



MARK BUTLER MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGED CARE

MEDIA RELEASE

END OF COVID-19 PREDEPARTURE TESTING REQUIREMENT **IN CHINA**

Australia's pre-departure COVID-19 testing requirements for passengers arriving from the People's Republic of China, including the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, will cease applying to flights that land in Australia at 12.01am on 11 March 2023.

The measure commenced on 5 January 2023 and was initiated out of an abundance of caution in response to a significant wave of COVID-19 infections in China and the risk of potential new emerging variants.

The Australian Government has been monitoring the situation in China and reviewing epidemiological data as it becomes available.

Reports show the number of COVID-19 cases, hospitalisations and deaths peaked in late December 2022/early January 2023.

China has been regularly providing data to the Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data and to date there has been no reports of new variants of concern.

Several other countries that implemented similar measures have recently either repealed their arrangements or announced an intention to repeal them, including the United States, Korea, Japan, France and Italy.

Since the measure was introduced, the Government has strengthened Australia's capacity to detect and respond to emerging variants of concern of international origin – including extending community wastewater testing.

Quotes attributable to Minister Butler:

“On the basis of emerging evidence from China and in line with other countries around the world, the Government has decided to end the COVID-19 pre-departure testing requirements for passengers arriving from China, including Hong Kong and Macau – effective from 11 March 2023.

“I would like to thank all travelers from China and airlines who complied with these testing arrangements.

“This is a sensible, measured decision based on decreasing COVID-19 case numbers in China, regular data updates from China on case numbers and the fact that we have strengthened our capacity to detect and respond to emerging variants of concern within Australia of international origin.”

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