

CORONAVIRUS — INTERSTATE BORDER RESTRICTIONS

141. Ms C.M. COLLINS to the Premier:

I refer to the growing COVID-19 outbreak in Victoria. Can the Premier please update the house on the state government's response to the outbreak, including changes to our controls with Victoria and what that will mean for Western Australians?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Hillarys for the question, and congratulate her on her tremendous success in the electorate of Hillarys at the state election.

The situation in Victoria is very concerning. There have been 26 cases in total now, that we are aware of, with 12 new cases reported overnight. We understand the exposure sites in Victoria have now grown to 83 and the situation is obviously developing fast in Victoria. We have offered the support of our contact tracers to the Victorian government, should they need our support. However, we have had to put in place measures to address the situation concerning Victoria.

Victoria is now designated a medium-risk jurisdiction under our controlled border regime. That means we now have a hard border in place with Victoria. Travel to WA for anyone who has been in Victoria since 16 May will no longer be permitted unless they are an exempt traveller. The exemption list includes those people who would be included for compassionate reasons, which may be Western Australians who have travelled to Victoria recently and need to return to Western Australia. It also includes a range of occupations, particularly senior levels of the commonwealth government. Anyone arriving in Western Australia from 10 o'clock this morning who is exempted will be required to complete 14 days of self-quarantine at a suitable premise and be tested for COVID-19 on arrival and on day 11. People who have arrived in Western Australia and who had been in Victoria since 16 May, prior to 6.00 pm on 25 May, must now also get tested within 48 hours and self-quarantine until they return a negative result, which is the same arrangement that has been in place for the last two days. In effect, we are backcasting to 16 May for that arrangement. The Western Australia Police Force will get in contact with these people through the G2G system.

This is the first time since the Queensland outbreak in late March that a jurisdiction has been classified as medium risk under our controlled border regime, which is, in effect, the first time since late March we have put in place a hard border for Western Australia. It brings us no pleasure to do this to Victoria, and we understand it involves significant disruption for people coming from Victoria. Obviously our thoughts are with Victoria. They are going through another significant issue, not of their making. A quarantine escape in Adelaide has caused this issue in Melbourne, and more broadly in Victoria, but it shows that we have to be careful. It also shows that we have to continue using the SafeWA app and, if you are eligible to be vaccinated, you need to get vaccinated as soon as you possibly can, because that is our way out of the pandemic.

We have a website, rollup.wa.gov.au, to allow people over 50 to book in for their vaccine appointment. We look forward to vaccinating people under the age of 50 as soon as we possibly can; that is, as soon as we get the supplies from the commonwealth government.

This event shows that our G2G PASS, our controlled border system, and the fact we verified at the High Court the capacity of Western Australia to put in place borders are important measures to protect the health and welfare of all Western Australians.