



## BRIEFING

### Future of Wellington-based MIQ facilities: options for maintaining quarantine capacity in Wellington

<b>Date:</b>	27 May 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security classification:</b>		<b>Tracking number:</b>	2021-3641

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Chris Hipkins <b>Minister for COVID-19 Response</b>	<p><b>Agree</b> to the decommissioning of the Bay Plaza MIQ facility in Wellington.</p> <p><b>Indicate</b> whether you would like officials to prepare an oral item or draft Cabinet paper advising Cabinet of your decision.</p>	7 June 2021

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Kara Isaac	General Manager, MIQ Policy	Privacy of natural persons	✓
Privacy of natural persons	Manager, Allocation and Supply, MIQ Policy		
	Senior Policy Advisor, MIQ Policy		

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
Ministry of Health, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Minister's office to complete:

Approved

Declined

Noted

Needs change

Seen

Overtaken by Events

See Minister's Notes

Withdrawn

Comments



# BRIEFING

## Future of Wellington-based MIQ facilities: options for maintaining quarantine capacity in Wellington [commercially sensitive]

<b>Date:</b>	26 May 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security classification:</b>		<b>Tracking number:</b>	2021-3641

### Purpose

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This paper:

- provides background information on the operational challenges of MIQ in Wellington
- sets out public health advice on the need to retain quarantine capacity in the Wellington region
- seeks your agreement to decommission the Bay Plaza Wellington as an MIQ facility.

### Executive summary

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Operating Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) in Wellington is logistically challenging, primarily due to difficulties involved in consistently transporting returnees arriving in Auckland to the facilities in Wellington (see **Annex One** for full details). In addition, the ongoing MIQ ventilation review recently found that both Wellington-based facilities require either moderate or significant remediation in order to sufficiently mitigate the risk of in-facility transmission.

Decommissioning both Wellington MIQ facilities would improve operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness for the MIQ network. However, public health advice is that having no managed quarantine capacity in the central region would increase the risk to public health in the event of a community outbreak. Consequently, we have worked with the Ministry of Health to identify and evaluate the following options for MIQ in Wellington:

- **Option 1:** Status quo (retain both MIQ facilities)
- **Option 2:** Decommission the Bay Plaza and retain the Grand Mercure (Wellington)
- **Option 3:** Decommission both MIQ facilities and use alternative quarantine measures for community cases and close contacts

We are seeking your agreement to Option 2 (decommission Bay Plaza, retain Grand Mercure), because it provides the best balance between the need to improve operational feasibility and maintaining high-quality public health risk management. This will have a negligible impact on MIQ operational capacity (30 rooms), while ensuring Wellington continues to have managed quarantine capacity available to respond to a community outbreak.

Decommissioning the Bay Plaza MIQ facility would require careful communications and stakeholder management to ensure a smooth decommissioning process and positive outcome for all involved. We will prepare a decommissioning pack for the Bay Plaza (including communications and stakeholder engagement collateral, and a timeframe for decommissioning) and provide this to you by 25 June 2021. While not required, you may also wish us to prepare an oral item or a Cabinet paper for you to inform your colleagues of your decision. ✓

Public announcements of any decommissioning decisions should not be made until we have completed discussions with all relevant stakeholders (particularly the hotel owners and MIQ staff). ✓

## Recommended action

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The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a **Note** MBIE previously advised you of the ongoing logistical challenges of MIQ in Wellington [2021-3193 refers].

*Noted*

- b **Note** as part of consultation on the possible decommissioning of Wellington MIQ facilities, the Ministry of Health has advised that quarantine capacity is required in the central region as part of the public health response to possible community outbreaks.

*Noted*

- c **Note** as part of the ongoing ventilation review of all MIQ facilities, on-site ventilation assessments in Wellington have found that:

i.

Commercial Information

ii.

*Noted*

### Options for MIQ in Wellington

- d **Note** we have identified three options for the future of MIQ in Wellington:

- i. **Option 1:** Status quo (retain both Wellington MIQ facilities with continued underutilisation)
- ii. **Option 2:** Decommission the Bay Plaza and retain the Grand Mercure (Wellington) as an MIQ facility [**recommended**]
- iii. **Option 3:** Decommission both Wellington MIQ facilities and use alternative quarantine measures for community cases of COVID-19

*Noted*

- e **Note** decommissioning the Bay Plaza would have the following workforce implications:

- i. re-deployment of NZDF staff (25), Police (12) and re-deployment of all DHB workers at the Bay Plaza (12)
- ii. likely re-deployment of third party contractors by their employers (22 security and 5 other staff)
- iii. possible redundancies for MBIE security staff (6 staff, though some are likely to be redeployed)
- iv. unknown impacts on the Bay Plaza staff (approx. 25) as the hotel returns to its general commercial use.

*Noted*

- f **Note** while Option 3 (decommission both Wellington MIQ facilities and use alternative quarantine measures for community outbreaks) would improve operational efficiency and

cost-effectiveness for the MIQ system, it would increase the risk to public health due to having no readily available quarantine facility in the lower North Island.

*Noted*

- g **Agree** to decommission the Bay Plaza and retain the Grand Mercure in Wellington as an MIQ facility (Option 2).

Agree  Disagree

- h **Indicate**, should you wish to advise Cabinet of your decisions in this paper, whether you would like officials to prepare either:

i. an oral item

Yes  No

OR:

ii. a Cabinet paper.

Yes  No

*Implementation*

- i **Note** should you agree to decommission the Bay Plaza MIQ facility, implementation process will be as follows:

Step	Action
1	Decision to decommission the Bay Plaza ( <b>Minister</b> ) Cabinet informed of decision (optional)
2	MBIE to provide decommissioning plan to Minister (including communications and stakeholder engagement plan, timeframes and costs) by 25 June 2021
3	MBIE communicate decisions and guidance to hotel, staff and other relevant stakeholders
4	Public announcement of decision
5	Commence decommissioning process

*Noted*

- j **Agree** to defer any public announcements about any decommissioning decision until MBIE has completed commercial discussions with all relevant stakeholders and communicated decisions to staff.

Agree  Disagree

- k **Note** that the contracted required notice for decommissioning an MIQ facility at our convenience is 90 days, meaning the earliest a Wellington MIQ facility would be decommissioned from the MIQ portfolio is October 2021 (assuming the termination notice is issued by the end of June 2021).

*Noted*

- l **Note** as requested by your office, MBIE will provide further advice on the general process for decommissioning MIQ facilities in general by 31 May 2021.

*Noted*

*Ventilation remediation at the Grand Mercure (Wellington)*

- m **Note** initial discussions with the Grand Mercure hotel owners indicate they are willing to undergo the remediation work required to reduce the risk of in-facility transmission caused by ventilation features at the facility.
- Noted*
- n **Note** we expect to receive a remediation plan from the hotel owners shortly, which will determine whether the facility will need to be taken offline during remediation, or whether it can continue to operate with reduced occupancy.
- Noted*
- o **Note** as a contingency plan in the unlikely event of a community outbreak during the Grand Mercure remediation, we will not decommission the Bay Plaza until we have certainty that either:
- i. managed quarantine rooms will be available at the Grand Mercure during the remediation work (i.e. reduced occupancy during remediation); or
  - ii. rooms at the Bay Plaza will be available as a temporary quarantine option until remediation at the Grand Mercure is complete (subject to agreement by the Bay Plaza hotel and IPC approvals).
- Noted*
- p **Note** we will provide your office with regular updates on developments with the Grand Mercure ventilation remediation work in the coming weeks.

*Noted*

*Proactive release*

- q **Agree** that this briefing is **not** proactively released at this time due to commercial sensitivities with the relevant hotels, and that it will only be released once decisions are finalised and all relevant stakeholders have been notified.

**Agree** Disagree



Kara Isaac  
**General Manager, MIQ Policy**  
Managed Isolation and Quarantine, MBIE

26 / 5 / 2021



Hon Chris Hipkins  
**Minister for COVID-19 Response**

3 / 06 / 2021

## Background

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1. On 14 April 2021, MBIE provided you with advice the ongoing challenges of operating MIQ facilities in Wellington [briefing 2021-3193 refers]. That advice set how the challenges involved in the current operation of Wellington MIQ facilities may mean having facilities in Wellington is not a viable or cost-effective long-term option (see **Annex One** for more detail).
2. These challenges include:
  - a. Wellington International Airport will not allow MIQ to use its passenger terminal or baggage handling facilities under any circumstances, meaning that all 'red' flights must be processed through the NZDF Rongotai Air Movements terminal
  - b. passenger processing facilities at the NZDF terminal limit the number of people who can be processed per flight in a safe and timely manner to approximately 60
  - c. difficulties with continuing a safe, reliable and cost-effective coach service to transfer returnees to the facilities
  - d. 

Commercial information
  - e. the lack of suitable and / or willing hotels to be added to the MIQ portfolio in Wellington.
3. While we explored whether Wellington could be used as an option for accommodating group arrivals, such as RSE workers or international students, operational challenges mean that this is not possible [2021-3496 refers].
4. We have since worked with the Ministry of Health through the operational and public health implications of decommissioning MIQ facilities in Wellington. As part of this consultation, the Ministry of Health has advised that decommissioning MIQ in Wellington would undermine current strategies for managing an outbreak of community cases in Wellington and bordering regions, due to having no quarantine capacity between Auckland and Christchurch.

## Factors to consider when deciding the future of Wellington MIQ facilities

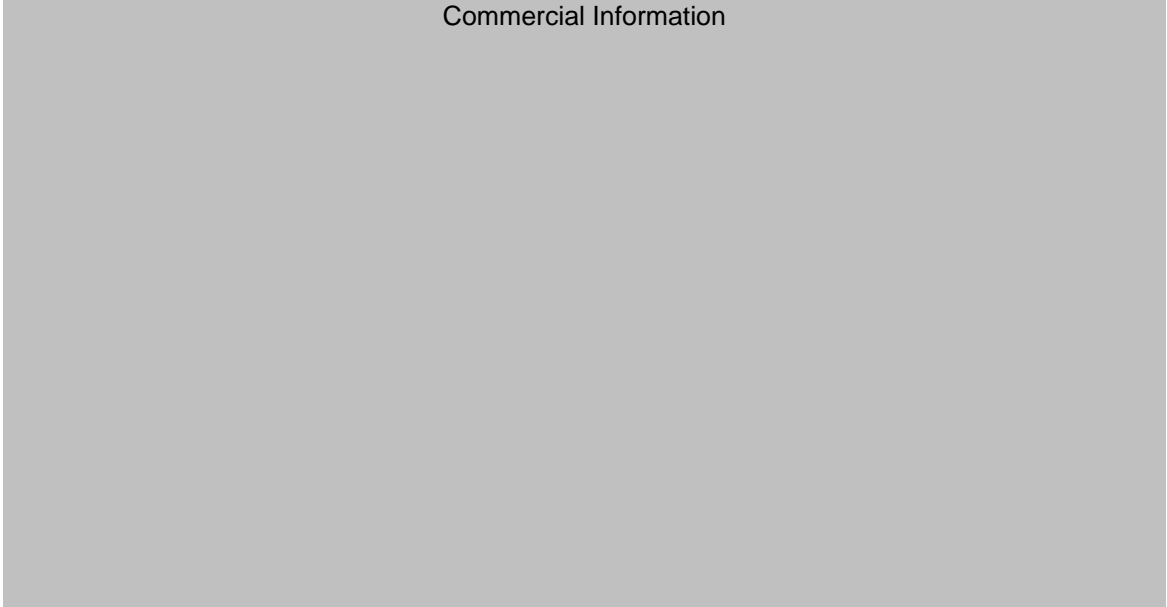
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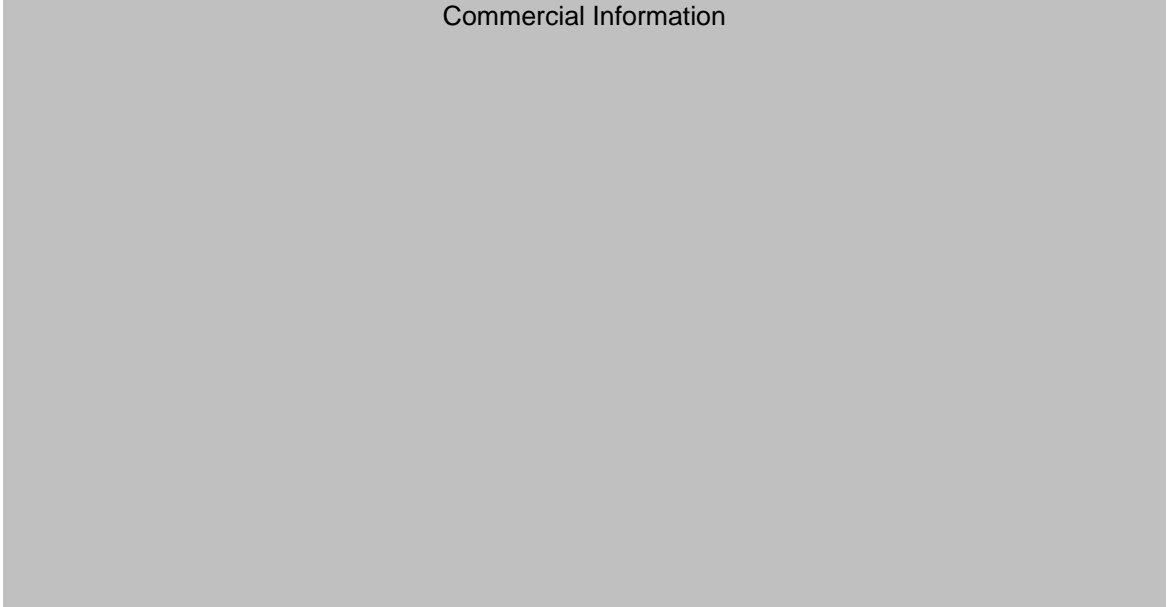
### *Role of MIQ in the public health response to COVID-19*

5. The MIQ system helps manage the public health risk posed by COVID-19 in two ways:
  - a. MIQ helps stop COVID-19 at the border by accommodating people arriving at the border who are required to undergo 14 days managed isolation. The majority of MIQ rooms are used for this purpose.
  - b. MIQ is a key part of the strategy to manage the spread of COVID-19 in the event of a community outbreak in a metropolitan region. Specifically, MIQ quarantine capacity:
    - i. gives medical officers of health the option of placing most community acquired cases and some of their close contacts into managed quarantine to limit the potential for onward transmission of the virus
    - ii. takes pressure off limited community options for suitable isolation/quarantine accommodation
    - iii. lessens the likelihood of needing to raise the Alert Level to limit movement of the general population in the affected region.

*Current state of MIQ facilities in Wellington*

6. The two MIQ facilities in Wellington are the Bay Plaza (Managed Isolation only, 61 room capacity) and the Grand Mercure Wellington (Managed Isolation and Quarantine, 94 room capacity, including 10 rooms reserved for quarantine).
7. As part of the ongoing ventilation review of all MIQ facilities (a progress report on the wider ventilation review programme will be with you by 8 June 2021), on-site ventilation assessments in Wellington have found that:

a.  Commercial Information

b. 

8. Removing both facilities from the MIQ network would only have a very minor impact on our total network capacity. This is due to:
  - a. the low number of rooms available in Wellington (145 rooms not including quarantine capacity, or 3% of operational capacity) of which only 115 can be used
  - b. logistical challenges resulting in both facilities persistently experiencing low occupancy, despite room availability
  - c. ongoing reduced capacity at the Bay Plaza due to ventilation considerations.
9. However, the Grand Mercure provides quarantine capacity that is critical to managing the public health risk of a community outbreak in the lower North Island (currently 10 rooms, though this could be scaled up). Unlike the Jet Park facility in Auckland, these quarantine rooms have, to date, been used very infrequently.

*Public health advice*

10. The Ministry of Health has provided public health advice that Wellington should retain managed quarantine capability, because:
  - a. It is your expectation that community cases and household contacts are managed in a safe and secure location as determined by a Medical Officer of Health. The ability for Medical Officers of Health to have the option to place positive cases or close contacts into a managed quarantine facility is necessary to manage the public health risk should there be a community outbreak of COVID-19 in the lower North Island.
  - b. Wellington has an experienced and stable workforce to support MIQ, so has the capacity and proven capability to run a quarantine facility.

- c. Wellington receives 'green' flights from Australia, and is connected with key cities across New Zealand, so the risk of cases or close contacts of cases arriving in Wellington who need to be placed into quarantine remains a possibility.
- d. Wellington facilities are critical to extending the geographic reach of the quarantine system in the wider region, particularly the lower North Island. DHB regions without MIQ facilities have encountered logistical issues in transporting people if they need to undertake managed isolation. Removing Wellington's quarantine capacity would result in similar issues.
- e. While the logistical issues involved in transporting cases to MIQ facilities are not insurmountable, transporting COVID-19 cases or contacts poses health risks for those affected and those involved in the transport. In addition, even where transport is feasible, it is necessary for regions to have rapidly available suitable accommodation options for 24-48 hours while transport is arranged.

11. Commercial Information

## Options for MIQ in Wellington

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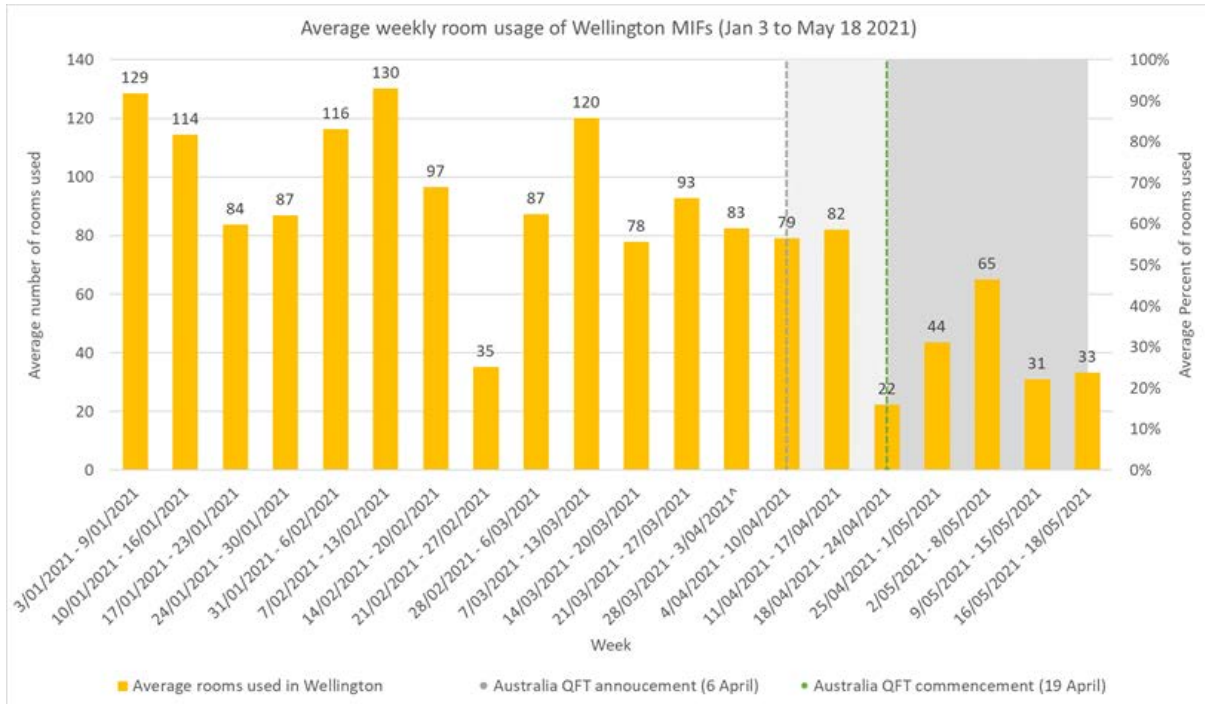
12. There are three options for the future of MIQ in Wellington:
- **Option 1:** Status quo (retain both MIQ facilities)
  - **Option 2:** Decommission the Bay Plaza and retain the Grand Mercure (Wellington)
  - **Option 3:** Decommission both MIQ facilities and use alternative quarantine measures for community cases and close contacts
13. We have not included an option to keep one MIQ facility empty (i.e. on 'standby') or quickly 'stand up' a standard MIQ facility in the event of a community outbreak, because neither option is practically feasible. One of the difficulties in retaining quarantine capability is the need for both a suitable facility and a suitable workforce. While we may be able to retain an empty MIQ facility on standby for a community outbreak, a suitable workforce takes time to build and requires ongoing activity in order to retain staff and system knowledge. Retaining a standard managed quarantine facility in Wellington would therefore require a facility that is consistently occupied in order to retain staff and maintain skills and readiness.

### **Option 1 (Status quo) is not recommended due to high operational costs**

14. Current MIQ capacity in Wellington provides both quarantine and isolation capacity. This capacity currently covers any community outbreaks in the lower North Island and contributes to the overall capacity of the MIQ system. However, since the commencement of quarantine-free travel (QFT) with Australia this capacity has been consistently underutilised (averaging 29% occupancy per week) due to the above-mentioned logistical and facility challenges. Figure 1 below shows the average weekly occupancy in Wellington in 2021.



Figure 1: Average weekly occupancy in Wellington MIQ facilities



15. Retaining both Wellington MIQ facilities would likely continue the underutilisation in Wellington and ongoing financial and workload uncertainty for the hotels and MIQ staff, potentially resulting in staff redundancies or turnover.

16. Commercial Information

17. In addition, there is a residual public health risk caused by ongoing domestic transfers of high risk returnees to Wellington. Minimising returnee movements, where possible, decreases risk. However, this risk is considered low with the operational practices in place, and to date has not resulted in any known cases breaching the MIQ system.

**Option 2 (decommission Bay Plaza, retain Grand Mercure) is recommended as it improves operational feasibility and maintains high-quality public health risk management**

18. Retaining the Grand Mercure will ensure Wellington is able to respond to positive cases or possible cases that emerge in the Wellington region. While this will come with logistical challenges, we consider this necessary to ensure Wellington is well-placed to respond to a community outbreak.

19. Due to the ongoing issues with domestic transfers and processing capacity at Wellington airport and wider cohorting restrictions, the Grand Mercure may continue to experience low occupancy although this is difficult to accurately predict. MBIE may need to take this into account when finalising the contract and remuneration with this facility (e.g. by paying a

minimum 'flat rate' if capacity drops below a certain level, as opposed to current arrangements where MBIE pays a lower rate for all unoccupied rooms).

20. As mentioned above, engineering and / or operational enhancements at the Grand Mercure will be required in order to mitigate in-facility transmission risks identified by the recent on-site ventilation review. Remediation work could require the facility to be taken offline for several months and may also require MBIE funding (pending the outcome of commercial discussions with the hotel). However, barring unexpected surprises, the remediation work will be able to go ahead and the facility should be available for ongoing MIQ use once this work is complete.
21. As a contingency plan to manage community transmission risk during the Grand Mercure remediation, we will not decommission the Bay Plaza until we have certainty that either:
  - a. managed quarantine rooms will be available at the Grand Mercure during the remediation work (i.e. reduced occupancy during remediation); or
  - b. rooms at the Bay Plaza will be available as a temporary quarantine option until remediation at the Grand Mercure is complete (subject to agreement by the Bay Plaza hotel and IPC approvals).
22. We expect to receive a remediation plan from the hotel owners shortly outlining steps they will take to address the ventilation considerations (noting that undertaking remediation is a commercial decision for the hotel). This plan will determine whether the facility will need to be taken offline during remediation (which could take several weeks or even months) or whether it can continue to operate with reduced occupancy. We will keep you regularly updated with any developments.
23. Decommissioning the Bay Plaza will:
  - a. result in a minor decrease in MIQ operational capacity (61 rooms, or 1.4%); however in practice this is effectively 30 rooms since the facility can only be used at 50% capacity with high risk returnees
  - b. increase occupancy at the Grand Mercure as it can now take in all of the domestic transfers arriving in Wellington
  - c. save approximately \$5 million in MBIE total expenditure up to June 2022 (the exact amount depends on when we give 90-day notice to the hotel and occupancy levels during the 90-day notice period)
  - d. enable staff re-deployment:
    - i. Capital and Coast DHB (12 staff):
    - ii. NZDF (25 staff)
    - iii. Police (12 staff)
  - e. possibly result in a few staff redundancies among the six MBIE security staff recently employed on fixed-term contracts work at the Bay Plaza. While we will look at redeployment options for these staff it is likely that some will be made redundant.
24. The ongoing employment of 25 hotel staff employed by the Bay Plaza, and 22 security and 5 other staff contracted by third parties, will be determined by their employers.
25. While there will be a reduction in contingency rooms available in Wellington in the event of a full or partial evacuation of the Grand Mercure, this is an operational risk that exists even under the status quo (i.e. the Bay Plaza cannot accommodate a full facility evacuation from the Grand Mercure). The risk of such an event is very low. If it were to eventuate, it is likely

that returnees would be transported to an alternative facility in another region (e.g. via charter flight to Auckland).

**Option 3 (decommissioning both Wellington MIQ facilities) is not recommended due to the impact this would have on current management strategies and options for community outbreaks**

26. Decommissioning both current MIQ facilities would remove current quarantine capacity from Wellington. In order to manage public health risk in the event of a positive case or close contact in the community, alternative quarantine measures to the current preferred option (isolate in an MIQ facility) would need to be pursued.
27. Alternative quarantine measures could include:
  - a. setting up a new quarantine facility in the Wellington region (likely smaller-scale than the current standard MIQ model, with smaller workforce and facility)
  - b. transporting cases or close contacts to an MIQ facility in Auckland (or another region)
  - c. self-isolation of cases and close contacts at their home.
28. Benefits of decommissioning both Wellington MIQ facilities include that it would:
  - a. remove the logistical challenges involved in running MIQ in Wellington, freeing up resources to deploy elsewhere
  - b. free up the NZDF Rongotai Air Movements terminal for defence purposes
  - c. reduce public health risk at the border by decreasing returnee movements before they undergo managed isolation
29. However, the downsides of this option are significant:
  - a. It is very unlikely that a high-quality alternative quarantine facility could be stood up with the same IPC standards as the current model (without a long lead-in time and overcoming the same logistical challenges currently present in Wellington). MIQ facilities are successful because of high-functioning, experienced teams who are specialised in containment and management of COVID-19. The team comprises the entire facility workforce, not just the health component. While it might be possible to have a team on re-call, the key elements would quickly become eroded.
  - b. Transport of community cases or close contacts over long distances (i.e. to quarantine facilities in Auckland or Christchurch) is logistically difficult to do in a way that retains effective IPC controls and may be advised against for health or social reasons in individual cases.
  - c. DHB capacity to manage cases and contacts in the community with supervision and wrap-around support is restricted to small numbers (i.e. two or three cases can generate multiple close contacts).
  - d. There is a current expectation that an MIQ facility is the default option to be considered. Not having sufficient safe and secure quarantine capacity would lower the threshold at which an Alert Level would need to be raised.
  - e. Wellington International Airport receives QFT 'green' flights from Australia. The current response plan to an outbreak incorporates access to MIQ facility: if a traveller arriving in Wellington airport has COVID symptoms and meets the high index of suspicion criteria, they (and potentially their travel bubble) will need to be tested and isolated. If they do not have a suitable place of isolation, they would be transferred to a MIQ

facility. This scenario would become considerably more complex if there was no MIQ facility in Wellington.

30. We do not recommend this option due to the high public health risk of having no readily available safe and secure quarantine facility in the event of a community outbreak. However, if Option 2 proves unworkable due to further developments with the Grand Mercure Wellington regarding ventilation, we will work with public health colleagues to further develop this option as an alternative noting that this would require capacity and capability that does not currently exist on the scale required.

## Implementation

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31. To decommission a MIQ facility requires MBIE to appropriately exit contracts with suppliers and the hotel, and to return the hotel to a condition that it can be opened to the public. This includes working with local stakeholders, removing MBIE-provided and hired equipment, working with staff (including unions where appropriate) to redeploy or terminate staff and support them through that process, and to reinstate the physical premises.
32. As requested by your office, MBIE will provide further advice on the process for decommissioning MIQ facilities in general by 31 May 2021.

### *Decommissioning the Bay Plaza MIQ facility*

33. If you agree to decommission the Bay Plaza MIQ facility, it will be the first standard MIQ facility to be decommissioned and the process followed here will set a standard for future decommissioning. While not required, you may wish to notify Cabinet of this decision.
34. Once Cabinet is notified, or if you do not wish to take a paper to Cabinet, MBIE will provide you with decommissioning advice for the Bay Plaza setting out the communications and engagement plan and a timeline for the decommissioning process. We will provide this to your office by 25 June.
35. The communications plan will include:
  - a. communications to the hotel owners and facility staff thanking them for their service, explaining the decision to decommission and providing guidance on next steps (including re-deployment options for staff)
  - b. a draft media release proactively thanking the relevant MIQ facility for their service, FAQs on why a facility is being decommissioned, and reassurance that the hotel will be safe to commence general public use
  - c. reactive lines for media stand-ups and interviews.
36. Due to commercial sensitivities with the MIQ hotel owners and staff, we recommend not making any public statements about the ongoing challenges in Wellington or a decision to decommission a facility until commercial discussions with all relevant stakeholders are complete. Effectively managing stakeholder relationships is what will ensure a smooth process and positive outcome, but it also presents the biggest risk. As mentioned above, 'getting it right' with the Bay Plaza will be critical to maintaining trust and buy-in of MIQ facility owners and staff across the country.
37. The contracted required notice for decommissioning an MIQ facility at our convenience is 90 days, meaning the *earliest* the Bay Plaza MIQ facility would be decommissioned from the MIQ portfolio is October 2021 (assuming the termination notice is issued by the end of June 2021).

## Next steps

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38. If you agree to our recommended option, the next steps will be as follows:

Step	Action
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decision to decommission the Bay Plaza (<b>Minister</b>)</li><li>Cabinet notified of decision (optional)</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>MBIE to provide decommissioning information to Minister (including communications and stakeholder engagement plan, timeframes and costs)</li></ul> <p><i>Provided to your office by 25 June.</i></p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>MBIE communicate decisions and guidance to hotel, staff and other relevant stakeholders</li></ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Public announcement of decision shortly after step 3</li></ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Commence decommissioning process</li></ul>

39. We will also provide your office with:





- a. advice on the decommissioning process for MIQ facilities in general by 31 May 2021
- b. progress updates on the remediation of the Grand Mercure Wellington
- c. regular progress updates on decommissioning the Bay Plaza MIQ facility.

## Annexes

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Annex One: MIQ operational challenges in Wellington

## Annex One: MIQ operational challenges in Wellington

AIR CHARTER AKL TO WLG	ARRIVAL AT WLG AIRPORT	COACH JOURNEY TO MIFS	GUEST STAY AT MIFS
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MIQ operates 1 - 2 charter transfers per week to WLG; A320 aircraft carries 117 pax socially distanced.</li> <li>However due to capacity constraints we typically fly with only 60 to WLG, so the plane is at best a third full. Disembarking a plane with more than 60 pax is not acceptable to Air NZ due to wait time on aircraft.</li> <li>Assuming 60 pax load, the cost to send returnees to WLG is \$746 per person. For comparison, we can get up to 130 pax to CHC for a per person cost of \$344.</li> <li>At the end of their stay, guests are flown back to AKL on commercial flights. If you conservatively assume \$200 per ticket, the cost could be \$40,000 a fortnight.</li> <li>The total per head cost of flying guests to WLG MIFs is ~\$1000 per person return.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellington Airport <u>will not</u> allow MIQ to use its passenger terminal or baggage handling facilities under any circumstances.</li> <li>MIQ currently uses the RNZAF Air Movements facility to receive charter flights. It has a capacity of 60 pax for MIQ transfers due to available space and ventilation.</li> <li>Air Movements needs to continue receiving NZDF flights, limiting availability for MIQ charters (exemption from the hard separation of red / green flights means that sufficient time must be allowed for cleaning between arrivals).</li> <li>There are no other facilities at WLG to process MIQ passengers and their baggage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johnston's Coachlines are MIQ's national provider of coach transfers from airports to MIFs. IPC and airport access requirements limit the available pool of vehicles and drivers.</li> <li>They have had considerable difficulty getting a reliable and cost effective transfer service in WLG.</li> <li>They replaced local providers a month ago and now have a bus and driver permanently stationed in WLG for MIQ use, including relief drivers.</li> <li>The infrequency of MIQ flights to WLG (1-2 per week) means that the coach and driver are hugely underutilised. There is also little redundancy in case of breakdown or driver unavailability.</li> <li>The WLG MIFs are difficult for the coaches to access and offload passengers and baggage. They manage it but it is far from ideal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With only two moderately sized MIFs (Bay Plaza and Mercure), WLG does not have the scale required to move large amounts of people to MIFs efficiently.</li> <li>The WLG MIFs have limited room and common area capacity for accommodating processing passengers.</li> <li>Prior to QFT with Australia, almost exclusively low risk returnees from AU, especially the Bay Plaza.</li> <li>Any future increase in MIF capacity (i.e. opening a new hotel) would still face the same air charter, airport and coach logistical challenges.</li> </ul>
RELATIVE RATING SCALE			
<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
Charter flights to WLG are possible to operate but are very expensive relative to any other MIQ region. For reference, flights to CHC would be rated Green.	Red/amber due to Air Movements capacity constraints.	Amber due to the effort required to maintain a coach presence in WLG. For reference, all other regions would be rated Green.	Amber due to the inherent capacity limitations in WLG MIFs.