



AIDE MEMOIRE

Update on Rapid Assessment

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|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Date: | 8 June 2021 | Priority: | Medium |
| Security classification: | In Confidence | Tracking number: | 2021-3993 |

Information for Minister(s)

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister for COVID-19 Response

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

| Name | Position | Telephone | 1st contact |
|---------------|---|----------------------------|-------------|
| Megan Main | Deputy Secretary, MIQ | Privacy of natural persons | ✓ |
| Ingrid Harder | Director of the Office of the Deputy Secretary, MIQ | | |

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

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Minister's office to complete:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seen | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |

Comments



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Purpose

This aide memoire provides you with further detail on how MIQ is meeting the recommendations made in the Rapid Assessment of MIQ, delivered by Murray Jack and Katherine Corich to MIQ in April 2021. We have also included a formal management response to the Rapid Assessment (Annex One).

Megan Main
Deputy Secretary
Managed Isolation & Quarantine, MBIE

10 / 06 / 2021

Background

1. Officials provided the Minister with an aide memoire (2021-3489) in May outlining a proposal to proactively release the MIQ Rapid Assessment.
2. The Rapid Assessment was commissioned by MBIE Chief Executive, Carolyn Tremain, after six months of operation of MIQ by MBIE in order to support the continuous improvement of MIQ systems and processes by identifying practical recommendations and improvement opportunities. The review was performed by Murray Jack and Katherine Corich, with the Ministry receiving the final recommendations in April 2021.
3. The report contained 82 recommendations. Eight of these were ranked as 'high priority' by the assessors.
4. The office was supportive of the proactive release, and asked for further information on how MIQ was addressing recommendations that were not ranked 'high priority' by the assessors, as they were not detailed in the previous aide memoire, as well as any recommendations that had not been accepted.
5. We have included a formal management response that welcomes the report, how we have responded to the Rapid Assessment and are taking a lessons learned approach to feed into nation pandemic planning and future preparedness within New Zealand.

Status update on MIQ Rapid Assessment recommendations

6. MIQ has already made considerable progress against the recommendations. Of the 82 recommendations, 55% have already been closed, with the remaining recommendations all underway.
7. Five recommendations were not accepted.
8. 77 of the recommendations have been fully or partially accepted by MIQ.
9. 37 of these are currently underway and are being delivered through a range of mechanisms, such as incorporation into BAU work, sprints, and formal programme management. 40 recommendations have already been completed.
10. The status of all recommendations is detailed in Annex Two. These have been broken down by relevant MIQ workstream for context.

Next steps

11. A Communications Plan (Annex Three) is attached which recommends MBIE places the report on its website and issues a media statement signalling its release.
12. We will work with the Rapid Assessment reviewers, Murray Jack and Katherine Corich on shaping the next assessment, due to commence in August 2021, to ensure these regular reviews assist us to continually improve and add value to our operations in support of our COVID-19 response.

Annexes

Annex One: Proposed Management Response

Annex Two: Status of Recommendations

Annex Three: Communications Plan

Annex One: Proposed management response



MBIE RESPONSE TO THE RAPID ASSESSMENT OF MIQ

The Right Thing to Do

One of the core organisational values of the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) is Pae Kahurangi – which at its essence is about building our future based upon learning from our past and present. As a public sector agency, this value speaks to our commitment to continual improvement, learning lessons, and future proofing the system we are responsible for. It was in this spirit that we commissioned an external panel to undertake the rapid assessment of Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) unit operations in February 2021, approximately six months after MBIE became responsible for their management.

The panel undertook interviews with a wide range of agencies and stakeholders, in addition to the conversations held with those directly working and supporting MIQ facilities. The authors of the Rapid Assessment Report rightly describe the “extraordinary collaborative effort on the part of all agencies and private sector partners” bringing into being the MIQ system to respond to arrivals landing at the border. It is important context that the MIQ system was established under great urgency. As noted by the authors, while the concept of managed isolation was contained within pandemic planning, there was no specific design concepts for creating a national system on the scale required responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, “everything had to be built from scratch”.

Currently we are managing a network of 31 MIQ facilities spread across five cities. More than 3,700 staff are contributing to their successful operation, and MBIE as an organisation is exceptionally proud of the work they are doing. Perhaps the most crucial metric is the more than 140,000 people who have safely gone through MIQ. These facilities have become the cornerstone of New Zealand’s elimination strategy.

Embracing the Findings

The fresh set of eyes provided by the Rapid Assessment report authors identified eight key recommendations, and within each area a series of subservient recommendations – some 82 recommendations in total. MBIE has had an opportunity to consider all of these recommendations, accepting the overwhelming majority either partially, or in most cases, in full (70 accepted; 7 partially accepted, with just 5 not accepted).

As MIQ is a very dynamic environment, and time had passed since the authors’ undertook the research for the Rapid Assessment, our systems and processes had not remained static. Consequently, this shapes why some recommendations are accepted partially, in

that generally we have accepted the need for the recommended improvements, but other solutions have been introduced or are in train.

Making good progress

We have already made considerable progress. Over a half of the recommendations have been closed – 45 of the 82. Action on the remaining recommendations is underway, or plans are in place to address them. The Rapid Assessment has identified a series of what it describes as high priority recommendations, and our response to each of these is as follows:

1. Strengthening systems and data integrity

Our Response: MBIE has an ongoing programme of work to add additional functionality to the systems that support the end to end 'customer' journey from voucher application to leaving a MIF.

2. Strengthening IT infrastructure

Our Response: The Technology Standardisation Project has been completed with internet, print, and devices deployed at Regional Isolation and Quarantine Coordination Centres (RIQCCs) and Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities (MIQFs). Storage of Standard Operating Procedures and a platform for cross agency collaboration has also been delivered. Further user training is underway and will flow into the records management work also underway.

3. Develop a plan to civilianise NZDF roles

Our Response: We will conduct a review of the security workforce numbers based on a site-level assessment of security needs. In addition, a review of NZDF national office support roles will be conducted in light of MBIE assuming some planning functions. A view of priority roles to transition from the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) will be formed.

4. Address shortages in health resourcing in Auckland

Our Response: Changes within the MIQ context are having time-limited impacts on the health workforce. These impacts have developed in the time since the assessment took place. The Ministry of Health (MoH) is currently undertaking a Model of Care review.

5. Review support functions and headcount required to support MIQ systems

Our Response: This has been completed with advice provided to the COVID-19 Response and Finance Ministers.

6. Continue rolling out the National Planning Function

Our Response: This is underway and part of the MIQ Regional Operations Structure initiative. A review of MIQ's planning function has been completed and it will have fully transitioned to a National Planning Function by the end of June, which will further clarify roles and responsibilities, and reduced duplication.

7. Strengthen Iwi-Māori partnerships in all regions

Our Response: The assessment highlights that the speed of establishing MIQFs resulted in iwi relationships not being developed early enough in the process. This has been recognised, and work has been underway for some time to deepen relationships. To further strengthen relationships, we are in the process of engaging with iwi on a local basis as well as arranging a June 2021 hui for all iwi that have MIFs in their rohe.

8. Formalise MIQs information gathering powers

Our Response: Suitable provisions are already available under the Privacy Act. MIQ will address this recommendation by continuing to pursue Memoranda of Understanding with government agencies to enable data sharing.

Leaving a Legacy - Lessons Learned

Another important aspect of the Rapid Assessment Report is the thoughtful approach they have taken to Lessons Learned that will enhance national pandemic planning and future preparedness within New Zealand. The seven key lessons captured all ensure that a legacy from the establishment and running of MIQ facilities is left and that the experience and knowledge gained is being captured. We agree with the authors' recommendation that MBIE lead a formal lessons learned process in the future.

Continuously improving the MIQ system

This Report is intended to be the first of a series of rolling six monthly reviews of this kind. These will assist us benchmarking the performance of MIQ in a meaningful way, as we continue delivering this operation for the people of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Annex Two: Status of Recommendations

Recommendations that were not accepted

| Report Page # | Internal Rec # | Response | Recommendation | Action Taken |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|--|---|
| p. 25 | RA19 | Not Accepted | Automate demand and supply planning. This can be done by improving the upfront capture of returnee data (covered in the sections: Enablers – Data Integrity/Reporting, and Technology – Operational Systems). | MIAS captures a significant amount of data about returnees which can be used for forecasting and planning. The forecasting and planning capabilities in MIAS will instead be developed. |
| p. 27 | RA22 | Not Accepted | Consider developing a process which enables MIQ to offer late available spaces in managed isolation to airlines, who may be able to fill them with latent demand passengers whom they engage with through their loyalty programmes. | Late available spaces are currently made available through MIAS and will be allocated if returnees apply. We are communicating with groups such as Business New Zealand and Kea to encourage bookings during periods of lower demand. |
| p. 35 | RA34 | Not Accepted | Apply a RACI framework to the agreed joint MoH/MIQ policy programme. | There are other processes in place that achieve the same purpose. The RACI is informally captured when commissioning future briefings, but it changes frequently during the policy development process. |
| p. 35 | RA36 | Not Accepted | Establish a policy development draughting and approval process that reflects the reality of the pressures imposed by the pandemic. | Approval processes within MIQ are considered right sized and appropriate |
| p. 46 | RA81 | Not Accepted | Consider implementing a standard add-on to MS Dynamics to provide a more sophisticated booking management capability, which enables the matching of vouchers to allocated rooms. Alternatively, consider outsourcing the booking process to the private sector | Further investment in MIAS was the preferred option. |

Remaining Recommendations

Workstream: Data, Technology, Insight

| Report Page # | Internal Rec # | Response | Status | Recommendation | Action Taken |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------|--------|---|---|
| p. 19 | RA15 | Accepted | Open | Develop a Data Ownership Map of all key data, clearly identifying data elements which require special or unique protections. This will enable all partners in the ecosystem to share a common view of data for reporting purposes. It will also enable the development of a comprehensive data sharing protocol to replace the individual data sharing agreements which need to be drawn up every time an individual data element needs to be shared. Note that this would need to be formalised in an Approved Information Sharing Agreement (AISA), approved by the Privacy Commissioner. | A data ownership map is underdevelopment. MoUs are in place between MBIE and Immigration, MBIE and Customs, and one between MBIE and MoH is nearing finalisation. |
| p. 19 | RA16 | Accepted | Open | Establish and implement a Common/Shared Data Model policy. [Note this recommendation relates to interagency data being transferred, as opposed to internal data]. | Work is underway to develop a data model and ownership map. |
| p. 19 | RA17 | Accepted | Open | Develop the Data Sharing Protocol, to provide an over-arching view of all the data elements that are required for efficient running of MIQ operations. [Note this recommendation relates to interagency data being transferred, as opposed to internal data]. | A data ownership map is underdevelopment. MoUs are in place between MBIE and Immigration, MBIE and Customs, and one between MBIE and MoH is nearing finalisation. |
| p. 46 | RA23 | Accepted | Open | Strengthen systems and data integrity. Build out technology systems to support the automation of end-to-end processes from voucher application to MIQ exit, and future proof MIQ. The solution should be compliant with MBIE's technology architecture and provide connectivity to other agencies. | There is an ongoing programme of work to add additional functionality to the systems that support the end to end 'customer' journey from voucher application to leaving a MIF. |
| p. 22 | RA24 | Accepted | Closed | Customer Hub – ensure that all customers are fully integrated within the customer hub for the duration of the end-to-end process (customer journey). | The Customer Hub is now live and has integrated emergency allocations, exemptions, waivers and complaints. |
| p. 46 | RA25 | Partially accepted | Closed | Consider extending the Customer Hub Portal (MBIE standard platform, MS Dynamics) to include this step of securing a Voucher. When built, migrate the voucher allocation function into the new platform. | Consideration of extending the Customer Portal was undertaken, but an integration of the Customer Portal and MIAS was the preferred solution |
| p. 22 | RA26 | Accepted | Closed | Establish a tightly managed technology project to progress the recommendations above, capture the future state end-to-end process, and define use cases for all required scenarios [Note: this is in reference to RA24 & RA78] | An agile project team is in place reviewing business needs and producing builds based on these. |
| p. 22 | RA27 | Accepted | Closed | As an interim solution, immediately simplify this process by basic automation of the data feeds out of MIAS and into allocation spreadsheets. | This is already currently happening where relevant. Spreadsheets are no longer used as planning is completed in MIAS. There is now a direct data fed from MIAS into the Service Hub. We continue to add additional functionality through an ongoing series of releases. |
| p. 43 | RA49 | Accepted | Open | Strengthen IT infrastructure. Technology in RIQCCs and MIQFs is being progressively upgraded. It is now urgent to upgrade the network at the RIQCCs and MIQF's is completed to allow staff to have sufficient access to the systems and tools they need to do their job. | The Technology Standardisation Project has been completed with internet, print, and devices deployed at RIQCCs and MIQFs. Storage of Standard Operating Procedures and a platform for cross agency collaboration has also been delivered. Further user training is underway and will flow into the records management work also underway. |

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| p. 43 | RA50 | Accepted | Closed | Provide additional shared devices for MIQF staff to enable them to access Standard Operating Procedure updates and learning courses online or give direct access to MIQ systems. | The technology standardisation project addressed the immediate needs in the MIFs. Further work is now underway to understand any changes in business requirements that may result in a further programme of work. |
| p. 43 | RA51 | Partially accepted | Closed | Improve Broadcast Communications technology capability in all MIQFs; as each different MIQF has its own broadcast communications systems; guidelines for this need to be provided to each MIQF. | See RA9 |
| p. 33 | RA52 | Accepted | Closed | Re-set expectations of service from MBIE Information Technology. | The technology standardisation project addressed the immediate needs in the MIFs. Further work is now underway to understand any changes in business requirements that may result in a further programme of work. |
| p. 29 | RA53 | Accepted | Closed | Review separation protocols in all MIQFs and ensure that technology and communication recommendations are implemented. | Further reviews surrounding Separation Protocols have been undertaken, resulting in updates to standard operating procedures for exercise, transportation, testing and smoking. Clearly defined booking systems have been created and communicated to returnees to ensure managed separation. A further review is underway on Managed Isolation Walks. Technology and communication recommendations have been dealt with under individual recommendations. |
| p. 22 | RA78 | Accepted | Closed | Create an 'intelligent' front-end portal which enables authentication/verification of all entrants into the hub. | An Application Programming Interface (API) with INZ has been established and integrated into the Customer Portal, which verifies passport number, nationality and visa status. |
| p. 46 | RA79 | Accepted | Closed | Create an intelligent portal that enables MIQ to verify and authenticate everyone at point of entry. | See RA78 |
| p. 46 | RA80 | Accepted | Closed | Use this authentication to follow the journey of returnees longitudinally through the MIQ system. | See RA78 |
| p. 27 | RA82 | Accepted | Open | Eliminate the ability for voucher seekers to game the system by authenticating every entrant to it. | The portal will validate returnee's identity. Several amendments have been made to the system to prevent automated booking, and a weekly scan is conducted to identify violations of the terms of use. There is an ongoing programme of work to add additional functionality to the systems that support the end to end 'customer' journey from voucher application to leaving a MIF, including reducing / eliminating opportunities to game the voucher system. |

Workstream: Engagement Approach

| Report Page # | Internal Rec # | Response | Status | Recommendation | Action Taken |
|---------------|----------------|----------|--------|---|---|
| p. 42 | RA1 | Accepted | Open | Leverage core approved MBIE reporting tools such as PowerApps and mandate these as the required tools for generating and storing reports. | This is underway and part of the Data Lake Pilot Project which plans to leverage MBIE reporting tools, starting with PowerBI, to improve the speed at which standardised reports and dashboards can be developed as well as increasing the functionality associated with them. |
| p. 42 | RA2 | Accepted | Open | Establish a library of core and common reports, and a mechanism for requesting new reports*. *ad hoc and regular reports. | This is underway. A stocktake of reporting activities across IDI and the RIQCCs has been undertaken. The current Data Lake Pilot Project will improve the speed at which standardised reports and dashboards can be developed as well as increasing the functionality associated with them |
| p. 42 | RA3 | Accepted | Open | Accelerate establishment of the data lake to enable better use of data for analytics and reporting. | This is underway and part of the Data Lake Pilot Project which plans to leverage MBIE reporting tools, starting with PowerBI, to improve the speed at which standardised reports and dashboards can be developed as well as increasing the functionality associated with them (linked to RA1) |

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| p. 42 | RA4 | Accepted | Open | Define the minimum Management Reporting standard which covers MIQ, RIQs and MIQFs. This information exists across emails and other documents and should not be difficult to compile. | This is being progressed as part of the work on implementing effective data governance and data stewards across the work of MIQ |
| p. 21 | RA8 | Accepted | Closed | Continue to communicate with returnees through their journey and during their stay in a MIQF, via the channel that will be established by improving the system. See the recommendations in the section: Enablers -Technology Operational Systems. | The Customer Portal provides key services and includes a self-serve element – i.e. people can log in to see the progress of their applications. We continue to add additional functionality to the customer portal through an ongoing series of releases. |
| p. 21 | RA9 | Accepted | Closed | For communications during a returnee's stay in a MIQF, a recommendation to improve broadcast communications within each MIQF is covered in the section: Core Processes - Services in Managed Isolation Facilities (MIQFs). | Broadcast systems, where available, are used to communicate to returnees in their room during their stay. Paper-based communications are used where this is not available. There is work underway on the MIQ website to improve returnees' experience. |
| p. 21 | RA10 | Accepted | Closed | Ensure that waiver, exemptions and restrictions communications are framed with the appropriate legal basis on which decisions have been made. | Communications have been updated. |
| p. 39 | RA11 | Accepted | Closed | Established a unified communications capability across all MIQ partners. Develop a rapid communications development and approval process. | Daily meetings have been established MIQ, DPMC and Ministers' offices to discuss issues, and sign off priorities and processes. |
| p. 39 | RA12 | Accepted | Closed | Develop a strategic communications policy and plan. This will streamline communications activities and reduce the volume of interrupt driven requests. | MIQ has developed a strategic communications policy and plan. The process for communications products sign offs has also been streamlined. |
| p. 39 | RA13 | Accepted | Closed | Interagency communications: As all participants in the MIQ ecosystem need to understand how important unified and timely communications are to the safety and security of the system, it is recommended that MIQ work with DPM, MoH and other agencies to ensure that no agency or participant in the system is blindsided by major public announcements. | Collaboration processes have been addressed through the establishment of daily meetings between MIQ, MoH, DPMC and Ministers' offices. MIQ have a primary POC in MoH for public announcements. |
| p. 39 | RA14 | Accepted | Closed | Adopt more rigorous collaboration practices (in reference to communications) | Collaboration processes have been addressed through the establishment of regular daily meetings between MIQ, DPMC and Ministers' offices. |
| p. 50 | RA54 | Accepted | Open | Strengthen Iwi-Māori partnerships in all regions. Continue relationship building and ensure continued development of the partnership. | The assessment highlights that the speed of establishing MIQFs resulted in iwi relationships not being developed early enough in the process. This has been recognised, and work has been underway for some time to deepen relationships. Feedback from some iwi now suggests that they are happy with their relationship with MIQ. To further strengthen relationships, we are in the process of engaging with iwi on a local basis as well as arranging a June hui for all iwi with MIFs in their role |
| p. 50 | RA55 | Accepted | Open | Build the knowledge base of insights into the things that are important to Iwi in the context of an MIQ setting. Capture and share these in an appropriate form, noting that the narrative is important in the communications with partners. What are the particular needs of Iwi? For example, the importance of family reunification, protocols around tangi and the repatriation of bodies, urban versus rural needs | Insights are being collected at all three levels and being fed back to MIQ staff. Once a mechanism to collect these insights is established the recommendation can be considered complete; however this is an ongoing activity. |
| p. 50 | RA56 | Accepted | Open | Update specific requirements into the Standard Operating Framework. This includes, but is not limited to, operational procedures handling decision making around sensitive handling of protocols for the handling of death in an MIQF, and Iwi related considerations in the allocation of vouchers, and granting of emergency requests, fees, and waivers. | Further work to improve cultural competency of staff needs to be completed. The SOP will be guided by Te Arawhiti engagement guidelines and capability frameworks. We have work underway to consider how we support people through funeral and tangi. |

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| p. 50 | RA57 | Accepted | Open | Consider the broader community concerns such as what are the risks of having an MIQF nearby. | Consideration of these concerns will be guided by Te Arawhiti engagement guidelines and capability frameworks, including deeper consideration of the Treaty principles emergent from Wai 2575. MIQ continues to work across AOG communications and have a number of channels with communities including the new Employers Network. |
| p. 50 | RA58 | Accepted | Open | Focus more effort on the regions where levels of engagement are least strong. | Resources for 5 EFT regional roles are ring-fenced to strengthen connections with iwi where MIFs exist. Respective iwi organisations are, or about to be engaged by MIQ regional leadership to discuss and develop those arrangements. |
| p. 50 | RA59 | Accepted | Closed | Continue formulation of a framework for nationwide engagement with Iwi to ensure that treaty obligations are met. Ensure that policy reflects the special requirements of Iwi within the general controls of a pandemic response. | Three levels of relationships outlined in the Framework will ensure communication is more appropriate for the audience and tailored specifically for them. The framework provides a useful guide to all levels of MIQ, supporting an increased use of “kanohi kitea” as a fundamental component of communications activities. |
| p. 50 | RA60 | Accepted | Open | Continue to strengthen relationships at different level between senior leaders in MIQ and Iwi representatives, and on the ground in regions. | The framework is also guiding the organisation of the first MIQ iwi partner hui on 22 June 2021, including hui content and items dedicated for wānanga. |
| p. 50 | RA61 | Accepted | Open | Communications with Treaty partners are currently passive and need to become more engaging and proactive. | See RA59 & RA60 |
| p. 50 | RA62 | Accepted | Open | There is a need for a more integrated way of working between Treaty partners, MIQ at a national level, RIQs and MIQFs. | See RA59 & RA60 |

Workstream: Future Planning

| Report Page # | Internal Rec # | Response | Status | Recommendation | Action Taken |
|---------------|----------------|----------|--------|--|---|
| p. 20 | RA18 | Accepted | Closed | Consider more sophisticated modelling that could enable higher capacity utilisation. | More sophisticated modelling and centralised planning for optimum capacity is already underway. |
| p. 25 | RA20 | Accepted | Closed | Design an optimum schedule that matches demand with supply, which can be shared with airlines. For example, if direct flights into Christchurch with a specific group can increase MIQ efficiency, airlines may be able to accommodate these. Airlines need more certainty to be able to plan and deliver on forward schedules. | A national planning effort is underway which is matching known demand to MIQF capacity. Direct flights into Christchurch are underway to increase efficiency. Schedules are now in MIAS up to four months out. We are also engaging on a regular basis with airlines and understand that more direct flights to Christchurch are likely in the medium term. |
| p. 27 | RA21 | Accepted | Closed | Airlines need a level of forward planned certainty and clarity to enable them to meet all of the regular constraints place on them by global regulatory, such as duty time limitations. It is recommended that MIQ consider strengthening the dialogue with airlines to deliver a more direct demand and supply match for moving people to specific regions. For example, airlines indicated that they would be happy to establish flights into Christchurch but would need a level of certainty to forward-plan these into schedules. | Engagement with airlines is ongoing, directly and via BARNZ. Direct flights into Christchurch are underway as a flow on from the national planning effort. We are also in regular conversation with MoT colleagues and part of a regular COVID forum chaired by Air NZ and supported by MoH, MoT, MFAT and us. |

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| p. 30 | RA28 | Partially accepted | Open | Obtain credit card details prior to returnee departure and/or leverage MBIE's point-of-sale solution. Consider identifying non-payers (those that depart prior to the in-country requirement) at the border should also be considered. | Current regulations do not allow us to invoice a person until on, or after the day they leave MIQ (unless they are a critical worker). However, MIQ is implementing a new system to improve invoicing, including building a data platform to enable matching across multiple data sets and the ability to automatically generate a portion of invoices. MIQ can also now identify those who leave NZ before 90/180 days, when they originally indicated they were staying long enough to not be liable for fees |
| p. 30 | RA29 | Accepted | Open | Financial outcomes can be further improved by obtaining credit card details prior to returnee departure and/or leveraging MBIE's point-of-sale solution. Identifying non-payers (those that depart prior to the in-country requirement) at the border should also be considered. | See RA28 |
| p. 17 | RA33 | Accepted | Closed | Exchange MIQ and MoH forward policy programmes and develop an agreed joint policy work programme with the MoH that identifies for each initiative which agency leads and which is consulted. Establish joint teams on policies that require extensive collaboration. | A weekly plan of MIQ policy work is provided to LT and includes joint work with MoH. Joint teams are created when required and are co-located when appropriate. Joint forward policy work programme is coordinated by DPMC and reviewed on a weekly basis. |
| p. 35 | RA35 | Accepted | Closed | Establish with some urgency a working approach which encourages project teams to co-locate for key policy development and/ or establish an online collaboration capability and process for example via Microsoft Teams. This should create visibility of policy development and prevent agencies from working independently on the same policy. | A mechanism is in place to co-locate staff across agencies when needed. |
| p. 17 | RA37 | Accepted | Closed | Capture with the MoH the scope of the policy function within MIQ, acknowledging the MoH lead role relating to policy settings for the managed isolation system such as IPC, and the need for effective consultation with MIQ. | The Director General of Health wrote to Chief Executive MBIE in December 2020 articulating roles and responsibilities. There are now regular consultation processes in place. |
| p. 35 | RA38 | Accepted | Closed | The Lead Agency must leave enough time for consultation and input by participating agencies. | Processes are in place to give an early visibility of policy proposals that may require consultations. |
| p. 35 | RA39 | Accepted | Closed | Establish a policy initiation process that seeks feedback on a policy need from cross-agency operational people on its viability and what might be needed to implement it. | Operational staff are now formally engaged during the policy development process. |

Workstream: MIQ Delivery Model/Systems

| Report Page # | Internal Rec # | Response | Status | Recommendation | Action Taken |
|---------------|----------------|----------|--------|---|---|
| p. 27 | RA7 | Accepted | Closed | Optimise the baggage clearance, handling and forwarding process to minimise returnee wait time at the airport. While baggage is an airport owned issue, of concern to MIQ is the waiting time for inbound returnees at the airport, before being transported to the facility. | The baggage handling process has been re-designed to facilitate quarantine-free travel into New Zealand. This was a joint piece of work between MBIE MIQ and border agencies and the AIA. We have created a specific area to enable larger numbers to be transferred from International to Domestic MIQ charters and the process went live last week with good results. |
| p. 23 | RA40 | Accepted | Closed | All the recommendations relating to technology improvements noted in the previous section on individual allocations are relevant for groups, with some additional functionality requirements. | The Groups process is currently manual. A review of the Groups process began in April, and will put in place improvement processes. The collection of data regarding groups is now much stronger due to the resourcing of the team. A great amount of information is collected about each group. We continue to add additional functionality to the groups process through an ongoing series of releases. |

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| p. 23 | RA41 | Partially accepted | Open | Implement a Group Portal that enables two way tracked dialogue with groups during the planning activities which can take several months. Data and insights from these planning activities will help MIQ to improve service and operations for future groups. Gather better insights into the broader needs of the travelling group such as cultural, training, dietary, medical, mental health, and mobility needs. | There is an ongoing programme of work to add additional functionality to the systems that support the end to end 'customer' journey from voucher application to leaving a MIF, including consideration of the needs of Groups |
| p. 23 | RA42 | Accepted | Open | Design and map the optimum groups allocations process. This will help to inform the technology need. | The groups team is now well resourced and has effective processes in place. A detailed mapping process is underway which will provide guidance to new staff. |
| p. 29 | RA44 | Accepted | Open | Consider the testing guidelines as they apply to children to ensure the correct balance of judgement is applied, with MoH reviewing and updating guidance if necessary to make this clearer and communicate to Public Health Units. | Changes within the MIQ context are having time-limited impacts on the health workforce. These impacts have developed in the time since the assessment took place. MoH is currently undertaking a Model of Care review. |
| p. 29 | RA45 | Accepted | Open | Improve MIQF check-in processes and explore monitored self-check in options to minimise wait time for tired returnees in public areas. | Work is underway to investigate the use of QR codes and the MIAS system with the aim of reducing time for people to check in etc. |
| p. 20 | RA46 | Partially accepted | Closed | Review the requirement for cohorting. Unless recommended by the MoH as an infection prevention control cohorting should not be proceeded with. | Cohorting requirements have been reviewed, and have come into effect since May. |
| p. 36 | RA70 | Accepted | Open | Simplify SOPs with more use of visual methods to communicate key concepts with which facilities need to comply. | This will be included in the SOPs Review initiative. Currently 3/7 SOPs have already been updated, with plans in place for the release of the remaining SOPs over the regular review cycles. |
| p. 37 | RA71 | Accepted | Closed | Develop a specific SOP for aircrew and review the isolation requirements for aircrew in light of an evaluation of current health risks. | Requirements for aircrew were captured in the latest version of the Operations Framework (V5.1) |
| p. 37 | RA72 | Partially accepted | Open | Delegate specific authority to RIQCC Managers to approve local variations to SOPs. Any variations relating to health guidance must be approved by the MoH. Local approved variations at the RIQs should be stored centrally, for review by MIQ Service Design and Policy. | Work is underway to collate local area procedures (LAPs), that will then be reviewed by MIQ's Operational Policy team with support from MIQ Risk and Assurance and MoH. |
| p. 36 | RA73 | Accepted | Open | Issue releases of operating procedure updates on a shared online site, with release notes and/or in both changes-tracked and clean formats; including specific identification of changes that must be communicated to airlines and other stakeholders. | Microsoft Teams has been developed to store operational documentation, and is accessible to MBIE, RIQC and NZDF staff. A single point of distribution has been agreed for stakeholders that fall outside of that group, such as MoH. |
| p. 37 | RA74 | Accepted | Closed | Create a single Knowledge Portal for all user documentation. | The creation of the Customer Portal and Service Hub allows both customers and appropriate MIQ staff to see relevant information and the status of any applications. We will continue to release additional functionality through regular releases. |
| p. 48 | RA75 | Accepted | Open | Strengthen communications with other third-party suppliers in line with the current plans. This includes services for cleaning, maintenance, food supply, security fencing, coach transport, and airline charters. | Work has been initiated, largely as a result of the vaccination roll out to better engage with third party contractors. This will largely be done through resources that MBIE provide to suppliers i.e. hotels, to push out to their third party contractors. |
| p. 48 | RA76 | Partially accepted | Closed | Establish a Supplier Portal for all hotels (MIQFs), to communicate standard requests and other key contract and supply information in a consistent way across all MIQFs. | MBIE has established new communications systems with hotels, and they are part of the MIQ Employers' network. |
| p. 48 | RA77 | Accepted | Open | Improve clarity of what is expected of each facility beyond the commercial terms. | This is linked to RA75. There is an opportunity to provide hotels better access to SOPs to improve compliance. |

Workstream: Operating Model

| Report Page # | Internal Rec # | Response | Status | Recommendation | Action Taken |
|---------------|----------------|----------|--------|---|--|
| p. 51 | RA5 | Accepted | Open | Implement the permanent MBIE MIQF leadership structure being trialled in Auckland across all MIQFs. | This is part of the MIQ Regional Operations Structure initiative. RIQCC leads have been appointed and of the lead, assistant and other roles recruitment is underway. |
| p. 8 | RA6 | Accepted | Open | Formalise MIQ's information gathering powers in the COVID-19 Health System Response Act and complete and operationalise the Information Sharing MoUs. | Suitable provisions are already available under the Privacy Act. MIQ will address this recommendation by continuing to pursue Memoranda of Understanding with government agencies to enable data sharing. |
| p. 40 | RA30 | Accepted | Closed | The assurance team should align resources to implementing only the necessary elements of the framework (for example the risk register) and focus on executing the work programme aligned to the assessment of residual risks and leading high priority reactive risk matters. | A risk, assurance and quality management framework is in place with an agreed maturity roadmap. The Risk and Assurance team prioritises audit findings and recommendations and tracks the closure of these. |
| p. 17 | RA31 | Accepted | Closed | Focus the established MIQ, MoH and DHBs oversight group on working to ensure DHB resourcing and service consistency issues are progressed. | There are two groups in place that cover oversight and resourcing service consistency issues. There is an established risk quality and assurance advisory group with MoH and DHB involvement. We continue to review governance arrangements on a regular basis. |
| p. 17 | RA32 | Accepted | Closed | Establish single MIQ/MoH Incident Management Teams for issues emanating from the MIQ system, with senior representation from both agencies. The MIQ-TAG team referred to in Issue 3 above is a proven model. | MIQ has worked closely with MOH to ensure there is an integrated response to events with senior representative embedded within each agencies respective Incident Management teams to ensure effective coordination of response activities across the MIQ system. MIQ has also established a new Incident Management capability in its Service Quality and Assurance branch to act as a functional lead for our incident response framework, policies and procedures. |
| p. 19 | RA47 | Accepted | Closed | Obtain positive consent from returnees who supply personal information. This would be for nominated information to be used to streamline their arrival and stay in MIQ and protect their well-being. | The positive consent was integrated into the Customer Hub. |
| p. 22 | RA48 | Accepted | Closed | Review the voucher application forms and process to ensure positive consent is obtained from returnees for accessing and sharing personal information for the purposes of managing their end-to-end involvement with MIQ and contact tracing. | MIAS Users need to proactively accept the MIAS privacy statement when they register, Connected to above. |
| p. 15 | RA68 | Accepted | Open | Continue with the rapid roll-out of the National Planning Function to increase efficiency and eliminate duplication between national operations functions and the RIQCCs. Ensure standard processes, protocols and tools are used across all planning activities, and strive to ensure that there is cultural alignment across teams. Continue national management of responses to Ministers, management of exemptions, group arrivals and emergency allocations. Create a single planning team located across HQ and the RIQCCs. | This is underway and part of the MIQ Regional Operations Structure initiative. A review of MIQ's planning function has been completed and it will have fully transitioned to a National Planning Function by the end of June, which will clarify roles and responsibilities, and reduced duplication. |
| p. 51 | RA69 | Accepted | Open | Once recruited, push day-to-day operational issue management down to level three in the organisation structure to enable the leadership team the space to focus on prioritisation, risk management, future planning and performance monitoring of the MIQ operation. | The three Regional Ops Directors are in post and have financial delegations. With Ops and Security Managers also in post and the plan to appoint MBIE MIF managers, most operational decisions will sit at an appropriate level. |

Workstream: Workforce

| Report Page # | Internal Rec # | Response | Status | Recommendation | Action Taken |
|---------------|----------------|----------|--------|---|--|
| p. 29 | RA43 | Accepted | Closed | Work with the MoH and DHBs to remedy shortages in health resourcing in Auckland. Greater use of health assistants, and if necessary options for training non-health staff to take swabs to release nursing staff for daily health checks and well-being support for returnees should be considered. | Guidance is in place for testing of children and how they should be applied. This guidance is reviewed regularly by MoH. |
| p. 33 | RA63 | Accepted | Open | Complete development of a plan to civilianise current NZDF roles. Some NZDF capability and presence will be required for as long as the current scale of operations is needed. The plan should define the essential NZDF roles (likely to be an element of MIQF security, some key operational roles and senior leadership) and a phased transition of other roles to appropriately skilled MBIE employees. Target to commence a phased transition by 30 June 2021. | We will conduct a review of the security workforce numbers based on a site-level assessment of security needs. In addition, a review of NZDF national office support roles will be conducted in light of MBIE assuming some planning functions. A view of priority roles to transition from NZDF will be formed. |
| p. 33 | RA64 | Accepted | Open | Strengthen pastoral care, particularly for MIQF staff, to underpin sustainability of the workforce. | <p>A Pastoral Care Programme is underway with a range of work in progress and in the pipeline. This recommendation is "High Priority" and will focus on staff, separating it from the returnee pastoral care which has seen significant progress.</p> <p>A single programme approach has been agreed for MIQ worker welfare and wellbeing supported by the MIQ Employer Network. The Employer Network is comprised of representatives of agencies and organisations which form the workforce of MIQ (NZDF, NZ police, Hotels, DHB, Security, AVSEC etc). This forum has agreed a staff survey and staff reporting process for discrimination incidents here.</p> |
| p. 15 | RA65 | Accepted | Closed | Review the support function's planned and actual headcount through the lens of the minimum requirement to support the MIQ system until 31 December 2022. | This has been completed with advice provided to the Covid-19 Response and Finance Ministers. |
| p. 51 | RA66 | Accepted | Open | Review resourcing levels for MIQFs and if needed reallocate resources from smaller MIQFs to larger ones and/or augment staffing for larger MIQFs. | Workforce Strategy development is underway which includes reviewing the overarching operating model and a detailed options analysis for resourcing. Analysis includes consideration of resource types (civilian/military) and the impact future scenarios may have on the resourcing level required. A recommendation can then be made for the resourcing levels for the MIQFs. |
| p. 33 | RA67 | Accepted | Open | Strengthen the reporting systems to enable accurate and regular reporting of headcount by location, employer, type and function. | This is part of the Workforce Strategy. A roadmap is being developed to identify current state, how to create a single source of truth for headcount and ways to automate the system. |
| p. 29 | RA43 | Accepted | Closed | Work with the MoH and DHBs to remedy shortages in health resourcing in Auckland. Greater use of health assistants, and if necessary options for training non-health staff to take swabs to release nursing staff for daily health checks and well-being support for returnees should be considered. | Guidance is in place for testing of children and how they should be applied. This guidance is reviewed regularly by MoH. |

Annex Three: Communications Plan



COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

RAPID ASSESSMENT



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI





DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document information

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Project name | Rapid Assessment of MIQ report |
| Author | Privacy of natural persons |
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Distribution list

| Name | Position | Group/Office |
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| MIQ LT | | |
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Document approval

| | Name | Signature | Date |
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| Prepared by (Project Manager and/or Communications Advisor) | Kathryn Rush | | |
| Approved by (Budget Manager) | Megan Main | | |
| Project Sponsor | Privacy of natural persons | | |



Context

After six months of operation by MBIE, Chief Executive Carolyn Tremain initiated a rapid assessment of MIQ operations by an external panel, made up of Murray Jack and Katherine Corich, to help identify practical recommendations for improvements.

The Rapid Assessment was carried out in February and makes 82 recommendations in five categories – with eight key recommendations identified.

Issues highlighted include the IT infrastructure, information sharing, and inter-agency arrangements, particularly with MoH.

This plan outlines the communications strategy for the proactive release of the report.

Objectives

- Communicate that MBIE has taken the initiative to review MIQ operations itself, as part of the commitment to continual improvement.
- Demonstrate that lessons have been learned, actions are already underway, or plans are in place to address recommendations.
- Demonstrate that given the pace of continuous improvement, many of the issues highlighted were already being addressed and are in significantly better shape now than at the time of the review – national planning processes and tools, information management and sharing, incident management to name a few.
- Ensure consistency of messaging among key stakeholders

Communications approach

We recommend that MBIE proactively release the Report on its website. This would be accompanied by MBIE's formal response to the Report.

MBIE would intend issuing a Media Statement at that time, alerting the news media to the Reports existence, and outlining MBIE's general acceptance of the recommendations and progress made. An MBIE spokesperson would be made available to any news media for interviews as required.

A date for public release of the Report is yet to be confirmed, and we would work with your office to identify a suitable date.



Key messages

More than 140,000 people have safely gone through MIQ and it is the cornerstone of what's keeping COVID-19 out so that we can enjoy freedoms that are the envy of the world.

MIQ staff are on the frontline and we are exceptionally proud of the work they are doing to help keep our communities safe.

The review was initiated as part of MIQ's commitment to continual improvement, learning lessons and future proofing the system.

We wanted a fresh set of eyes to confirm we are on right track and to help identify any further areas for improvement.

Because MIQ is a very dynamic environment where we constantly refine our systems and processes, many of the issues raised in the report have moved on.

Nearly a third of the recommendations have already been implemented, while action on just over 60 percent is already underway. The remaining recommendations have plans in place to address them.

The pandemic and New Zealand's response to it has continued to evolve, and MIQ has had to adapt, often at pace, to these changes.

MIQ's IT Infrastructure and systems were stood up very quickly, and work is underway to ensure the systems are fit for the future.

The evolving and dynamic nature of the COVID-19 situation has presented complex, never previously experienced operational challenges. But inter-agency relationships are strong, and roles are constantly being more tightly defined and collaboration strengthened.

This is the first of rolling six monthly reviews that will act as a benchmark for MIQ as it continues developing this unprecedented operation.



COMMUNICATIONS RUNSHEET ACTION PLAN

Recommended deliverables

| Date/ Time | Event/action | Audience | Person responsible | Status/ comments |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Three days prior to release | Email to RIQ leaders. They pass information onto relevant parts of their team | RIQ leaders/staff | MIQ Comms/Regional Comms | |
| Three days prior to release | Reports, PR and key messages. | DPMC | <small>Privacy of natural persons</small> MIQ Comms | |
| Three days prior to release | Heads up | DHBs | MoH comms | |
| Three days prior to release | Heads up | NZDF | Rose King's office | Signed off |
| Three days prior to release | Heads up | Airlines | Andy Milne | signed off |
| Three days prior to release | Heads up | <small>Commercial Information</small> | Christina Sophocleous- Jones | signed off |
| Three days prior to release | Heads up | MIFs | <small>Privacy of natural persons</small> | signed off |
| Three days prior to release | Heads up | Iwi | Andy Milne | signed off |



| | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Three days prior to release | Heads up - generic | Police, Avsec, Unions | Megan Main's office | Signed off |
| Day of release TBC | Intranet news story, MIQ staff email from Megan Main/Rose King before it is released publicly (suggest 9am) | MIQ Staff | Privacy of natural persons | To be signed off |
| Day of Release - Early afternoon Report and Response 'go live' on MBIE website PR sent out [Media interviews if required] | Proactive release | Public and Media | MIQ Comms | |



Appendix One: Points of Interest in Report

Quotes from Report:

- “As context for the assessment, it is acknowledged that the MIQ system was established under urgency, initially with only a few hours to stand up facilities before arrivals landed at the border. It has been an extraordinary collaborative effort on the part of all agencies and private sector partners. The operations of the MIQ system have continued to evolve since its inception.” Pg 5
- “Given the urgency with which the MIQ system was established and the need for it to operate from day one, it was inevitable that the organisation, operating model, processes, systems and technology to support its functioning would need to be built alongside scaling of day-to-day operations.” Pg 5
- “Given the complex and ever-changing inputs with which the planners deal, MIQ has achieved an admirable capability. This has been due to the total commitment of the people who have been working in these areas since the launch of MIQ. A recently appointed team is focusing on continuous improvements.” Pg 24
- NB: The report says “MIQ will likely continue in some form at least until the end of 2022”

Interagency arrangements:

- The report says “Frustrations are evident on both sides of the working relationship...existing mechanisms do not seem to be effective in resolving tensions”
- In response to issues, people in MIQ and MoH “swarm the issues”... “running to a problem is a human phenomenon that does impact efficiency and effectiveness”. Pg 16 & 17

Info and Data Sharing

- The report highlights there is no agreed framework for the practical sharing of data that is required in a pandemic. Pg 18

Capacity

- The report recommends no cohorting if it isn’t recommended by MoH. Pg 20
- It is critical of the capacity modelling and suggests considering “more sophisticated modelling”. Pg20

Core Processes

- Report says that comms with people who couldn’t get a voucher is “not ideal”. Pg 21

Planning and Scheduling Returnees:

- Reportsays the format is “rudimentary” and relies on “heavily manual processes”. Pg 25
- Report suggests eliminating “the ability for voucher holders to game the system by authenticating every entrant to it” pg 27



Fees

- Assessment highlights the issue of outstanding invoices and backlog and of identifying non-payers at the border. Pg 30
- It recommends Cabinet paper of default to bill everyone. [note this may be redacted]

Enablers

- Health resourcing is under pressure in Auckland. Unplanned sick leave and other absences can create a daily shortfall of 10-15% of the 160-person workforce. This shortfall is filled with costly agency staff and charge nurses. Although there is no evidence that testing is compromised, it is possible there are shortfalls in daily health checks and general support for returnee well-being. There is also likely to be additional pressure on DHBs as the vaccination programme ramps up.
- There are concerns that the Auckland health workforce is under stress given the volume of returnees, and the impacts of community outbreaks which creates downstream risks to IPC. Pg 32 -33

Policy

- The report says: Policy creation is currently a fragmented and heavily manual process... This results in time wastage, duplication of effort and confusion. Recent examples have seen two papers on the same topic being written by different agencies and submitted to the Minister. Pg 34

Operating Procedures

- “There are specific requirements for the handling of international aircrew and these are not as rigorous as for returnees” pg 36 (not for MIQ to answer)

Quality Assurance

- Report says given the remaining life – “unlikely to reach full maturity before scaled down or closed”. Pg 40

Data Integrity/Reporting

- Report says “The mechanisms governing data sharing in the cross agency MIQ model result in manual work-arounds, involving re-work and significant delays, being the operational norm. Extant processes are invented on the fly to deal with each individual case, and core systems are not integrated, resulting in poor quality data and inaccurate reporting.”
- No single source of truth
- Report generation is unsophisticated and labour intensive.
- Data security (and therefore privacy) is a key issue and risk pg 41

Technology Operating Systems

- Report says “the flat file structure of MIAS is unable to support the efficient transfer of data to other systems and is unlikely to be able to support the scenario modelling that will be required as NZ moves towards a variable model of managed isolation which could include different requirements for groups, travel bubbles, green travel zones, home isolation and fee structures” – pg 44 (may be redacted)



Treaty

- Report says “significant omission in set up phase” and “The shared understanding of needs is maturing but still has a long way to go”. Pg 49



Appendix Two – Q + As

Are you expecting there to be border restrictions until the end of next year?

It is likely to be some time before international travel returns to normal. At this stage MIQ has funding through to June 2022.

The report recommends a phased transition of defence force starting the end of this month

MIQ logistics and operations require a cross-agency effort, which includes MBIE, New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), the Ministry of Health, New Zealand Police, District Health Boards, Aviation Security, private security and hotel staff.

In August 2020, the Government increased the number of defence force personnel supporting MIQ and the maritime border to further bolster protections against COVID-19 spreading into the community.

Defence force personnel have appropriate training for a range of security tasks at MIQ facilities. Defence personnel provide robust leadership and management skills that assist in the running of MIQ facilities.

As part of MIQ's continuous improvement process for operations, a review is planned of the roles undertaken by defence personnel. This review will assist in ensuring a sustainable MIQ system for as long as it is required, and identify any roles that can be transitioned to appropriately skilled civilian staff.

As yet, there is no fixed end date for the involvement of NZDF in supporting MIQ.

Is there tension between MIQ and MoH?

The multi-agency nature of MIQ has presented complex operational challenges, but the relationship between MIQ and MoH is strong. A Ministry of Health official sits on the MIQ leadership team which meets every week and we have daily interactions with our colleagues at Health. The response to Covid-19 is a team effort, and all agencies are committed to working together to make the system the best it can be.

If you're working so well together, why does the report talk about time wastage, duplication and confusion?

MIQ was set up at pace and there was no 'play book'. We have worked to create strong links between our various agencies and better define respective roles. We have worked increasingly to provide joint advice to Ministers and create joint teams where appropriate. There is the ability for staff across agencies to work in the same office when needed, and workshops are frequently used to develop cross-agency policy advice.

Why isn't there better information sharing between the two Ministries?

The multi-agency, rapid nature of MIQ operations and the sensitivity of health data has presented logistical challenges, but the systems are continuously improving. MoH and MBIE continue to work on systems to provide efficient and effective sharing of information between Ministries.

The report describes you as "swarming" and "running" to an issue – is this a sign that the Ministries are working inefficiently together?



MIQ workers are committed to their role of keeping New Zealanders safe and this drives the response when issues arise. It seems reasonable that teams made up of both of MIQ and Health staff jointly lead the responses to any issues that emerge. We are always looking for ways to strengthen the framework and coordination between MIQ and MoH.

More than 133,000 people have safely gone through MIQ and it is the cornerstone of what's keeping COVID-19 out so that we can enjoy freedoms that are the envy of the world.

Is the MIQ set up inefficient? Are you duplicating the effort at head office?

Because of the pace that MIQ was set up there was previously some duplication of roles. These have now been clarified and there is recruitment in place to establish a team to manage planning nationally which will help make the system even more efficient.

Are your IT and data systems a failure?

The IT systems were set up at speed and a network upgrade is underway in RIQCCs and MIQFs. We are looking at all of MIQ's systems and data to ensure that they enable MIQ to do what it needs to, and that it is fit for the future, whilst not creating a white elephant.

Several streams of work are underway to improve system and data integrity. A data ownership map will assist with the overall improvement in data integrity, particularly for records that are not already centralised. MIQ acknowledges the need for strong leadership in the data stream, and has appointed a General Manager Data & Technology to lead this area.

Is the IT and data sharing set up the reason we've seen some MIQ workers not being tested regularly?

By and large these systems are now working well, and employers are recording staff testing information into the Border Worker Testing Register, and we can cross reference this with our WhosOnLocation system.

We now use this information to proactively support employers and employees to meet their obligations when it comes to staff surveillance testing.

The report is concerned about the impact of cohorting on capacity – why are you increasing this?

With the pandemic still raging around the world, and the emergence of new, potentially more contagious variants, the government has taken additional steps around cohorting to make New Zealand's borders safer.

The introduction of the Trans-Tasman bubble has freed up a number of rooms. This has provided the opportunity to rethink the approach to managing returnees, and risks, in ways that were not previously available.

Is the booking and scheduling system “rudimentary”?

The voucher system has performed extremely well as a system to book vouchers since its introduction in October 2020. The system was introduced to manage demand for spaces in MIQ which it has done, allowing over 135,000 people to come into New Zealand. As was always intended, improvements have



been made as we go and the system has been developed significantly since it was first released. We've made multiple changes since the system was introduced, such as:

- Improvements to the front-end and back-end features, based on feedback from customers and our internal teams
- Preventing people from holding multiple vouchers
- Enhancing software to prohibit programmes (bots) securing bulk vouchers
- Releasing batches of vouchers at different times to assist people in different time zones
- We're doing everything we can to optimise space within Managed Isolation facilities

Of course there is always room for improvement. However, as has been the case throughout, our team has learned fast, identified and plugged gaps.

Is the system unsophisticated?

The Rapid Assessment is based on observations from months ago, when the booking system had only been operating for a short time. It has been significantly updated since then, with new functionality for the front-end customer experience and back-end administration.

MIAS has performed very well as a booking system, with only a few occasions where the system has become overloaded due to unprecedented high demand. Any website would have struggled to cope with the level of usage which MIAS experienced, which occurred because MIQ was unable to load new spaces due to the unavailability of flight schedules. The build-up of demand was not a problem caused by the technology system itself. We have made changes to address this, including moving to a rolling release of rooms and working with airlines to get more reliable flight schedules loaded. MIAS will continue to be developed further as both a booking system and a planning tool.

Are there cyber security concerns around MIAS?

We have engaged an external agency to carry out testing and review of MIAS to ensure it meets security expectations. There is 24 hour monitoring and investigation of any unusual behaviour. This is an area we constantly scrutinise and make any improvements as needed.

Have people been gaming the system? Is that because the system is unsophisticated?

MIAS was intentionally designed to give everyone an equal opportunity to secure a voucher in a managed isolation facility. While human behaviour means that's not always possible, we have taken steps to help even the playing field, including preventing people holding multiple vouchers and enhancing software to prohibit programmes (bots) securing bulk vouchers.

This has been necessary due to the demand for spaces in MIQ, which is not a problem which the technology system has caused.

Programmers who circumvent the normal use of the system are breaching the Terms of Use stipulated for the site. This behaviour is monitored and users are blocked where necessary.

Is MIQ not getting consent for the way they use returnees personal data?

Since the launch of the online booking system, in order to create an account and register, MIQ has been getting consent from returnees for the way their personal data is used. Returnees need to tick agreement to the terms of use and privacy statement which covers this. Since March we also require confirmation of



agreement within the application process in the personal data section to consent to use of personal information. The consent is mandatory and recorded, along with the date it was ticked.

Is the system fit for purpose to manage if the Australian bubble bursts?

We are confident in our ability to respond if the bubble is paused or suspended. We have 500 spaces set aside as national contingency if required. If the government determined that travellers needed to go into MIQ unexpectedly, the MIAS system would not be used for this purpose.

Can the current system handle variable and potentially higher risk returnee scenarios?

Yes, and as New Zealand's response to Covid-19 develops, so do our systems and processes. We will continue to adapt our operations as required.

Are you failing to communicate properly with people trying to book a voucher?

Our team has worked hard to ensure that there is detailed information on the MIQ website to help those trying to book a voucher. We continuously monitor this and provide updates and improvements if any gaps are found.

The report says that MIQ is “unlikely to reach full maturity before scaled down or closed” – is that good enough? Can we expect a less than ideal set up for the duration of this pandemic?

The nature of MIQ's operations mean we will always be evolving and there will always be room for improvement. The key thing is that we continue to learn and adapt for the time that MIQ is required, and look to set up a legacy, should a similar system be needed in future pandemics.

Why is it taking MIQ so long to invoice and get payment from returnees? Why don't you just charge people before they arrive/on checkout?

Current regulations mean we cannot invoice someone until they day on or after they leave a managed isolation facility. Invoices become overdue from 91 days after the invoice date. Debt recovery action doesn't occur until 180 days from when the invoice was issued. If the person does not contact or pay, a decision will be made about the most appropriate course of action – that could be debt collection agency referral or court action. No one has been referred to debt collection yet as no invoices have reached 180 days.

MBIE has been undertaking a review of the MIQ fees system to ensure the settings remain fit for purpose and align with government objectives. The Minister will be reporting back to Cabinet on this work once it is complete.

Is the pressure on the MIQ health workforce putting the system at risk?

Looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of all of our staff is a top priority, and it is critical to ultimately ensure the safety of our community. These workers are on the frontline of our defence against COVID-19 and we thank them for their hard work and commitment in protecting New Zealanders during this global pandemic.

Pressure on the health workforce ebbs and flows in response to a range of complex factors, some temporary and others sustained. For example, the opening of quarantine-free travel resulted in a sustained overall reduction in occupancy but an increase in the risk profile of returnees. The transition to



cohorting returnees also resulted in sustained changes to the flow of workload. An example of a temporary change includes the recent suspension of travel from India.

The Ministry of Health and DHBs work closely together to understand the impacts of change and adapt to it. A recent Ministry of Health review found that the health workforce has been able to “sustain a high-quality service in a context of constant change and challenging conditions. Staff have responded to the need to rapidly evolve practice in response to emergent knowledge about the virus and the risks it poses. It is evident that as teams have developed confidence in the efficacy of what they are doing, a resilience-based approach is emerging, where risks are assessed and managed, and what is working well is identified and augmented.”

Will you consider using health assistants/non-health staff?

We are exploring whether non-health staff can conduct the daily staff health checks when under the appropriate delegation and supervision of registered nurses. We are also investigating models of care within MIQs to identify opportunities for health care assistants to support registered nurses with tasks that are within their scope of practice.

Why didn't Maori engagement happen when MIQ was set up? And what's being done to address this now?

The speed at which MIQ had to be stood up meant that engagement with Māori did not happen early enough in the process and we are deeply committed to addressing this. A lot of effort has been put into building and strengthening relationships with our Iwi-Māori partners in our MIQ regions, and this is something we will continue to work out. MIQ recently appointed a new Director Māori has to provide further leadership on this and more resources are being allocated to help cement engagement with iwi as part of our business as usual approach. A future-focussed wananga with iwi participation is also planned to take place in Wellington in mid-June.

Are communications teams completely disconnected between agencies?

The entire COVID response was stood up at pace. There are now daily morning meetings between the communications teams of the main agencies (MoH, MIQ, DPMC) and the relevant Minister's offices. Regular weekly meetings are also held. Communications teams at all the agencies work closely together to ensure no surprises for anyone involved.