the next few days, we do need to ensure that we're giving ourselves as much flexibility as possible to deal with what we learn over the next 72 hours. Parliament was due to dissolve today at 11 a.m. Now, essentially, that doesn't stop the Government from being able to make decisions. Cabinet continues to have a mandate to make the decisions that we've been talking about over these past 24 hours. But the Parliament dissolving does mean that, if we needed to convene Parliament for any reason, we wouldn't be able to do so. We've, therefore, decided it would be prudent to defer the dissolution of Parliament by at least a few days to preserve all options for, if needed, reconvening Parliament or, if

needed, for the purposes of the date of the general election. So that will be extended until Monday.

We're seeking advice, around the options of the issue of the election, from the Electoral Commission, just so that we make sure we have all those options available to us. No decisions yet, as you can imagine, have been made. We are still in the very early stages of dealing with the new cases in the community; so we've got some time to work through that.

Finally, I know it's important to keep you updated, and we will continue to be communicating with you throughout the day. The director-general and I will hold a further press conference at 4 p.m. today to share information that has come to light during the day; not necessarily an expectation that there will be large amounts of new information, but we'll be creating that opportunity to check in and share what we know.

Separately but very importantly, Police Commissioner Andy Coster immediately after this press conference will take to the podium. He'll talk through the police's actions, expectation, and their approach to enforcement of level 3 in Auckland and also, importantly, how we anticipate the boundaries working in Auckland.

So, to finish, a quick recap: for Auckland, the rules are the same as we have all experienced before. Jump online if you have any questions, but remember that the general rule of thumb is that if you worked at home at level 3 before, that is what we are asking of you again. For the rest of the country, we are bringing back social distancing and those limits on large gatherings. For everyone, though: wash your hands, stay at home if you're sick, get a test if you're symptomatic.

I know how hugely frustrating this current situation is for every single member of our team of 5 million, but if we get our immediate response right in this critical phase, we have the opportunity to lessen the time that we will have those heavier restrictions. And that is a lesson that we have all learnt together. Please, as always, stay kind, look after one another, and please stay tuned as we update you on the situation as it continues to unfold.

Media: How many positive tests have been returned, because we're hearing it's as many as 10 to date?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: We've been informed, and the tests that we have back are the ones we reported last night, that is four members of the original family. A number of other people have been tested. We don't have any further results to report at this point.

Media: And are you able, Dr Bloomfield, to run us through a detailed time line of when you found out about that first positive test, when that trip to Rotorua took place, and can you give us an assurance that, between finding out about that first positive test, there was no travel that took place or potential community transmission that took place? I'm wondering why it took so long for us to find out.

PM: To find out what, sorry, Tova?

Media: About the community transmission back in New Zealand in general.

PM: From the space of 2.30 till being notified last night?

Media: From when the first positive test was and then whether there was any—whether you can rule out any travel or possible community transmission or transmission of any sort between that first positive test and when you told us last night.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: So I think there are a couple of questions in there. The first bit is once we found out about the positive test—and, indeed, the district health board and public health unit did mid-afternoon yesterday, around 2.30—both the case and all members of the original case's family were contacted and self-isolated and isolated at home. They were then all tested late yesterday afternoon, and we had those results back from the initial rapid test last evening, and that was reported in last evening's media conference. The trip to Rotorua took place last weekend, and so the person in their 20s and the family—and the person in their 20s has tested positive; that was one of the results we

got last night. And one of the two pre-schoolers in that family had also tested positive; again, a result we received last night. They had made the trip to Rotorua over the weekend. That information was elicited late last evening, and then with a follow up this morning by the public health unit to get more information. And the first bit of information that was made available to us was that it was not just a trip to visit another family and sort of a small potential group of contacts but they had visited a number of tourist venues there. We are getting further information about that, and we'll release that as soon as we have it.

Media: Didn't you say last night that the first positive test was the day before yesterday?

PM: That's when they were tested—

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: That's when they were tested.

PM: —and then the results came through yesterday. So that's, as you'll remember, we have that cycle of testing and then the results coming through. I think the important thing to remember, as well, is that we last night were providing—we had an original test that then alerted us to test the entire family. Those results came through late last night; that was immediately communicated here. That then triggers, of course, a range of interviews. Those interviews then bring in that extra information about Rotorua, and that's what we're communicating this morning. So a lot of interviews, questioning, and contact tracing all happening simultaneously, and we're providing that information at the next available opportunity.

Media: Why not lockdown in more detail, though? Why not go to alert level 3?

PM: Yeah, just to answer the question, I tried to cover that off in my original introduction—the question of “Why not lock down Rotorua?” Of course, keep in mind the difference here, as we've described, is that everything at this stage still points to the source of this infection at this point being within Auckland. We have multiple individuals at multiple work sites with close contacts within Auckland. What we have now is travel into another region where there's potentially close or casual contacts, but because we have, really, the source of the infection still in that primary place, that's why they're at level 3 and the rest of the country at level 2. But, of course, that contact tracing is under way. Those who are picked up in that perimeter will be requested to isolate and be tested.

Media: [*Inaudible*] err on the side of a few more details on that?

PM: Erring on the side of caution is moving the entire country to level 2 and an entire city to level 3 in less than 12 hours after being informed of a case.

Media: Prime Minister, just a few more details on that time line. When was Dr Bloomfield first alerted, and when were you first alerted, and then what happened between 4 o'clock and 9?

PM: So we covered this off last evening, but I am happy to canvass this time line again. The one thing before I start—by Dr Bloomfield beginning, because he, obviously, knew before I was then informed—the one thing I will say is that I have heard suggestion—I've heard suggestion that we may have had this information earlier than we have said. There is no reason why we would ever do that, and I hope that you'll hear from the time line we set out that we have then moved very, very, quickly, including informing the public. I do worry that those kinds of theories do nothing to support what needs to be collective action from all of us. But, Dr Bloomfield, I'll start with you.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Thanks, Prime Minister. I'll start off and then hand to you. Just to confirm, I received a text from the chief executive of Counties Manukau District Health Board—that's Margie Apa. She's the lead CE for the Auckland region on the COVID-19 response. She texted me at about 2.40 yesterday afternoon. I rang her at 2.45, and we then had a Zoom discussion about seven minutes later with the teams, to get an initial rundown of what was happening and organise for a further update once the initial case had been interviewed. The Prime Minister can talk a little bit about when she became informed, but what I would say here is we needed to have a certain amount of information to be able to

inform what are already quite significant decisions around moving Auckland to an alert level 3 stance and, indeed, the rest of the country to alert level 2. So all that work was happening, and a lot of information was gathered, not just from the interviews but, of course, from the testing of the family, that helped inform those significant decisions.

PM: So just to cover my time line, I went into a public event about 3.15 in Whanganui. I exited that around 4 o'clock. As soon as I was in the privacy of the van, I was informed of the case, immediately spoke to my chief of staff and the Minister of Health. At that stage, I saw a sitrep that had been produced about that same time. It suggested that additional swabbing was being taken to confirm that it wasn't a false positive, which, of course, we've had in the past. We wanted to be certain. Testing was then being undertaken, I understand, of the wider family members, and Health were giving a briefing to those involved at 5.30. I, of course, was on the road in that time; posed a number of questions I wanted answered before we convened to make decisions, including: can we isolate the potential source; is there any connection to border staff or MIQ? If we couldn't answer those questions, then that was an indication we needed to move to a more precautionary approach. I arrived at Parliament close to 7, or just thereafter. I sat down with the Minister of Health straight away. By 7.30, we had all AOG officials and Health officials in the office. Immediately after that, I convened Ministers with power to act; briefed them on what we'd been informed; made decisions; called the Leader of the Opposition; obviously, gave her quite a fulsome briefing, because I see it's been shared with the media thereafter; gave a briefing to Mayor Phil Goff; and then came down and briefed the media.

Media: In terms of getting your head around this, do the public need to start preparing to go back to level 4, or is there a possibility that this will just be a couple of days? It's seeming increasingly unlikely.

PM: Well, of course, that all depends on what testing tells us—what that genome sequencing tells us as well. As Dr Bloomfield has touched on, that can potentially provide us information as to whether or not the cases are connected to a particular MIQ or existing COVID case. So that, basically, can tell us about different strains of COVID. There are a range of different strains, some more common than others. So it may help us narrow down information; it may not. And, as Dr Bloomfield has also said, we have a coolstore workplace where we are testing surfaces, because we know that, although we primarily look for human to human transmission, we do need to check whether or not we can rule out whether or not there's been something to do with freight or so on that has played a role here as well.

Media: Why aren't you releasing details of the locations involved and other places such as supermarkets, malls, where the individuals may have been?

PM: I'll leave that to Dr Bloomfield.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: So the workplaces—one workplace I don't have the location of; that's the workplace of the original case. The other workplace, which was the second case, that is four locations across Auckland. The place where this person works is in Mount Wellington, but there are four locations. They've all been closed down, and all the workers there will be followed up and tested. There is nothing else to suggest there are other—if there were other locations in the Auckland region that would be elicited that they may have visited, we would make those public as well.

PM: Yep.

Media: Dr Bloomfield, what are the best-case and worst-case scenarios that you're working to?

PM: Well, the best-case scenario, of course, is if we are able to identify the source of the infection, that gives us a greater ability to be able to ensure that we have adequately contact traced and isolated individuals. And you'll hear us continue to give you updates as to whether or not we're getting closer to that information. If we're unable to identify the source and we continue to see positives that, perhaps, are difficult to link, then that does

make it more difficult, but you won't have to wait till Friday; you'll hear us as we give continual updates around some of the information that we're able to uncover.

Media: Could COVID have spread in that 6½ hours, Dr Bloomfield, between you finding out and you making it public?

PM: Keeping in mind, as soon as the person tested positive at 2.30, they went into isolation. So the idea that something only happens once we inform the public is incorrect. As soon as a result is received, that person goes into isolation, everyone around them goes into isolation, contact tracing starts straight away. The gears do not start moving once we tell the public; that happens well before.

Media: Are you considering any changes to the inflow of international passengers to New Zealand at the moment?

PM: We had that discussion with the all-of-Government group this morning. We, of course, do continue to have arriving New Zealanders. They are all operating in a level 4 environment; so we treat those arrivals very, very cautiously. So there's no reason why we cannot continue to do that. They will be moving into a level 3 environment, but they will be in level 4. And so, while we had that discussion, there's no reason, given the precautions and everything we have in place, why we cannot continue to maintain and manage that. What we are doing at the moment, though, is working through a system of testing everyone working at our MIQs, whether they are on shift or off shift, to make sure that we have covered off those high-risk areas.

Media: How many tests in total is that?

PM: So across—I understand if you're including border staff, those who are working in MIQ facilities, in Auckland and outside of Auckland, keeping in mind we are going to really put quite a lot of emphasis on Auckland, my recollection is it's around the 6,000 to 7,000 individuals.

Media: Dr Bloomfield, given that these four people haven't travelled overseas recently, there are no known links to people working at the border or working in quarantine or managed isolation facilities, are you preparing for the possibility that we may never determine the source of the infection?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: So two things there. The genome sequencing will be very helpful in this regard. What we are confident is that we didn't have any community transmission for quite a long period. And I should say that, also, even if you look at our influenza-like illness surveillance, even over the last week or two, there has been no upswing at all.

The second thing is we're not ruling anything in or out at this point. We are very open-minded. The Prime Minister mentioned that we're doing some environmental testing in the workplace, which is a coolstore. We do know from studies overseas that, actually, the virus can survive in refrigerated environments for quite some periods of time. So, as we have done with those cases that have appeared when New Zealanders recently have travelled to other countries and tested positive—the South Korean case being the first one of those and the most widely publicised—we start by looking at all options and then ruling them out, and that's the position we're in at the moment. We have ruled out a false positive.

Media: Just to be clear that that coolstore—you have incoming freight from overseas that's being cooled the whole way through and it arrives in Auckland in a cold condition?

PM: Yes.

Media: So are you implying—

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: We're not sure about that yet, but—

Media: Right. But you're implying it's possible that the virus could be on a surface—

PM: We're not ruling it out; so that's why we're including testing that includes looking into that possibility. We haven't ruled it out at this stage.

Media: If level 3 is extended beyond midnight Friday, what sort of notice will you be able to give to Aucklanders—like, midday Friday or this Thursday?

PM: Yeah, I would like to give notice. Of course, then we'd be looking at an extension of an existing situation, but I do like to give notice if we can do that. Certainly, of course, making public announcements at midnight, of course, is not what we intend. So we've put it in till midnight. We'd look to give people advance notice. I don't want to put a time on that right now, because I want to make sure, whatever decision we make, it's informed by the most up-to-date information we have, and, obviously, we'll be working intensively to gather that.

Media: Can you just clarify something on testing: if someone has symptoms, can they just go to a drop—

PM: Go to a CBAC? Yes.

Media: Without having to call Healthline or go to a doctor?

PM: Correct. Yes, they can. Yes, they can. They can do that. We're asking: if you're symptomatic, you can go to a drive-through. We're just asking people: if you're well, you do not need to go and get a test. We're asking people who are symptomatic or who might have been told from Healthline, because they're on the phone to Healthline, or they might have been at their GP and their GP has advised them to.

Media: One of the problems in Melbourne seems to be that Australians weren't used to wearing masks and it took a while for that to catch on, which led to the disease spreading. Are you worried that that's going to happen in Auckland?

PM: Well, of course, we haven't had widespread mask use in New Zealand generally or, indeed, previously at other levels. We are encouraging their use, but one of the reasons we haven't mandated it is because we have thought carefully about whether or not people have accessed them, whether or not they have listened to that advice and have them on hand. We are really encouraging quite liberal interpretations of face coverings, because it's better than nothing. But yes, this will be new for New Zealanders, but we are asking them to make an effort on behalf of others. You know, I think it's just a statement that you care about your community that you're going out and you're wearing a face mask to look after other people, and if both people who may interact with each other are doing that, it lessens the chance of an infection.

Media: Will Aucklanders receive targeted economic support?

PM: Yes. So if, up until—we're, of course, leaving this period, and if we are in the position of making decisions that may lead to further extensions, then we will be looking to do that at that point. The Minister of Finance has already been engaged on that and is at the ready if that's required.

Media: What's your response to iwi who want to reinstate checkpoints?

PM: Yes, so I've just been on the phone to Minister Kelvin Davis, who has been working with Te Arawhiti to make sure that we're in close contact with iwi and bringing in the police—so, Stuart Nash. I'm expecting them to convene a call and have a discussion sometime today. What we're doing is putting in these roadblocks so that it's not necessary elsewhere, but I do understand we need to give people the assurance, and particularly iwi the assurance, that we're doing it well and that we are looking after those who are in areas outside of Auckland.

Media: GPs in Auckland are concerned that they're going to run out of swabs. Is the ministry doing anything around that? Is there enough PPE and swabs in the testing centres?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Yes, there is a good supply, and one of the conversations we even had last night—I know the DHBs, actually, their incident management team, last night was planning to push out additional PPE and swabs to all general practices and primary care across the Auckland region to avoid any temporary distribution shortages.

Media: We've been told that the GPs are limited to 20 swabs, in some cases. But 20 swabs per order—that suggests that the supply chain isn't as good as you say.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: I don't think it does suggest that. It just is pre-empting a whole lot of swabs going to a few places to make sure that there is good distribution right across Auckland, and not forgetting that, as the Prime Minister has pointed out, there are four dedicated community-based testing centres, plus the two additional popups as well. And urgent care—there are a number of urgent care clinics, and general practices. So we're very confident that there will be enough supplies of PPE and also swabs across the Auckland region.

PM: That was a question asked today, and because of those distribution points being from within Auckland, that eases those issues. But, again, another reminder that testing stations are at Northcote, Eden Terrace, Henderson, New Lynn, Wiri, and Ōtara, and that, of course, testing there is free. If you go to your GP for a test, it is also free. So people need to keep that in mind. It is more efficient, however, if you use the testing stations that are available to you, and many of them operate as drive-thrus, which is a nice, safe way to do it.

Media: What's the time line on getting the results on that genome sequencing?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Well, the swabs have to get to ESR and then be processed, but they can turn them around quite quickly. We're wanting to have those results to help inform a decision on Friday. So that will be a key part of our decision making.

PM: Keeping in mind we'll be doing that for those positives but also those who have recently been confirmed as cases within MIQ.

Media: How many confirmed cases, Dr Bloomfield, could be isolated in MIQ facilities? Have any close contacts or anything been put into facilities thus far?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Not at this point, but that is available there, and in fact we've talked this morning with Air Commodore Webb about ensuring there is capacity in the quarantine facility, which is where we would want cases and close contacts to go, and they have ensured that there is capacity there if needed.

Media: Prime Minister, in terms of tangihanga restrictions, when it comes to police entering marae without a warrant, what does that mean?

PM: Of course, at the moment, we're asking that for the next three days we have those limits on numbers. My hope, of course, is that that will be a short limitation. I know from countless conversations that I've had in the past with the police that these issues will be very, very carefully managed. It's a time of grief, and so really working alongside, working with Māori wardens, that's always our preference rather than things that, in those circumstances, are very, very delicate because of all of the grief involved. But, again, three days, at this stage, we're asking for those restrictions.

Media: Prime Minister, I think most people assumed that when we saw another outbreak it was going to be directly connected to the border. How surprising and concerning was it for you to—

PM: And, look, it may yet still be. What we're trying to identify is that chain, because, ultimately, there are a limited number of options for a how a case can come into New Zealand—by a traveller, and all our travellers are in quarantine; by someone working in a facility where a traveller with COVID is, and so we're working to see if we can draw those links through some of that genome sequencing, whether that can help us build that link and then work backwards to people who have had contact with a workforce; or, of course, as

you've heard, we are dealing with the potential here and trying to rule out whether or not it may have come in via some other freight.

Media: Did some of the family, then, therefore, go to work while symptomatic and then travel to Rotorua while symptomatic? And if that's the case, then surely that underlines the need for people to stay home.

PM: Yes, obviously, as we've confirmed, there has been travel whilst symptomatic, and that underscores again why it is so important that, if you are sick, even if you are disappointing family and friends, it is so important that you stay home. We need people in workplaces as well to encourage others. If you are unwell—send your workmate home. No one needs people to be a trooper. We need them to think about others and be at home.

Media: Can you expand at all on how long the family were in Rotorua for and their movements? I don't if you talked about both workplaces or just one? Did you talk about both of the workplaces?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: So the family were in Rotorua for a weekend trip. So last weekend, Saturday and Sunday, is my understanding. In terms of the workplaces, remembering the first case was tested on Tuesday and had been symptomatic for some days, including in the workplace. Likewise, the other family member—so the partner, who had actually been symptomatic for a couple of days prior to the onset of symptoms in our index case, had also been in the workplace. But, for both of them, their number of close contacts—they picked the team they worked in—or the number of people they had contact with in the workplace was actually very small. We'll extend it out to the whole workplace as part of our approach to testing all, even casual, contacts.

PM: Just to clarify, my understanding is it's only one adult and one child who have tested positive who travelled to Rotorua—so not the whole family; just one adult and one child. OK. I'll just check who hasn't had questions.

Media: What's the risk of those close contacts returning false negatives?

PM: For close contacts?

Media: Close contacts.

PM: So, for testing, the false negatives, that's really dropped down as a percentage.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: It is low, and just to be clear, anyone who's a close contact remains in isolation for 14 days regardless of the test result. Casual contacts, who we are testing anyway, have to return a negative test before they can leave self-isolation, but they're not required for the full 14 days unless there's a clinical assessment that they should remain or the test be repeated again in a few days' time.

PM: So, regardless of whether or not you have a false negative, a close contact has to stay in isolation for 14 days no matter what.

Media: What's the percentage risk of returning a false negative?

PM: It's dropped, hasn't it?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: It has dropped. I can get you the information on the false negative rate for the PCR test. It's low.

PM: Quite low. It started off much higher, I think, but it's declined.

Media: Prime Minister, on masks, why have you chosen not to mandate mask usage—

PM: At this stage.

Media: —particularly in Auckland at this point, and is it something that's still on the table? Could we still see mandated mask use?

PM: Yes, we could still see mandated mask use. We haven't done that as yet. One of our concerns is that not everyone will be prepared. So you may, for instance, wish to go to

your local supermarket or do a click and collect with a local hardware store to pick up masks, and of course we wouldn't want people being fined without having them while they're endeavouring to get them. So that's one reason. Also, we do want to get the message out that you can fashion your own mask. So, even if you're unable to locate one at a supermarket or just the expense is prohibitive, you can use a bandanna or a scarf or something else as a face covering. We haven't ruled out mandating mask use, but over the next few days, until Friday, in Auckland we are strongly encouraging their use when you step outside to go and undertake any jobs or anything you might do outside of your home, but we will continue to consider whether or not we mandate. The only place it's in the Health Order, though, is for flights coming out of Auckland. You'll be given mask there.

Media: Just on mental health, what is your advice to people who are struggling with the news of a second lockdown?

PM: I know that this news—and we can see that in Healthline calls; often those are individuals who are feeling really anxious about this information, and I have huge sympathy for that. This is unsettling. I know how I feel when I get a call with the information, and I imagine that's how other New Zealanders feel too. So my advice is that 1737 is a line that's available. I also really encourage people to reach out to their friends, their neighbours if they're in Auckland, in particular, and check on them and check that they're OK. Equally, we will keep giving as much information as we can. You know, we do have a plan. I know this is unsettling, but we do have a plan, we are rolling it out, and we have very, very good people who are working on this with a huge amount of effort to make sure we can limit the effects of this as much as possible.

Media: If we do have an extension to the alert levels on Friday, what's your thinking about an election date? Do you think that necessarily requires a pushback or a rolling—

PM: Yeah, look at this stage, obviously, I don't want to get too far down the track there, because the immediate focus has to be on this response. There are a range of options, of course. There is the option of sticking with the date that is there. The Electoral Commission have already planned for a level 2 election; so they've already got what is required to make sure that you can maintain social distancing and so on. Otherwise, there is the ability, of course, to simply move it within the legal parameters that exist. So, at the moment, any date before 21 November can be chosen. So that flexibility already exists. It only becomes more complicated if you seek to extend it beyond that 21 November date. So, at this stage, look, too early to make any decisions, but there is little bit of flexibility available if required.

Media: Would it be fair to go ahead with the current election date, given the limitations on campaigning and your cut through in terms of speaking directly to public?

PM: I would rather not be on this podium right now, discussing what we are discussing, and so I think probably everyone appreciates that. In terms of, you know, dates, though, one of the issues we have to keep in mind is that COVID will continue to exist in the world for the foreseeable future. And other countries have had to try and navigate election periods during COVID. We're now having that experience too. I will constantly be mindful of both making sure we act fairly but, at the same time, at any point we're having to calculate when it will be possible to do it at a time that all voters can freely participate and aren't worried about participating. So that's a real judgment, because COVID isn't going to go away in the next six months.

Media: Is there a plan around different economic and social measures that have to roll out at different alert levels, and, if so, what's your—

PM: Yeah, so immediately, of course, we have, thankfully, already put extra funding into things like the provision of food parcels. Extra support has already gone into food banks. You will have heard that we are now putting in extra measures like distribution of masks within those—so that immediate support. We also, for our public health units, they

have the ability to immediately support those with financial constraints that might stop them from self-isolating.

So, if we ask someone to stay at home and they need to cover off their income, we have the ability to do that; so we can remove the barriers for people self-isolating. The leave scheme is also in place. So, if you are asked by a PHU to self-isolate because you're a close contact, the leave scheme will be able to cover your needs. If we go beyond those three days, then we'll look more broadly, but that's something that we'll be considering over the next 48 hours.

Media: The ban on evictions, is that also [*Inaudible*]

PM: I would need to go and—let me, please, if I may, just look at the time frames that we had in place there. OK, a couple for Dr Bloomfield.

Media: Dr Bloomfield, do you have any numbers on whether there's been an upswing in the download or use of the COVID Tracer app?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Yes, I heard this morning that there have been 100,000 downloads overnight—very pleasing. I'd love that to continue. This will be a really helpful tool, which we've been saying all along—and even just registering. So I would to encourage people to continue to use that. As the Prime Minister has mentioned, we're also looking at businesses having a requirement, actually, to display a QR code in the Auckland region.

PM: So I'll give another update on the app, downloads, and also expectations for businesses around the use of QR codes at 4 o'clock today. But what I'd like to do is make sure that we have some communication with those representatives of some of those business organisations. [*Interruption*] Yep, I have some more questions for Dr Bloomfield. I didn't want to cut off—

Media: In Japan, there's been a report just very recently of a woman who came from New Zealand, has travelled to Japan, was asymptomatic but has tested positive for COVID-19. Do you have any details of this?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: I was aware of it from a few days ago. I haven't had any further information, but we'll give an update on that this afternoon. We had been notified by the national focal point there, but I haven't had an update on that. I'll provide that this afternoon.

Media: Have we traced her close contacts, though, now that she has tested positive?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Let me check on that.

PM: Keep in mind all of our internationals to date—and we've had a handful of them now—have, through multiple tests, demonstrated old infection. So that's what we always try and rule out. Sometimes, when we're dealing with counterparts overseas, requesting and having those repeat tests done in order to demonstrate to us old or new infection has taken a little bit of time, but we've usually, of course, acted with close-contact tracing beforehand while we've waited.

Media: The health Minister has been saying for two few weeks now that all staff at the managed isolation facilities and the border are being tested. Why did you say last night that we will now test all of them?

PM: So, just to be clear, at the Jet Park, where we put all of our COVID cases, we have very frequent testing of everyone. At some of the other facilities, it's not as frequent as what we have at the Jet Park, because that's where all our COVID cases are. So what we're doing now is a fresh run of everyone, because you've got a cycle of testing. We want to make sure we've got a fresh run of testing—immediately.

Media: But we were told that was across all isolation facilities—

PM: Yes.

Media: —so staff were being tested, the bus drivers were being tested, the border staff were being tested—

PM: Yes. Yes. And they are, but they're not tested every single day, obviously. I've just told you that we've got roughly 7,000 people that would be captured by that; so there's a rotation of people being tested. It's more frequent at the MIQ where our people with COVID cases are.

Media: Should we have been testing them more often?

PM: More often than—?

Media: Than we have been.

PM: Well, of course, we have had testing across all of those sites, but at the MIQ we've targeted a higher frequency of those where we have the COVID cases but also been mindful that constantly swabbing every day or on a regular basis is just not something that we can ask of 7,000 people every single day.

Media: There were some concerns raised about nurses working both inside those managed isolation facilities and then going back and working on the wards. Has that completely stopped?

PM: For the Jet—for where we have the COVID cases, they only—workers only—work at that facility.

Media: What about the rest of the managed isolation facilities?

PM: I'd need to check in with the Minister of Health, but I can tell you that for certain, for the Jet Park, it is an isolated—people only work in the Jet Park.

Media: What does this mean for the Cook Islands bubble?

PM: I would want to talk to Prime Minister Puna, but obviously I would have thought, given our expectations on the Cooks, that their expectations on us would be that we'd be free of community transmission. I'll take the last couple of questions, because I do want to make sure Dr Bloomfield's able to go and continue work.

Media: Dr Bloomfield, just on the tourist attractions that the woman in her 20s and the child visited in Rotorua, have they been shut down—will they need to close?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Not at this stage. We don't have enough information on that; so that information will be being sought at the moment, and we'll be giving advice as to whether that needs to happen, and we'll update later in the day.

PM: We'll give another update at 4 o'clock on that. Last two—here and here.

Media: Dr Bloomfield, after so many days without community transmission, how did you feel when you got that text, just before three yesterday, to say "We've got a community case."?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Well, I'm sure I felt like every New Zealander, and the Prime Minister's already said she felt—of course we're disappointed. We've been making the point that—it was, in fact, I think, last week I said, "It's a matter of when, not if." And now is the time that has happened. What we want to do is get to the bottom of it and also find out the extent of the outbreak, ring-fence it, and get on top of it quickly. As I said earlier, we've done this before; we can do it again. If there's one place in the world where people should have hope that we can get on top of this, it's this country, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Media: Dr Bloomfield, does the ministry still advise against regional shifts in alert levels, as it did in April?

Dr Ashley Bloomfield: Well, we've seen, actually, here that we have in this situation—remembering, now, our advice in April was while we were coming out of a big outbreak and coming out of a lockdown. We now have been in alert level 1, and all our planning, our resurgence planning, in the health system and across Government has

included scenarios that would include different alert levels in different regions, and that's what we're seeing playing out at the moment.

Media: So were the ministry supportive?

PM: So that advice, as I recall, was all around whether or not we should move to a regional—after coming off level 4, where we were nationwide, whether or not we should move, for instance, the West Coast to level 3 and Gisborne to level 2 while we were coming out of that alert level 4. So that is my recollection of the advice that Health were giving at that time. I don't think anyone ruled out the possibility of using a regional approach more generally. OK. Thank you, everyone; we'll be back at 4 o'clock.

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Kia ora koutou. In light of alert level 3 restrictions coming into effect in Auckland from midday today, Police will be increasing our visibility, for reassurance purposes, and establishing road checkpoints.

Police has been planning for the possibility of a return of COVID to community transmission, including the possibility of regional restrictions. So we will shortly release details of the boundaries to be enforced—in fact, those details have now been published on the Police website.

Police will have a high-visibility presence across the region, with all three Tāmaki-makaurau police district commanders working together to manage a regional response to alert level 3. We will be visible around supermarkets and places where communities need assurance of police presence.

Once again, we are urging people to play their part. We're relying on people to heed the message to go home and stay home.

From midday, we will be operating nine checkpoints at exit and entry areas just inside the regional boundaries largely based on the Auckland super-city. There are five checkpoints in the north, just north of Te Hana, and there are four in the south, in the vicinity of Bombay, Pukekohe. These checkpoints will initially be staffed by police, but we may engage support from partners, including the Defence Force, in due course. We'll be stopping vehicles and questioning drivers to validate that the travel is essential.

As has been our approach throughout COVID-19, our first approach will be to engage, to educate, and encourage people to comply, before going to enforcement.

We have issued a reminder to our people: they need to be exercising good hygiene and social distancing practices. And we've issued a directive that Auckland staff will wear masks when dealing with the public and other PPE gear, as necessary. For the rest of the country, this is not new territory, and hopefully there's a strong community willingness to abide by the restrictions of alert level 2. I'm happy to take any questions.

Media: Do you think that there will be community buy-in, given that we're going through this again? Last time, I think there was a real impetus, wasn't there, in driving the entire country, but do you think the more we go in and out of lockdowns that that impetus will be reduced?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: I believe New Zealanders have a choice. We've seen what it looks like overseas when we don't get this right. I think we know what we need to do to get back to where we've been, and I'm really confident that New Zealanders will step up to that.

Media: At what point would you bring the Defence Force in to help at those checkpoints?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We will probably do that sooner than later, simply to enable the maximum availability of police resourcing for reassurance within the Auckland region.

Media: Were you disappointed to see the behaviour of some in Auckland at supermarkets last night?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: I'm aware that there were some pressures on queues as people reacted to the situation. I think that's isolated. Our experience throughout level 3 was that people could get the food and supplies they needed, and people do not need to worry about that.

Media: Will you take the same escalated response from warning to prosecution as you did last time, or do you think there will be a harder line?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We're still taking the same approach. We recognise people need some time to adapt, but also people know now what the levels mean, and once that settling-in period is done, then we will respond appropriately.

Media: How soon are you looking at the Defence Force coming in to help police?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: The Defence Force has indicated immediate availability to support us; so we're working through the logistics of that. There will always be a police presence at those locations, but we can draw on defence staff to help us across those nine locations.

Media: How resource-heavy are these nine roadblocks, and where are the police resources coming from?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We're initially requiring 40 staff at any one time across those locations. There will be a bit of adjustment as we step through, just to see the volumes of traffic and how we can keep that flowing. So we'll assess it, but we will draw on past lessons.

Media: Sorry, it was 40 across all nine roadblocks, not 40 at each?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Correct.

Media: What test will you use to determine whether or not travel is essential when people will have the legitimate excuse that they could be heading back to their normal place of residence? How will you distinguish the two?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We will speak to people and check the reason for their travel. If people want to avoid unnecessary delay, then bringing the best evidence they have of their place of residence will enable them to pass through smoothly.

Media: So, like a bank statement or—

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Anything that indicates what their home address is.

Media: Commissioner, when it comes to tangihanga restrictions, can we expect police to work with iwi in terms of no warrants, or with or without warrants?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Absolutely. So this is exactly the same approach we have taken throughout. We've worked really carefully with iwi. I'm aware you had a question earlier about our approach with marae. During the initial lockdown, we worked with iwi leaders to agree a protocol so that that power would be exercised in consultation, and we will continue to work that way.

Media: In terms of checkpoints, are police happy to work with iwi in reinstating those?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Level 3 applies only to Auckland, level 2 to everywhere else. There's no legal basis for checkpoints during level 2, either by police or by anybody else. We are operating checkpoints at all entry and exit points for Tāmaki-makaurau, and so there is no need for others to respond in that way.

Media: Just to be clear, will we see Defence Force staff at these checkpoints from today, for example?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: It's quite possible that we will have them in place from today, but we're working through those details.

Media: That could be quite alarming for a lot of people, seeing Defence Force on the ground, policing in this way. What do you say to them?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: It's quite common for Civil Defence to engage to help New Zealanders in times of emergency. There's frequent operation of Defence domestically in the civil defence context; so this is the context we're talking about. It will always be with the presence of police, and we would expect all people to operate the same way as us—calm, compassionate, confident are the three words that we've used to describe our intended style.

Media: Can you give New Zealanders an assurance that it will only be the police enforcing then, that the Defence Force are only there to provide information?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Absolutely. The powers for enforcement in this setting are with police. We're not expecting, at the checkpoints, to need to take a lot of enforcement action. It will be a question of checking, understanding the reason for travel, and then allowing through those who are allowed to pass.

Media: What sort of police presence will there be around Auckland in general, with the limited time outside the house and essential work and that sort of thing?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We have an enhanced presence that will be focusing particularly on locations where people may need reassurance—essential services, supermarkets, and the like. Our experience during lockdown previously was that demand for police services drop when people aren't so much out doing their ordinary activities. So I've got no concerns about our ability to do that.

Media: Will you be out on the coast as well? Like last time there were people walking along the beach on nice days and—you know?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We'll be monitoring the key spots, but I think people now are in a pretty good routine of what's allowed at this alert level, and I'm sure that will settle pretty quickly.

Media: Are you preparing at the moment in case similar measures might be needed in Rotorua?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We're always preparing. So we've been preparing since we got out of the controls we've had before to make sure we're ready, so we have the ability to mobilise where required.

Media: Are there more than nine exits from Auckland? Have we covered every exit with checkpoints?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: At those locations, because of the way Auckland is structured, yes, we are able to cover it with nine in those points.

Media: What sort of penalties would people face if they are found to be breaching the lockdown rules?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: That's a matter for the courts, obviously, if we take a prosecution action in terms of penalty. But all of those provisions are contained within the COVID Act.

Media: How much more difficult is it to police a regional lockdown? It's the first time we've had a regional lockdown, opposed to a country-wide lockdown.

Commissioner Andrew Coster: It has some complexity, primarily around containing the flow of traffic in and out. Clearly, freight and other services will be permitted to move. We will be wanting to make sure that we keep Auckland moving in that sense, and so, yes, that's different. But it's not altogether different from what we would do if we were running a breath-testing checkpoint or similar.

Media: What kind of personal protective equipment are you and officers working at those roadblocks using?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Officers engaging with the public will be expected to wear, at a minimum, masks, and then they have other PPE if there's a risk indicator—for example somebody who's symptomatic—but at that location it would be masks.

Media: Are police officers on the ground still receiving information about the positive COVID-19 cases in the country?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: I'm sorry; say that again.

Media: Police officers on the ground were receiving the information about the positive COVID-19 cases in the country. The Privacy Commissioner's had a conversation with Police about that. Will those officers on the ground still have that information available to them in NIA so that they can make use of it?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: That's a continuing conversation with the Ministry of Health, in light of our conversations with the Privacy Commissioner, but there is still a place for limited sharing of information where a risk to staff requires that knowledge.

Media: But currently, on the ground, do the officers have that information?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: They will have, I understand, in the cases where it's appropriate. That's a current conversation.

Media: So is that like cases where, if the police officer is in Auckland, they will have that information?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: It would be if there's somebody who is symptomatic and not properly isolated—you know, in the sense of being in a quarantine facility. I expect that we will have the information in that case, but that is being worked through.

Media: Are you preparing for a greater number of people to possibly breach rules or regulations, or less social cohesion this time around, after we've gone through this once before?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: As I said before, I think New Zealanders were proud of where we were with no community transmission, and I believe that we want to be there again. We know we can do it, and that's the kind of response that we're looking for from the community.

Media: Are you prepared for it, though? Do you consider it's a possibility?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Of course it's a possibility, and we'll monitor carefully, but we've been able to adapt our enforcement approach according to what we're seeing, and we will do that.

Media: Do you think because we've done it before that it will be easier to enforce?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: I think it's easier for people to know what needs to be done, and to know that it's possible, and that increases the likelihood that people will want to do that. In terms of our officers, they're well familiar with what it looks like to police in this mode; so, in a sense, having had a practice does make it easier.

Media: Are you preparing that 105 line again for reporting breaches of that lockdown?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: The 105 line, or "ten-five", is always operating, and that is a potential channel for reporting breaches, and, of course, we are working with partners around things such as business compliance to make sure that those rules are being followed.

Media: And are you going to be redeploying more staff to it and anticipating an upswing in complaints again?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We will do if required. As I said before, our previous experience has been that other demands tend to reduce a bit when we're in lockdown; so there's a bit of a balancing that occurs naturally there.

Media: How many of those nine checkpoints will actually be on motorways?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Well, the motorway enters and exits at two places on those boundaries—one in the north, one in the south. Those are the high-volume locations, and then there a number of other minor roads that will need minimal presence, but the map is now uploaded on to the news section of the Police website so you can see where they are.

Media: Are you 100 percent confident that no one can leave Auckland without going through a police checkpoint?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: I'm absolutely confident that we've identified the right locations. If someone is wanting to tramp through the bush in order to leave, then I'm sure they'll find a way, but, you know, we're relying on people to do the right thing. It's hard to make a large city hermetically sealed, and so, ultimately, we need people to buy in and do the right thing.

Media: The Defence Force personnel who are helping out and giving information, etc., they're not going to carry any armaments of any kind? They'll be—

Commissioner Andrew Coster: No, absolutely not.

Media: Are the police going to be doing check-ins on people who are in self-isolation?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We will work with Health around the requirements for that. It depends very much on how things track and how the cases that are identified are able to be managed. So there are a range of options we could pursue there.

Media: Will you be doing check-ups on businesses and things in Auckland to make sure that they are adhering to the rules?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: In a general sense, we will be observing for compliance with the rules. In some situations, it will be more appropriate for other agencies to undertake business enforcement, but Police is always part of that effort.

Media: Have you had to up-staff, cancel leave to bring everyone together to enforce this law?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: Not at this stage. As I've said, we have 2,000 to 3,000 staff in Auckland. So the requirement for checkpoints is a pretty modest one. We will keep an eye on it, but, at this stage, no.

Media: Have you been briefed at all that businesses could be required to display QR codes and that will be part of the compliance checks?

Commissioner Andrew Coster: That will certainly be something that Police may be involved in, but it's more likely that other agencies would support that, be it MBIE, WorkSafe, and the like.

Media: OK. But you have been informed that businesses will be required to display—

Commissioner Andrew Coster: We are aware of that. Thank you all very much.

conclusion of press conference