



BRIEFING

Update on expedited MIQ facility commissioning timeframes

Date:	29 July 2021	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:		Tracking number:	2122-0339

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Chris Hipkins Minister for COVID-19 Response	Note the contents of this briefing.	3 August 2021

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact	
Andrew Milne	Associate Deputy Secretary, MIQ	Privacy of natural persons	✓	
Privacy of natural persons	Manager, Allocation and Supply, MIQ Policy			
	Senior Policy Advisor, MIQ Policy			

Minister's office to complete:

Approved

Declined

Noted

Needs change

Seen

Overtaken by Events

See Minister's Notes

Withdrawn

Comments



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Date:	29 July 2021	Priority:	Medium
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Purpose

To update you on an expedited timeframe for assessing and commissioning a new MIQ facility.

Recommended action

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

- a **Note** that on 3 August officials will provide you with advice on possible new MIQ facilities. *Noted*
- b **Note** that officials previously advised that commissioning a new facility would take three to four months, and that we would explore options to reduce this. *Noted*
- c **Note** that further work by officials has identified that under an expedited timeline, establishing a new facility would take a minimum of 8 weeks, but this relies on a number of assumptions, and on no major issues being encountered. *Noted*
- d **Agree** that this briefing is not proactively released while officials are actively considering the near-term commissioning of specific MIQ facilities.

Agree / Disagree

Andrew Milne
Associate Deputy Secretary
Managed Isolation and Quarantine, MBIE

29 / 7 / 21

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister for COVID-19 Response

3 / 8 / 2021

MIQ facility commissioning timeline

1. On 3 August 2021, officials will provide you with advice on possible new MIQ facilities.
2. We previously indicated that it would take approximately three to four months to commission a new MIQ facility [2122-0037 refers], and that we would explore options to reduce this. The table below shows an expedited timeframe for urgently assessing and commissioning a facility.
3. This timeframe would commence once you have agreed for MBIE to commence the detailed feasibility assessment of selected facilities and stakeholder engagement, which will be possible following your consideration of our upcoming advice on 3 August.
4. Assessing and commissioning a new facility would take a minimum of eight weeks – i.e. potentially entering operations in October. This assumes officials can locate a viable facility with no major issues, the required funding is approved quickly by Cabinet, and successful negotiation of an agreement with the facility owner. If issues are identified, such as a significant need for remediation, this timeframe would be extended.
5. Meeting an expedited timeframe will involve additional costs and trade-offs. At any stage, there could be unanticipated delays, or developments that mean facilities or regions under consideration are no longer viable in the short term.
 - a. Key assumptions include that:
 - no major issues are encountered, such as substantive concerns being raised during stakeholder engagement or complex-to-rectify ventilation issues being identified
 - sufficient workforce is available – our advice on 3 August will include discussion of workforce availability
 - the necessary funding is made available to meet the costs of the additional facilities and staffing.
 - b. Additional costs to meet this timeframe could be as follows:
 - costs may be higher if existing hotel bookings are required to be relocated at short notice e.g. conferences
 - short-term staffing with higher pay rates may be required for rapid recruitment
 - while existing MIQ facilities have largely borne the costs of ventilation remediation themselves, MBIE would need to contribute for this to proceed at pace in a new facility.
6. Ventilation assessment and remediation work will be a key determinant of timeframes, and will depend on the condition of a specific facility. Unless a relatively new facility can be found, we expect a need for remediation work will exist. As poor ventilation increases the risk of in-facility transmission, we do not recommend removing ventilation review from the commissioning process.
7. Officials' upcoming advice on possible new facilities will include a more detailed timeline and planning considerations for each possible facility, as these will vary by hotel and by region.
8. The below table provides an overview of key steps under an expedited timeframe.

<u>Key steps</u>	<u>Estimated expedited timeframe</u>
Decision from Minister for COVID-19 Response to commence feasibility assessment and engagement	Possible by 4 August
1. Engagement and initial assessment a. Engagement with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key stakeholders to confirm in principle regional feasibility (particularly with iwi, other local stakeholders, hotels, and regarding workforce and transport) • Ministry of Health and DHBs, particularly regarding health workforce • agency partners e.g. NZDF b. Desktop assessment of facilities (ventilation review, IPC, security, operational viability)	1 week
2. Onsite assessment of facilities (ventilation review, IPC, security, operational viability)	1 week
3. Feasibility report prepared and approval sought from Minister for COVID-19 Response to begin <u>in principle</u> negotiations with feasible facility(s)	1 week
4. Cabinet approval for funding and negotiations begin a. Seek Cabinet approval for funding to enter into agreement with feasible facility(s) <i>This assumes the paper can go directly to Cabinet.</i> b. Commercial negotiations commence <i>This time will vary depending on whether the hotel owner already has another facility that is being used for MIQ.</i>	1-2 weeks
<i>Contract signed</i>	
5. Hotel owner relocates upcoming bookings/business Workforce planning begins (establishment, training, vaccinations)	2-6 weeks
6. Commissioning facility Including any necessary ventilation remediation, and installation of security measures such as CCTV and fencing. <i>Where possible, we will look to run processes in parallel to reduce cumulative timeframes.</i>	2-5 weeks