

## **Coronavirus – FAQs – as at 2pm 29 January 2020 AEST**

### **What is the latest update on the coronavirus outbreak?**

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) advised on Tuesday 28 January that the death toll from the coronavirus has risen to **106** with **4,537** confirmed cases worldwide;
- **An additional Australian case of coronavirus is expected to be confirmed today, which will bring the total cases to 6 in the country (4 in New South Wales and 2 in Victoria).**
- China announced on 27 January 2020 that the Lunar New Year holiday will be extended to 2 February; the holiday week was originally from 24 January to 30 January. Meanwhile, Shanghai has announced that all enterprises will remain closed **until 10 February**. Universities, primary and middle schools and kindergartens across the country will postpone the opening of the spring semester until further notice.  
[http://english.www.gov.cn/policies/latestreleases/202001/27/content\\_WS5e2e34e4c6d019625c603f9b.html](http://english.www.gov.cn/policies/latestreleases/202001/27/content_WS5e2e34e4c6d019625c603f9b.html)
- 30 Chinese cities and provinces have launched Level I emergency response, while Hong Kong has declared its "highest" emergency response;
- **China's National Immigration Administration (28 Jan) advised Chinese citizens to postpone all "non-essential" overseas travel.**
- **This is in addition to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism notice for all tourism operators to suspend group tours and tour packages (domestic and international) effective 27 January until further notice.**
- As part of efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus, the China Association of Travel Services is suspending all group tours, including international ones, from Monday (27 January). Current reports suggest the ban will remain in force until at least the end of March;
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) continues to monitor the situation. At the stage, they have not declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern, nor are they recommending the introduction of any international travel restrictions;
- **On 28 January, the Australian Federal Government's Smart Traveller website upgraded its warning to 'reconsider your need to travel' to any part of China and 'do not travel' to Hubei Province. The travel advisory does not apply to Hong Kong or Macau.**
- **The Federal Government announced today (29 January) that Australians in Hubei province at risk of coronavirus will be airlifted to Christmas Island for quarantine. 600 Australians are registered as being in Hubei province. Priority will be given to children and the elderly.**
- All international airports are open and, with the exception of flights from Wuhan, all international air services into Australia are operating as normal;
- Sydney Airport is the only Australian airport that has direct flights from Wuhan, and those flights are currently suspended;
- As with other countries, precautionary measures have been put in place in Australia, including meeting every arriving flight from China, where passengers are being provided with information and asked to report symptoms;
- Other international governments are boosting border control checks at airports, including requesting arriving passengers to report symptoms;
- Airports Council International (ACI), the global association representing the interests of airports, is providing ongoing guidance for airports.

### **Where can I obtain the latest health information and travel advice?**

- If you have current or future plans to travel to Australia from China, please speak to your travel agent or airline before travelling
- You can keep up-to-date with the latest news on the Coronavirus from the Australian Government's Department of Health, including updated health warnings at:  
<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

- The Australian Government's Smartraveller website also provides advice to Australians returning home from a destination with reported cases of the Coronavirus or feeling unwell: <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/news-and-updates/novel-coronavirus-outbreak>
- The latest travel advice being provided by the WHO can be read here: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>
- For more information call the Public Health Information Line on 1800 044 599 or contact your state or territory public health agency:
  - ACT - 02 5124 9213
  - NSW - 1300 066 055
  - NT - 08 8922 8044
  - QLD - 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
  - SA - 1300 232 272
  - TAS - 1800 671 738
  - VIC - 1300 651 160
- Tourism Australia will continue to provide updated information as it becomes available.

#### **What symptoms should I watch out for and where should I report concerns?**

- The virus can cause a range of symptoms, ranging from mild illness to pneumonia. People may experience:
  - Fever
  - Flu like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and headaches
  - Difficult breathing in some cases
- If you become unwell and suspect you may have symptoms of coronavirus, you should seek medical attention. More information can be found here: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

#### **What actions is Tourism Australia taking to support travellers and industry?**

- This is clearly a complex and quickly evolving situation;
- TA is monitoring the situation very closely and providing industry with as much accurate and up to date information as it can to help share with their customers;
- Tourism Australia has updated its consumer [website](#), including information on the outbreak and links to relevant websites where travellers can access the latest health and travel advice.

#### **What impact will the coronavirus and group travel ban have on Australian tourism?**

- TA is monitoring the situation very closely;
- It is still very much a watching brief and too early to start quantifying the potential tourism impacts;
- We are currently talking to industry here in Australia and our airline and key distribution partners in China to better understand the full ramifications;
- We can reasonably expect the group travel ban to have an impact on future Chinese travel to Australia. We are also expecting there will be an impact also likely to hit education sector. To what extent we just don't know at this stage.

#### **What about schools and universities?**

- Yesterday the Communicable Disease Network Australia (comprising Commonwealth, state and territory government health experts) finalised advice to early childhood centres, schools and universities;
- For early childhood and schools:
  - If a child is a close contact of a confirmed case of the coronavirus, even if they don't have symptoms, they cannot attend school or childcare until Public Health authorities inform the parents that it is safe for them to do so.

- If a child has recently travelled to mainland China and has developed symptoms parents should contact their usual doctor for assessment who will liaise with Public Health authorities and determine whether or not their child needs to be excluded from school or childcare.
- If a child has recently travelled to mainland China and has not developed any of the symptoms they may attend their school or early childhood centre and should not be excluded.
- For university students:
  - If a student is informed by Public Health authorities that they are a close contact of a confirmed case of the coronavirus and have developed symptoms they need to contact their public health authority for advice. The student cannot attend university until Public Health authority informs them that it is safe to do so.
  - If the student has not developed symptoms they should monitor their health closely but should not be excluded from attending University.