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23 November 2022

J Bruning

By email: fyi-request-20643-71fe5335@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H2022013228

Tēnā koe J Bruning

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 11 September 2022 for information regarding international travel vaccination certificates. You requested:

“Please supply all cabinet papers, memoranda, and reports received by officials and Ministers regarding an 'International Travel Vaccination Certificate'.

See: September 14, 2022.

<https://scanmail.trustwave.com/?c=15517&d=mpmr4xgyUpbx0Qc2hGZU8jS0tnjs6pDZWdRl8lYnwA&u=https%3a%2f%2fcovid19%2egovt%2enz%2fcovid-19-vaccines%2fvaccine-passes-and-certificates%2fproof-of-your-vaccination-status%2f>

This includes all information internally produced by agencies and government officials, as well information and advice received from the WHO, United Nations agencies, from GAVI, CEPI and COVAX; from the World Economic Forum as well as from management consultancy firms.

Please advise all known countries who have integrated International Travel Vaccination Certificate into their policies and procedures currently, and countries for which this plan is underway.”

Manatū Hauora was advised that information in scope of your request is also held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFAT). As such on 6 October 2022, your request was partially transferred to MFAT. Manatū Hauora also understands you have made the same request to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. These agencies will respond separately.

Manatū Hauora has interpreted your request to exclude email correspondence and has provided documents containing official advice. Documents held by Manatū Hauora and identified within scope of your request are itemised in Appendix 1. The Appendix identifies where information is withheld, and this noted in the documents provided. Where information is withheld under section 9 of the Act, I have considered the countervailing public interest in releasing information and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

Further documents relevant to your request such as meeting documents from the 2021 and 2022 Pacific Heads of Health meeting are publicly available at the following link: <https://phd.spc.int/phoh-meeting-documents>.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has guidance for countries and implementing partners which can be accessed here: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Digital-certificates-vaccination-2021.1>.

Information regarding the European Union Digital COVID Certificate (EU DCC), which is the format that New Zealand uses for its international COVID-19 travel vaccination certificates, is available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/coronavirus-response/safe-covid-19-vaccines-europeans/eu-digital-covid-certificate_en.

New Zealand is one of 48 non-EU countries and territories that joined the EU DCC system. Further information can be found here:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/coronavirus-response/safe-covid-19-vaccines-europeans/eu-digital-covid-certificate/commission-implementing-decisions-equivalence-covid-19-certificates-issued-non-eu-countries_en. The EU DCC was one of several formats being used internationally for COVID-19 travel vaccination certificates.

On 15 November 2021, it was confirmed that New Zealand's International travel COVID-19 certificates were in accordance with the EU DCC standard, and that its technological system is interoperable with the trust framework that allow for the verification of the authenticity, validity, and integrity of the certificates. Further information can be found here: [EUR-Lex - 32021D1993 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) Being part of the EU DCC trust framework meant that New Zealand issued certificates were recognised by all countries that joined the EU DCC trust framework.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Steve Waldegrave
Associate Deputy Director-General
Strategy, Policy and Legislation | Te Pou Rautaki

Appendix 1: List of documents for release

#	Date	Document details	Decision on release
1.	29 March 2021	Memo COVID-19 vaccine certificates for outgoing and incoming travel	Released in full.
2.	17 May 2021	Memo: Vaccination Certificate on policy project overview and key issues	
3.	17 June 2021	Talking Points: Border Executive Board Meeting	
4.	3 August 2021	Briefing: Proof of COVID-19 vaccination in the context of border reopening scientific and public health considerations 20211448	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.
5.	17 August 2021	Memo: New Zealand issued digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates	Released in full.
6.	26 August 2021	Memo: COVID-19 digital vaccination certificate update and international requirements	
7.	22 September 2021	Briefing: Update on the development of NZs digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate 20212055	Some information withheld under the following sections of the Act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • section 9(2)(a); and • section 9(2)(g)(i) to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers and officers and employees of any public service agency.
8.	6-7 October 2021	Excerpt from Pacific Heads of Health Meeting pack for GM	Some information released under section 16(1)(e) of the Act by giving an excerpt or summary of the contents.
9.	17 December 2021	DG Memo: Access to NZs international travel COVID-19 Vaccination certificates for NZers vaccinated offshore	Some information withheld under section 6(a) of the Act as its release would likely prejudice the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.
10.	4 August 2022	Excerpt from Aide-Memoire: Meeting between Minister Verrall	

#	Date	Document details	Decision on release
		and the EU Ambassador on COVID-19 20221227	Some information released under section 16(1)(e) of the Act.
11.	20-21 September 2022	Excerpt from Pacific Heads of Health Meeting pack for GM	
12.	24 January 2022	SPC Project kick-off Deck and Charter	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
13.	22 March 2022	SPC COVID-19 Certificate for Cross Border travel - Protocol Analysis Overview	Released in full.
14.	10 June 2022	SPC Covid-19 Travel Certificate Weekly Status Report Phase 1 Transition 220610	

Memo



Date:	29 March 2021
To:	Maree Roberts, Deputy Director-General, System Strategy and Policy Sue Gordon, Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Health System Response
Copy to:	Laura Miller, Manager, COVID-19 Policy, System Strategy and Policy Megan McCoy, Group Manager, Global Health Jon Herries, Group Manager, Emerging Health Technology and Innovation, Digital and Data
From:	Stephen Harris, Group Manager, COVID-19 Policy, System Strategy and Policy
Subject:	COVID-19 vaccine certificates for outgoing and incoming travel
For your:	Information

Purpose

1. This memo provides you with an overview of the work underway to progress the development of a COVID-19 vaccine certificate for both outgoing and incoming international travel. It sets out a basic sequence of the key steps that need to occur to develop a solution for New Zealand that has international interoperability. Appendices to this memo provide background an overview of key roles across the Ministry and international developments in this space.

Executive summary

2. Considerable activity is underway to develop a COVID-19 vaccine certificate, both at government and intergovernmental levels and in the private sector. Vaccine certificates are being seen as a tool to provide greater confidence for the safer reopening of borders and resumption of international travel.
3. The Ministry of Health is actively involved in building the information technology platforms to enable identity linked COVID-19 digital vaccination certification for New Zealanders. It is important that work continues at pace as it lays the groundwork to enable a workable solution that can be operationalised when the time is right. There are also key policy and operational questions that need to be resolved along this process. Key among them:
 - how do we ensure New Zealand's certificate has interoperability with a global certification system?
 - what is the best platform for the certificate?

- under what circumstances would we use vaccine certificates to ease border and domestic control measures to international travellers?
4. At the government agency level, the Ministry of Transport has convened a Multi-Agency Travel Pass forum to coordinate cross government work towards a solution for New Zealand. The Travel Health Pass Programme focuses on the role of traveller health certificates in facilitating travel in and out of New Zealand.
 5. This forum sits under the COVID-19 Border Executive Board. There are different streams of work led by different agencies. It is a system comprising:
 - digital identity linked vaccination certificates
 - diplomatic settings about who can travel and enter New Zealand
 - travel certificates and transaction at the border
 - the interface between domestic and international settings.
 6. This work is mediated by the timing and extent of the relaxation of our borders which is informed by roll-out of vaccines globally and internationally and the science about vaccine efficacy and the behaviour of the SARS CoV-2 virus.
 7. It is now time to accelerate this work as it is possible that the first movers – such as the private sector and other countries – will set precedents that shape the landscape of the vaccine certificates before key scientific unknowns are resolved. Internationally a number of countries are progressing vaccine certificates for international travel (including removing quarantine and testing restrictions) before there is clear evidence that vaccines prevent transmission.
 8. As vaccine certificates are principally a health issue, the Ministry of Health will take a joint role with the Ministry of Transport in leading this work programme.
 9. There are a number of significant policy issues to work through to firm up a Ministry of Health and All of Government position on vaccine certificates. Progressing a clear sequenced work programme that captures the end to end process for travel to and from New Zealand and that has health considerations at the forefront is imperative.
 10. The diagram overleaf sets out the key steps towards a digital vaccine certificate. There is more work to do to map out expected timeframes for each phase. At this stage, we are currently at phase 1.

Steps towards digital vaccine certificates for international travel

The diagram below outlines a four phase framework for developing a digital COVID-19 vaccine certificate for New Zealand



A smart vaccination certificate sets the foundation for supporting an internationally recognised health record that is held by an individual

Background

11. As COVID-19 vaccination programmes are rolled out in New Zealand and across the globe, there is considerable focus on whether the vaccination will allow the easing of border and domestic control measures, enable the resumption of international travel and a return to pre-COVID conditions.

What are vaccine certificates

12. Vaccine certificates are digital or physical documents that establish proof of vaccination (date, vaccine, place of vaccination etc), and can be linked to the identity of the holder. Digital vaccine certificates are proposed as a tool to give confidence in the easing of border restrictions and allow international travel without compromising personal or public health.
13. At the moment, people who are vaccinated in New Zealand as part of the COVID-19 immunisation programme receive a paper vaccination booklet linked to their NHI.
14. Digital vaccine certificates are an extension of a known technology, Verifiable Credentials. These are able to be printed and can be used to prove a certificate is valid. They conventionally take the form of an electronic file or document and can be summarised with a QR code, this is used to verify the certificates authenticity. Evidence that the person owns the certificate comes from printing some of the identifying information of the person on the certificate, such as a passport number or NHI number.
15. The use of Verifiable Credentials is seen by many in the global technology industry as a mechanism to increase the security of proof of identity, and to therefore facilitate reductions in fraud and enable various new business models. This also forms the basis of the Department of Internal Affairs' work programme on Digital Identity, where a number of these verifiable credentials from various sources comprise elements of a Digital Identity. From a technical perspective, the ability for an agency to create and maintain large numbers of these credentials would allow the creation of significant value for the economy, with the understanding that in order for this to happen, the process for creating them needs to support the trust they engender.
16. The WHO and forums of experts (such as the UK Royal Society¹) has urged caution on introducing proof of COVID-19 vaccination for international travellers until more is known about the efficacy of vaccines and until vaccines become more available. The WHO has also raised concerns about how those who cannot be vaccinated would participate.
17. The WHO International Health Regulations Emergency Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic will review its position on vaccine certificates for international travel on 14 April 2021. In the meantime, it is leading the development of agreed standards and specifications for vaccine certificates (see paragraphs 36-40).
18. There is precedent for a WHO-led international vaccine certificate system. In the past vaccine certificates for cholera and smallpox have been required for international travel, and today some countries still require proof of yellow fever vaccination.
19. Under the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), travellers can be required by the destination country to demonstrate proof of yellow fever vaccination using a physical document

¹ <https://royalsociety.org/-/media/policy/projects/set-c/set-c-vaccine-passports.pdf>

displaying a stamp and the signature of an authorised vaccinator. Yellow fever is the only disease currently mentioned in IHR 2005 for which countries can require proof of vaccination for international travellers. The IHR specifies:

- vaccines approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO)
- vaccines “of suitable quality” – with evidence on efficacy in reducing transmission
- vaccines universally available
- proof of vaccination recorded in the International Certificate for Vaccination or Prophylaxis (Yellow Card).

Key policy and operational considerations

20. There are a number of important health policy and operational questions that need to be resolved. These include:

Under what circumstances would we use vaccine certificates to ease border and domestic control measures (testing and MIQ) to international travellers?

What credentials will NZ require of international travellers?

How will NZ differentiate varying certifying authorities (e.g. WHO, EU, countries) and among different vaccinations for incoming travellers?

How do we deal with people who can't be vaccinated? (incoming and outgoing)

What information is displayed on the credential itself (privacy vs security)

Will Verifiable Credentials (VC) have other uses beyond international travel?

How do we generate those QR codes in the vaccination process (that bind an event to the person)?

QR codes that represent a VC are very dense – how do we manage to minimise this?

The User Experience is critical – how do we make it simple to recognise and use?

Does the QR code invalidate itself after single use?

How do we onboard NZers to this – are they interested in seeing their vaccination history?

What happens when someone arrives without a recognised vaccine certificate?

How useful are the WHO standards going to be (when should we start)?

What are the Identification Management Standards, how do they apply to the creation of certificates?

Can we sweep up identity with rollout of the second vaccine?

Can we create verifiable credentials against other countries passports?

How long might we need/require vaccine certificates?

21. Additional to the fundamental questions around vaccine efficacy and population coverage are also questions around equity, privacy and ethics and interoperability.

‘New Zealand’s Multi agency Travel Health Pass Programme

22. A cross-government agency group has recently been established to start looking at what policy and operational settings may be needed to implement travel passes in New Zealand. The Travel Health Pass Programme focuses on the role of traveller health certificates in facilitating travel in and out of New Zealand.
23. The aim of this programme is to position New Zealand to be able to move when the health science says it is safe to do so, recognising that international connectivity remains fundamental to the economic and social wellbeing of New Zealanders. The programme acknowledges there are significant unknowns about the efficacy of vaccines, and pace of global and domestic immunisation against COVID-19.
24. This work is still at the very early scoping stages, but the group has recently started meeting on a weekly basis. Agency participants are the Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Health, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, New Zealand Customs Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. This work sits under the “Keep it out” pillar of the Elimination Strategy and is overseen by the COVID-19 Border Executive Board.
25. Since February 2021, the Ministry of Transport has been the lead agency coordinating this programme. From here on as vaccine certificates are principally a health issue, the Ministry of Health will take a joint role with the Ministry of Transport in leading this work programme.
26. At this stage. The programme has identified three core work streams:
 - **Vaccine certificates** – This activity will consider what information New Zealand should require as part of proof of vaccination and how that information is verified.
 - **Health settings** – This activity will focus on information gathering (including around vaccine transmissibility), vaccines approvals (which vaccines could allow us to adjust entry requirement to New Zealand), scenario planning around public health settings and economic impacts, and consideration of entry requirements into New Zealand.
 - **International standards and process** – This activity will focus on coordinating and prioritising New Zealand’s involvement in multilateral and industry-related Travel Health Pass efforts.

Briefing Ministers on the Vaccine Certificates for Travel

27. The Ministry of Transport (MoT) is preparing a briefing to Ministers Hipkins and Wood on the Travel Health Pass work programme in consultation with agencies. MoT intends to provide the briefing prior to a Ministerial meeting (Woods and Hipkins) on 15 April. An outline of the paper will be considered by the Border Executive Board on 1 April. MoT has advised that Minister Hipkins asked about this work at the MoT officials meeting on Monday 22 March.
28. In addition, the MoT intend to provide a ‘heads-up’ in this week’s COVID-19 Response Weekly Report. The item will provide Minister Hipkins and Minister Woods with:
 - a short overview of the work underway
 - an overview of the session with IATA and Air NZ on the IATA travel pass and upcoming Air NZ trial; and
 - signals a more detailed briefing in early April 2021.

Ministry of Health involvement on the Multi-Agency Travel Pass forum.

29. The workstreams within the multi-agency Travel Health Pass programme rely heavily on information from the Ministry of Health. As the pace of this work is now accelerating, agreement was reached with the Ministry of Transport on 26 March 2021 that the Ministry of Health will now jointly lead this work programme. It is now timely to build a more robust policy framework around this work with a clear sequenced programme to operationalise vaccination certificates.
30. Megan McCoy (Group Manager, Global Health) has supported coordination of the Ministry's engagement in the multi-agency Travel Health Pass programme. This has included facilitating an internal coordination meeting to share information and prepare for the multi-agency Travel Health Pass meeting, coordinating responses to OIAs and media queries for example. This coordination function will now be handed over to SS&P and Global Health will instead provide support regarding the role of the WHO and/or other global/regional initiatives.
31. The Ministry of Health is actively involved in building the information technology platforms to enable identity linked COVID-19 digital vaccination certification for New Zealanders. This requires significant effort to understand the potential implications and how these could be best designed and delivered. This work is being managed in concert with and with dependencies on a number of other Data & Digital workstreams.
32. Jon Herries (Group Manager, Data and Digital) is closely involved in shaping the digital architecture and the potential Minimum Viable Product for COVID-19 vaccine certificates. He also has close links into international developments within government and private sector digital and information technology.
33. Alastair Kenworthy (Chief Standards Advisor, Data and Digital) is a member of the WHO Independent Expert Advisory Group on establishing an international Smart Vaccination Certificate (SVC) specification. (To note Alastair was selected by the WHO as an expert and was not formally put forward as the Ministry or New Zealand as a representative. This means that the Ministry still needs to provide a formal Ministry/New Zealand input to the work of the WHO).
34. A summary of key roles and activity across the Ministry of Health related to the vaccine passports is set out in appendix 1.

National Advisory Bureau briefing

35. The National Advisory Bureau has prepared a paper for the COVID-19 Chief Executives Board (CCB) meeting today (25 March 2021). This paper provides a very good overview of the issues around vaccine passports. This is provided to you separately.

WHO guidance and standards

36. While the WHO is currently recommending against the use of vaccine passports, it has convened an independent expert working group to establish standards for digital vaccination certificates used in member states. The WHO emphasises it is critical to reiterate that the smart vaccination certificate (SVC) is not intended to serve as an 'immunity passport'.
37. There are three New Zealanders participating on this expert group, Alastair Kenworthy (Chief Standards Advisor, Data and Digital from the Ministry) and two others from industry. This

working group aims to establish recommended standards for security, authentication, privacy and data exchange for vaccine certificates and provide best practice guidance for use.

38. WHO released on 19 March the first draft of the smart vaccination certificate specification for public feedback. We can provide constructive feedback on the first draft and at the same time do the groundwork for an eventual solution that conforms to the specification, which is already very detailed, albeit with some open questions. At this stage we are confident and comfortable with the direction with the draft specification, which presents no challenges for New Zealand. By adhering to the specification, New Zealand can be sure to have mutual recognition of vaccination certificates with every other country that does the same.
39. The WHO will finalise this guidance by the end of June 2021 and will produce six-monthly revisions thereafter. This guidance and WHO's leadership will be key to establishing international trust agreements for the use of vaccine certificates.
40. The Ministry will provide formal Member State feedback on this guidance, to be coordinated by Data and Digital.

Other global developments

41. The Multi-Agency Travel Pass Programme also maintains a watching brief over the various work streams underway internationally to ensure interdependencies, issues, and risks are identified and managed. Global developments are summarised in appendix 2.
42. A number of countries are starting to think about vaccine certificates or 'passports' but haven't publicly stated a position on their use for international travel (e.g. Australia, UK). Others are framing vaccine certificates as something to consider so they don't get left behind if other countries introduce vaccine certificates but haven't yet taken a stance on vaccine certificates for incoming passengers (e.g. Denmark, Canada).
43. Some countries have already developed health 'passports' to support international travel (e.g. African Union, Bahrain, China²) or health or vaccine passports to support domestic freedoms (e.g. US, Israel³, Hungary) which have scope to evolve into vaccine passports for international travel.
44. Others have been more upfront, proposing vaccine certificates as an essential step towards the resumption of travel (e.g. Singapore). This view is particularly prominent among tourist-dependent economies.
45. On March 17 2021 the European Union (EU) announced it would be creating a "Digital Green Certificate" to enable mutual recognition of vaccination, test and recovery certificates between EU member states. The certificate would enable restriction (test and quarantine) free travel based on a QR code which established the authenticity of the vaccination, test or recovery of the holder. The vaccine certificates will be based on vaccinations approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA)⁴. The EU aims to have the scheme in place by June to allow travel during the European summer.

² In early March 2021 China launched a digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate for its citizens planning cross border travels. This certificate would have details of the holder's vaccination information and coronavirus test results.

³ In Israel hotels and gyms are open for only this with a 'green pass' to show they are either fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19.

⁴ The EU has stated member states could decide whether or not to accept vaccines that have not been approved by the EMA, such as Russia's Sputnik V or China's Sinopharm, both being deployed in member state Hungary.

46. Sweden, Denmark and France are also trialling country specific initiatives with the French scheme focused on enabling access to private facilities.
47. A minority of countries have announced intentions to ease their border restrictions on the basis of vaccine certificates. Last week Iceland announced it would exempt incoming travellers from screening and quarantine if they can prove they have been vaccinated with an EMA or WHO endorsed vaccine (or have antibodies against the virus or proof of past infection). Greece and Israel have signed a bilateral agreement to recognise each other's vaccine certificates to remove restrictions on travel between two countries, and Cyprus announced in early March its intention to allow vaccinated British citizens to enter without quarantine as of 1 May 2021.

Proposed next steps

48. COVID-19 Policy, System Strategy and Policy will work closely with Global Health and Data and Digital map out a more comprehensive cross Ministry of Health work programme to progress this work.

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APPENDIX 1: Ministry of Health activity relevant to a COVID-19 vaccine passport

System Strategy and Policy	Data and Digital	COVID-19 Health System Response	Office of the Director General
<p>COVID-19 Policy</p> <p>Lead GM: Stephen Harris</p> <p>Policy lead for developing a Ministry of Health position on COVID-19 vaccine certificates</p> <p>Border reopening under the Elimination Strategy</p>	<p>Emerging Health Technologies and Innovation</p> <p>Lead GM: Jon Herries</p> <p>Leading work on a proof of concept for a digital vaccine certificate.</p> <p>Working to ensure the architecture of the Covid Immunisation Register (CIR) is future-proofed for digital vaccine certification</p>	<p>Science and Insights</p> <p>Lead GM: Gill Hall</p> <p>Providing science input to resolve key questions relating to COVID-19 and</p>	<p>Global Health</p> <p>Lead GM: Megan McCoy</p> <p>Collates and maintains a watching brief on international developments</p> <p>Advice and support on role of WHO and engagement with other international initiatives</p>
<p>Public Health System Policy</p> <p>Lead GM: Wendy Illingworth</p> <p>Vaccine roll-out</p> <p>Development of a framework to assess risk of COVID-19 outbreaks alongside rollout of domestic and vaccination and changes to border settings</p>	<p>Digital Strategy and Investment</p> <p>Lead GM: Darren Douglas</p> <p>Alastair Kenworthy, Chief Standards Advisor is on a WHO Independent Expert Advisory Group on establishing an international Smart Vaccination Certificate (SVC).</p> <p>Development of a HISO standard to create an open specification of the vaccination certificate data set that conforms to the WHO SVC specification</p>	<p>COVID-19 Border Operations</p> <p>Lead GM: Shona Meyrick</p> <p>Operationalising health related border measures</p>	

APPENDIX 2.

Global developments


Organisation	Initiative	Standards	Consumer	Health Records	Identity	Travel Rules/Process
WHO	Smart Vaccination Certificate Consortium	X				
WHO/Estonia	Pilot of Smart Vaccination Certificate		X	X	X	
Five Eyes	Human Biosecurity Group (HBG5)	X				
OECD/Spain	COVID-free mobility initiative					
Commons Project	CommonPass	X	X	X	X	X
IATA	IATA Travel Pass		X			X
International Chamber of Commerce	AOKpass					
Linux Foundation	COVID-19 Credentials Initiative (CCI)	X				
GoPassport Group	GoPassport					
IBM	IBM Digital Health Pass		X	X	X	
CANImmunize (a Canadian company)	CANImmunize					
Alipay and WeChat (Chinese entities)	Chinese QR code traffic-light coding system for health status administered through apps					
Healthvana (in partnership with LA County)	Healthvana					
Vaccine Credential Initiative (VCI)	Credentialising health records	X				
Singapore			X	X	X	X
Denmark			X	X	X	X
ICAO		X	X	X	X	X
EU		X				

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Memo






Paper 9

Date:	17 May 2021
To:	COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Steering Group 
From:	Maree Roberts, Deputy-Director General, System Strategy and Policy
CC:	Sue Gordon, Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Health System Response
Subject:	Vaccination certification policy project overview and key issues
For your:	Noting and Decision

Purpose

1. This memo outlines the context for COVID-19 vaccination certificates, summarises current activity and highlights emerging issues that require the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Steering Group's attention.

Recommendations

a)	Note	Vaccination certification is a current key issue both domestically and internationally and work is needed to determine the Government's position and approach.	
b)	Note	A work programme is underway, coordinated by System Strategy and Policy Directorate, to develop a policy position on vaccine certification for COVID-19 that will frame decisions around certification in both domestic use and international travel, and provide direction for operational and technical projects.	
c)	Note	Advice will be provided on interim policy positions for your consideration and feedback on 8 June 2021, to support decisions about an interim solution for a COVID-19 vaccination certification.	
d)	Note	Several countries, including Samoa, are already or intend to require proof of vaccination as a condition of entry or for reduced quarantine and testing regimes at the border.	
e)	Note	The World Health Organization is establishing standards and guidance for member states on digital vaccination certificates which will be published on 30 June 2021.	

f)	Note	The Ministry of Transport is coordinating the interagency Travel Health Pass work programme looking at transacting verifiable health credentials of travellers in and out of New Zealand.	✓
g)	Note	The current COVID-19 vaccination card that is being issued does not meet International Health Regulation's (2005) standards and this card is unlikely to meet the requirements of countries who require proof of vaccination.	✓
h)	Agree	That officials will prepare options for an interim solution for a COVID-19 vaccination certificate that meets international standards and report back to the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Steering Group on 8 June 2021.	Yes/No

CONTEXT

Vaccination certification is a key current issue, domestically and internationally

2. As COVID-19 vaccination programmes are rolled out globally and here in New Zealand, vaccination certificates or 'vaccine passports' are being proposed as a way to facilitate the safer reopening of international borders and a way to ease restrictions for individuals who have been vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2.
3. The need for a high level of confidence about vaccination status to manage the pandemic is driving the push towards proof of vaccination which can be verified as authentic by a third party.
4. The assumption underlying the use of COVID-19 vaccination certificates is that vaccination not only protects individuals from disease, but also reduces their risk of becoming infected and spreading the virus. Under the assumption vaccinated individuals could resume activities that entail social interactions and international travel without substantially contributing to onward transmission with their community or abroad.
5. These assumptions are key underpinnings of current work on the Elimination Strategy ('Keep it out' and 'Prepare for it' pillars) and the wider Reconnecting New Zealand work programme.

Vaccine certificates can serve different purposes

6. Individual vaccination records can serve two key purposes:
 - a. to document a vaccination event that forms part of individuals personal health care record (e.g. WellChild book, or Manage My Health)
 - b. to provide proof to a third party that the person has been vaccinated in order manage and minimise the impact of infectious disease outbreaks across settings, geographical regions and international boundaries.
7. Such records can only document that a vaccination event has occurred. They cannot prove immunity. Vaccination certificates that confer certain freedoms or rights on the holder are often referred to as vaccination passports.
8. The World Health Organization's International Certificate of Vaccination and Prophylaxis (ICVP) or "Yellow Card" as it is commonly referred to, is a globally recognised certificate for international travel. The legal framework for destination countries to require travellers to show

proof of vaccination is the International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005. Yellow Fever is still the only disease currently mentioned in the IHR for which countries can require proof of vaccination for international travellers.

9. The ICVP has standardised fields for particular information such as name, date of birth, nationality, vaccination type, batch number, signature of the clinician, and official stamp of the vaccination centre. The format for this is set out in Annex 6 of the IHR.

Internationally, interest in COVID-19 vaccination certificates is growing

10. A significant number of governments worldwide are either considering, developing or are already issuing COVID-19 vaccine certificates to people who are vaccinated in their country. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) is tracking these developments through their overseas posts and feeding this information through to the Ministry of Health.
11. Several countries, including Samoa, are already requiring, or intend to require, proof of vaccination as a condition of entry or for reduced isolation and testing regimes at the border.
12. Some countries such as Israel, Sweden and Denmark are using 'vaccine passports' to as part of their domestic COVID-19 management plan and to encourage vaccination uptake, allowing certificate holders to access particular services, venues or sporting or cultural events.
13. The European Union (EU) is proposing a bloc-wide digital vaccination card (the Digital Green Certificate) to facilitate quarantine free travel for vaccinated travellers in the EU and possibly beyond.

Digital solutions may provide more confidence in a verifiable proof of vaccination

14. As paper documents can be subject to fraud and falsification or can be easily lost or damaged, digital certificates are increasingly being proposed as a viable solution to increase confidence in the authenticity of the certificate, and that the person presenting with the certificate is indeed the person who received the vaccination. The basic concept with a digital certificate is that they are issued to an individual by an authoritative body, held by the individual, can be presented to demonstrate they have received a vaccination and this claim can be cryptographically verified by an interested party.
15. While the current focus is on COVID-19, digital solutions can provide the foundational mechanism that will be applicable for other vaccinations, such as Yellow Fever, Polio, or vaccinations that have yet to be discovered. Additional functionality could be built to support things like automated reminders for next doses, or links to other information. They may also be able to store other health data, such as COVID-19 test status, medical exemption or proof of immunity.

WHO is establishing international standards and guidance for member states

16. Recognising that member states are beginning to lay the groundwork for a digital vaccination certificate for COVID-19, the WHO is developing guidance on what they refer to as Smart Vaccination Certificates (SVCs). This will involve recommended standards for security, authentication, privacy and data exchange for vaccine certificates and provide guidance detailing use cases, standards and best practices.
17. The WHO will be releasing three draft documents for consultation before the final version is published at the end of June 2021. Thereafter, due to the evolving context of pandemic, updates are planned every six months for the next three years.

18. There are three New Zealanders participating on the WHO's SVC expert group including Alastair Kenworthy (Chief Standards Advisor, Data and Digital) from the Ministry of Health.

DEVELOPING A NEW ZEALAND POSITION

System Strategy and Policy is leading work to develop a Ministry position on vaccination certification

19. There are complex issues behind vaccination certification that transverse ethical, equity, scientific, political, privacy, operational and technical boundaries. Key amongst them is to ascertain what benefits verifiable proof of vaccination would deliver to New Zealand and New Zealanders and to identify any risks that need to be addressed before technical solutions are finalised.
20. A cross Ministry work programme is being coordinated through the System Strategy and Policy Directorate to develop a policy position that can be used to create a framework for vaccine certification discussions and decisions within the context of COVID-19 while acknowledging the wider implications. This work will inform some key decisions and policy positions, which will feed into the design of any technical solutions. The outline of this work programme is attached in appendix 1.
21. The issues being explored will include, but are not limited to:
- the privacy and legal implications of vaccine certification
 - the principles underpinning the collection, sharing and management of health records
 - the scientific evidence and epidemiological utility of a vaccine certificate
 - the principles underpinning identity in the health system
 - options for:
 - how we gather vaccination status and confirm identity
 - who has access to the information
 - what the Ministry's role is in sharing the information.
22. In developing options and recommendations we will consider:
- te Tiriti assessment
 - equity impact assessment including accessibility issues
 - operational Impact assessment
 - risks, unintended consequences and potential legacy issues.
23. Agreeing the specific purposes and use cases of a vaccination certificate will be a foremost priority. Use cases might include for New Zealanders to travel internationally, as a requirement at our borders for incoming travellers or for domestic purposes (e.g. workplaces, large indoor events or for managing outbreaks).
24. International interoperability and a New Zealand position on mutual recognition agreements will also be considered. For example, the Singapore government has approached New Zealand (via MFAT) for an initial discussion about a mutual recognition agreement of COVID-19 vaccination certificates.

Agencies are looking at how border systems might need to change

25. The interagency Travel Health Pass (THP) work programme is a component of the broader Ministry of Health work looking at digital vaccination certificates. The THP work is based on the

assumption that it is increasingly likely that countries and the travel industry will require verifiable proof of a travellers COVID-19 health status (e.g. vaccination and/or test results).

26. While it is recognised that there is still uncertainty as to how the global COVID-19 risk profile will evolve, and many countries have yet to stake their position on vaccination certificates for travellers, this work aims to ensure the ground work is well advanced should verifiable health credentials become a requirement for international travel.
27. The key outcomes are to stand up a solution that:
- ensures New Zealanders can access and transact a verified health credential prior to international travel with other countries and airlines
 - allows travellers to New Zealand to transact a verified health credential with the New Zealand government to support entry into the country (should this be required).
28. This TPH work programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Transport and reports to the Border Executive Board. To date, the Minister for COVID-19 Response has received two written briefings on the THP programme from the Ministry of Transport.

There are some key decisions that need attention in the near future

29. While there is a need to establish the policy foundations on the broader issue of digital vaccination certificates, two issues have arisen that require more immediate attention:
- Firstly, there a need for an interim solution so New Zealand travellers can provide proof of vaccination that meets international standards. Options for an interim solution will be provided to this group by 8 June should you agree.
 - Secondly, as the pace of our vaccination programme speeds up there is a need to ensure the data we are capturing is sufficient to be able to issue a digital vaccination certificate in the future.

Our current COVID-19 vaccination card doesn't meet international standards

30. As noted previously, a growing number of countries are introducing proof of vaccination at the border. Even if initially only a small number of countries require proof of vaccination, arguably governments have an obligation to provide their citizens with proof of vaccination in order to allow them to travel to countries that require it.
31. The purple COVID-19 vaccination card that is currently issued to people in New Zealand does not meet IHR standards and is unlikely to satisfy country requirements. Samoa, for example, who intends to introduce proof of vaccination by 1 July 2021, has already indicated the New Zealand purple card is not acceptable. There is a need for an interim solution to be agreed.
32. The Ministry of Health, Healthline, and COVID-19 vaccination centres are receiving an increasingly number of enquiries from the public about certificates for international travel and concerns that the New Zealand's current COVID-card won't be accepted.

We need to ensure the data we are currently capturing will meet international standards

33. While there are still a number of policy decisions to be made regarding a New Zealand digital vaccination certificate, it is important that data that is currently being captured in vaccination process and entered the COVID Immunisation Register (CIR) is sufficient should a digital option be made available in the future. This will enable people who were previously vaccinated to be able to be subsequently issued with a digital certificate.

34. Some form of identity check in this process is needed to confirm that the person who holds the certificate is indeed the same person who was vaccinated.
35. A memo on this matter from Shane Hunter, Deputy Director-General, Digital and Data has been prepared for the Steering Group's consideration.

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Appendix 1: Vaccine certification policy project outline

What	Description	Inputs into/is dependent on	Lead & Support	By when
Ministry of Health policy position on vaccine certification	<p>Develop a policy position that can be used to create a framework for vaccine certification discussions and decisions within the context of COVID-19 but acknowledging the wider implications.</p> <p>Stages of this work include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scope problem definition and identify range of issues 2. Internal workshops to explore policy issues 3. Develop a policy position for Ashley's consideration 4. Adapt into a Health Report for Ministerial consideration if required <p>Issues to explore include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the privacy and legal implications of Vaccine Certification (generally), i.e. compliance with International Health Regulations 2005 • What are the principles underpinning the collection, sharing and management of health records? (what about for immunisation records) • What are the principles underpinning identity in the health system • What are the options for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ how we gather vaccination status and confirm identity ○ who has access to the information ○ what the Ministry's role is in sharing the information • Scientific evidence and research • Te Tiriti assessment • Equity impact assessment including accessibility issues • Operational Impact assessment • Risks, unintended consequences and potential legacy issues 	<p>Inputs into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position on domestic use • Requirements for incoming travellers to NZ • Technical build project • Health Travel Pass project • Operational system design 	<p>Lead: SS&P (Maria Cotter/Laura Miller/Casey Picket)</p> <p>Support: COVID Directorate: STA (Jeremey Tuohy) Privacy and risk (Caitlin Hawkins) Chief Advisor (Aiofe Kenny)</p> <p>Health Legal Public Health & Population Directorate</p> <p>Data & Digital Directorate (Jon Herries, Alastair Kenworthy, Phil Baskerville, Selwyn Rimmer)</p>	<p>1 June</p>

Policy subprojects				
<p>New Zealand's requirements for inbound travellers</p>	<p>Assess potential for vaccination status of inbound travellers being a consideration for New Zealand's public health border measures. Issues to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific considerations (vaccine efficacy, duration of immunity, risk modelling) • Confidence in authenticity of credential • Compliance with International Health Regulations 2005 • Ethical and equity issues • Risks and unintended consequences • Operational feasibility at the border (high level) • MIQ and testing • International minimum requirements (ie WHO, ICAO). <p>Border reopening policy & Elimination Strategy.</p>	<p>Dependent on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Health policy position on vaccine certification <p>Inputs into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical build project • Health Travel Pass project • Operational system design 	<p>STA (Jeremy Tuohy) SS&P Public Health COVID Directorate</p> <p>Data & Digital Directorate (Jon Herries, Alastair Kenworthy, Phil Baskerville, Selwyn Rimmer)</p>	<p>tbc</p>

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<p>Interim vaccination certificate solution for NZs travelling overseas</p>	<p>Agree an interim vaccination certificate and issuing process that meets minimum criteria of overseas border authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene internal meeting to agree problem definition and possible solutions • Seek CVIP Steering Group agreement • Operationalise 		<p>COVID Directorate: (Steve Guiney, Astrid Koorneef, Aoife Kenny)</p> <p>SS&P (Laura Miller, Maria Cotter, Casey Pickett) for policy decision</p> <p>Public Health</p> <p>Data & Digital Directorate (Jon Herries, Alastair Kenworthy, Phil Baskerville, Selwyn Rimmer)</p>	<p>15 June 2021</p>
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<p>Travel Health Pass multi-agency working group</p>	<p>Health representation on the Ministry of Transport convened multi agency working group, which focuses on developing an end to end solution for verifying the vaccination status for inbound (and possibly outbound) travellers (should this be required in the future).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to Border Executive Board (BEB) • Briefing to Minister for COVID-19 Response 30 June 2021 (tbc) 	<p>Dependent on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Health policy position on vaccine certification • New Zealand's requirements for inbound travellers <p>Inputs into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical build project • Operational system design 	<p>SSP (Maria Cotter, Laura Miller) Data & Digital (Jon Herries, Alistair Kenworthy, Selwyn Rimmer, Phil Baskerville Global Health (Lucy Cassels)</p>	<p>Weekly meeting</p>
<p>Mutual recognition agreements</p>	<p>Position on mutual recognition agreements of other country's COVID-19 vaccination certificates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZ – Singapore call 24 May 2021 (organised through MFAT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ initial discussion to hear Singapore's proposal • Agree interim position(s) <p>Internal workshop plus MFAT</p>	<p>Dependent on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Health policy position on vaccine certification • New Zealand's requirements for inbound travellers • Health Travel Pass project 	<p>Global Health (Lucy Cassels SSP (Maria Cotter, Laura Miller) Public Health (tbd)</p> <p>Data & Digital Directorate (Jon Herries, Alastair Kenworthy)</p>	<p>tbd</p>

Talking points

Border Executive Board Meeting, 17 June 2021

To:	Sue Gordon, Deputy Chief Executive, Deputy Director-General, COVID-19 Health System Response
From:	Maria Cotter, Principal Policy Analyst, COVID-19 Policy, System Strategy and Policy
Subject:	Talking points for BEB agenda item on vaccination certificates
Date:	16 June 2021
For your:	Information

Purpose of report

1. This memo provides you with talking points for your meeting at the Border Executive Board (BEB) meeting on Thursday 17 June 2021, where you will provide a brief update on plans to develop and issue a Ministry of Health issued COVID-19 vaccination certificate.
2. This item is scheduled for five minutes on the BEB agenda.

Background and context

3. At the 3 June BEB meeting, the BEB considered a paper from the Ministry of Transport on the Travel Health Pass work programme, which the Ministry of Health contributed to. The BEB noted and agreed to the following recommendations:
 - (i) **note** that that Ministry of Health is progressing work on options for vaccination certification which would meet international standards
 - (ii) **note** that the Ministry of Health is working in consultation with TPH agencies (the New Zealand Customs Service, the Department of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Trade, MBIE (Immigration New Zealand) and Ministry of Transport) to ensure any solutions work within the operational and geopolitical border ecosystem. This will be developed by the July report back to Ministers
 - (iii) **agree** that the Board will receive a report back on 17 June with an update on the COVID-19 vaccination credential.
4. At the recent meeting of the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme Steering Group on 15 June 2021, the Steering Group considered a paper from Maree Roberts on options for COVID-19 vaccination certification that would meet international requirements.

5. The Steering Group agreed to progress work towards a Ministry of Health-issued and digitally enabled COVID-19 vaccination certificate, that can be used and accessed in multiple ways and includes a digital signature.

Suggested talking points

6. We recognise there is increasing pressure for the Ministry of Health to issue COVID-19 vaccination certificates that meet international requirements.
7. We are aware that an increasing number of countries are exempting inbound travellers from isolation and testing requirements where they can provide proof of their vaccination.
8. The Ministry of Health is actively working towards the development of a digitally enabled vaccination certificate that aligns with international standards.
9. We are still working through timeframes and resource implications. Our current best guess is that we will have our 'target state' solution in place before the end of the year. We will have a better idea about timeframes in the next few weeks.
10. We have developed a set of criteria to inform the design and approach for vaccination certification. In particular we want to ensure that anyone can access vaccination certificate, that both digital and non-digital (paper) certificate options are available, and that the process of requesting and issuing it doesn't undermine vaccine uptake or negatively impact the operations of the vaccine rollout..
11. We also want to ensure that any Ministry of Health authorised vaccination certificate is a trustworthy document. We are actively working with DIA to identify the best solution for applying a digital seal that would reduce the risk of fraud and provide assurance of authenticity.
12. We are also working closely with Customs to decide which international standard we should align our credential with to ensure international interoperability. International standards are still evolving so waiting a little until the dust settles may actually result in us developing a more durable solution.
13. Until we develop a digitally enabled credential our interim solution is a letter from the Ministry of Health with data sourced from the Covid-19 Immunisation Register. This letter contains core information broadly aligned to international guidance. We recognise it does not have key features such as a digital signature and it is administratively burdensome to request and issue - but it is our best interim solution at this stage.
14. Other points to note:
 - (i) our current IT priority is the vaccination programme, in particular our booking system
 - (ii) New Zealand Government is still issuing a do not travel advisory

- (iii) our border settings do not consider vaccination status for inbound travellers, and this is unlikely to change in the short term.

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Briefing

Proof of COVID-19 vaccination in the context of border reopening: scientific and public health considerations

Date due to MO:	3 August 2021	Action required by:	N/A
Security level:	IN CONFIDENCE	Health Report number:	HR20211448
To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for COVID-19 Response		
Copy to:	Hon Ayesha Verrall, Associate Minister of Health		

Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
Dr Ashley Bloomfield	Director-General of Health	s 9(2)(a)
Maree Roberts	Deputy Director-General, System Strategy & Policy	s 9(2)(a)

Minister's office to complete:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Decline | <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 | |

Comment:

Proof of COVID-19 vaccination in the context of border reopening: scientific and public health considerations

Security level: IN CONFIDENCE **Date:** 30 July 2021

To: Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for COVID-19 Response

Purpose of report

1. This report provides you with advice on the scientific and public health considerations for how COVID-19 vaccination status can assist risk stratification of inbound travellers to reduce the risk of COVID-19 from entering New Zealand.
2. This report is an item in the *Reconnecting New Zealanders with the World* work programme that was considered by Cabinet on 5 July 2021 [CAB-21-MIN-0263 refers]. The focus for this briefing is primarily on vaccination status for **inbound** travellers to New Zealand. It does not cover the use of vaccination credentials for domestic use, i.e. to access venues, services or settings within New Zealand.
3. This briefing discloses all relevant information.

Summary

4. Used alongside country and travel route risk assessment ascertaining the vaccination status of inbound travellers can assist with individual risk stratification. It can also support more tailored mitigation measures such as testing and isolation/quarantine based on the risk an individual might present.
5. No vaccine is 100 percent effective against transmission however, and the evidence is still evolving. Uncertainties remain in key areas such as real-world vaccine effectiveness, duration/type of immunity, and the changing nature of these variables as new variants emerge.
6. COVID-19 control measures, including border rules around vaccination status, will need to be flexible and responsive to accommodate this dynamic scientific and epidemiological situation
7. Vaccination certificates are health records that can confirm a person has received a vaccination, however they cannot prove immunity or guarantee the bearer presents low or no risk of importing or transmitting COVID-19.
8. Where there may be significant benefits of having a vaccination certificate (such being granted an entry visa to another country or being exempt from managed isolation and quarantine), the credential itself can become a valuable commodity.
9. Currently, there are numerous vaccination certificate formats being issued internationally. A growing black market in fake COVID-19 vaccination and test certificates is reinforcing the need for global standards for COVID-19 credentials that have security features that provide authenticity and are able to be digitally verified.

10. Until international standards are adopted more widely, the variability in formats will present significant challenges for verifying vaccination status of inbound travellers to New Zealand. Key considerations for easing the border rules for vaccinated travellers should include our degree of confidence:
 - a. in the authenticity of the vaccination certificate
 - b. that the bearer of the certificate was the person who received the vaccination
 - c. that the vaccine the person received meets our standards of efficacy.
11. The rigor around what New Zealand accepts as a valid proof of vaccination needs to reflect the Governments strategy to keep COVID-19 out of the New Zealand community.
12. Systems to transact and verify COVID-19 health credentials for inbound travellers to New Zealand, using a travel health declaration, are in development, led by Customs. The Ministry of Health is providing advice on health conditions and risk mitigation measures as part of the Reconnecting New Zealanders work programme.
13. Part of this work includes establishing New Zealand 'vaccination standards' for inbound travellers, such as:
 - a. which vaccines would be accepted?
 - b. what "fully vaccinated" means (i.e. number doses, dose intervals, and time before travel)?
 - c. what form of proof we might accept?
14. The Ministry of Health is progressing the development of a digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate for people vaccinated in New Zealand, using a format aligned with the European Union standard. This will be widely available towards the end of 2021.
15. The Ministry of Health will continue to engage with other global standards including the International Civil Aviation Organisation Visible Digital Seal and World Health Organization Digital Documentation of COVID-19 Certificates to ensure we are able to create certificates that meet requirements of different jurisdictions. Officials are also working through the process for seeking country-to country or regional mutual recognition of vaccination certificates.

Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **Note** that confidence in the vaccination status of people wishing to travel to New Zealand can assist with assessment and mitigation of risk at the border.
- b) **Note** that no vaccine is 100 percent effective against transmission and evidence is still evolving around real world vaccine effectiveness, duration/type of immunity and the impact of variants on these variables.
- c) **Note** that COVID-19 control measures, including border rules around vaccination status will need to be flexible to response to the dynamic scientific and epidemiological situation.

- d) **Note** a growing black market of fake vaccination certificates is emerging internationally.
- e) **Note** that until international standards are adopted more widely, the variability of formats will present significant challenges for verifying vaccination status of inbound travellers to New Zealand.
- f) **Note** that key considerations for assessing traveller risk based on vaccination status include the level of confidence in the authenticity of the certificate; that the bearer of the certificate was the person who received the vaccination; and that the vaccine meets our standards for efficacy.



Dr Ashley Bloomfield
Te Tumu Whakarae mō te Hauora
Director-General of Health

Date: 3/8/2021



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister for COVID-19 Response

Date: 10/8/2021

This work is critical to the Reconnecting NZ programme.
We need to see a joined-up govt approach to this.
A digital solution linked to passports would be ideal.

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Proof of COVID-19 vaccination in the context of border reopening: scientific and public health considerations

Proof of vaccination as a tool for managing the pandemic

16. Globally, the rollout of effective COVID-19 vaccines is seen as offering the best pathway to manage the pandemic, enabling the safer reopening of international borders and the resumption of most previously enjoyed freedoms. In New Zealand, vaccines are expected to help shape the phased approach for easing our border restrictions, supported by science, research and evidence.
17. The need for a high level of confidence about a person's vaccination status is driving the push towards trusted credentials that can prove to a third party that a person has been vaccinated against COVID-19. Knowing a person's vaccination status can enable decisions about the level of risk an individual might present and what mitigations might be needed in order to manage the risk. In the context of inbound travellers to New Zealand, the risk an individual traveller presents is also dependent on the numbers of people vaccinated domestically.

Technological solutions can assist with verifying COVID-19 health status

18. On 31 May 2021, the joint statement from Prime Ministers Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern and the Hon Scott Morrison for the annual Australia New Zealand Leaders' Meeting, noted that they had "tasked officials to explore technological solutions to verify vaccination status to enable Australians and New Zealanders to reconnect with the wider world..."
19. Internationally, countries are issuing a wide variety of vaccination certificates using variable formats. A growing black market in fake COVID-19 vaccination and test certificates is reinforcing the need to for countries to adopt global standards for COVID-19 credentials that have security features for authenticity and that are able to be digitally verified.
20. Where there are significant benefits of having a vaccination certificate (such as being granted an entry visa or being exempt from managed isolation and quarantine), the credential itself can become a valuable commodity.
21. As paper documents can be subject to fraud or falsification and can be easily lost or damaged, digital certificates can provide greater confidence that the person presenting the certificate is indeed the person who received the vaccination.
22. Work is progressing to develop a New Zealand issued verifiable digital COVID-19 health certificate for people vaccinated or tested in New Zealand. This is being developed alongside work for an accessible digital mechanism for people to be able to store and view their own COVID-19 vaccination and testing records. The ability for users to be able to request and upload a vaccination certificate as part of this functionality is expected to be widely available by the end of the year.

23. Recognising the importance of international interoperability, the Ministry of Health is designing the New Zealand issued vaccination certificate to be aligned with the emerging international standards. Initially the New Zealand credential will use the European Union Digital COVID-19 Certificate (EUDCC) standard. The Ministry of Health will continue to engage with other global standards including the International Civil Aviation Organisation Visible Digital Seal (ICAO VDS) and World Health Organization Digital Documentation of COVID-19 Certificates (WHO DDCC) to ensure we are able to create certificates that meet requirements of different jurisdictions.
24. This work sits within the Travel Health Pass work programme and is closely aligned with Reconnecting New Zealanders policy decisions. You recently received a briefing from the Ministry of Transport that provided an update on the Travel Health Pass Work Programme (OC210425, 16 June 2021).
25. The Travel Health Pass work programme has two component parts - departures, and arrivals:
 - a. **departures:** to ensure that people vaccinated in New Zealand can access a digital COVID-19 health credential (e.g. vaccination and test certificate) that can be used to facilitate international travel (led by the Ministry of Health)
 - b. **arrivals:** a travel health declaration system that can check and verify a travellers COVID-19 health credentials to ensure travellers are in the correct entry pathway for their risk (led by Customs).
26. This briefing does not repeat the issues covered in that briefing, but rather provides an overview of how assessing the vaccination status of inbound travellers can be as a tool to reduce the risk of COVID-19 from entering the New Zealand community.

Internationally, many countries are introducing proof of vaccination for inbound travellers

27. An increasing number of countries have introduced varying isolation and test exemptions for travellers from low risk countries and who can provide proof of having been vaccinated against COVID-19.
28. At this stage very few countries are requiring vaccination as a *mandatory condition* of entry, with the exceptions to date being Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Samoa, Grenada, Azerbaijan, Equatorial Guinea and Palau.
29. The scope and extent of exemptions for vaccinated travellers vary based on risk-benefit trade-offs such as geographical proximity, epidemiological factors, response capacities, and socio-economic factors.

WHO position

The World Health Organization advises against proof of vaccination being a mandatory condition of entry

30. The World Health Organisation (WHO) advises against Members States requiring proof of vaccination as a condition of entry or departure across international borders. Their main concern is the limited evidence about the performance of vaccines in reducing transmission and the persistent inequity in the global vaccine distribution.

31. They also cite equity concerns in that preferential vaccination of travellers could result in inadequate supplies of vaccines for priority populations considered at high risk of severe COVID-19 disease.

Instead the WHO recommends a risk-based approach to international travel

32. While recognising the diverse epidemiological situation and that countries have varying response capacities, the WHO recommends Member States adopt a risk-based approach to international travel which considers:
- a. the risk posed by travel for the importation and exportation of cases in the context of the evolving epidemiology, including the emergence and circulation of virus variants of concern
 - b. the expansion of the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out
 - c. lessons learned while responding to the pandemic, including on the early detection and management of cases and the application of public health and social measures.
33. Key among the WHO recommendations are that Member States:
- a. not require proof of COVID-19 vaccination as a *mandatory* condition for entry to or exit from a country.
 - b. consider a risk-based approach to the facilitation of international travel by lifting measures, such as testing and/or quarantine requirements, to individual travellers who:
 - were fully vaccinated, at least two weeks prior to travelling, with COVID-19 vaccines listed by WHO for emergency use or approved by a stringent regulatory authority, or
 - have had previous SARS-CoV-2 infection as confirmed by real time RT-PCR (rRT-PCR) within the six months prior to travelling and are no longer infectious as per WHO's criteria for releasing COVID-19 patients from isolation.
 - c. if testing and/or quarantine requirements are lifted for travellers who meet the above-mentioned criteria, offer alternatives to travel for individuals who are unvaccinated or do not have proof of past infection, such as through the use of negative rRT-PCR tests, or antigen detection rapid diagnostic tests (Ag-RDTs).
 - d. consider recording proof of COVID-19 vaccination in the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) ("Yellow booklet") or in digital formats, as recommended by regional or global intergovernmental bodies. Where digital certificates of "COVID-19 status" are used, interoperable solutions should be sought to allow for cross-border verification.

Assumptions

Assumptions behind COVID-19 vaccination certificates

34. The assumption underlying the use of COVID-19 vaccination certificates domestically or for international travel is that vaccination not only protects the vaccinated individual from being infected and becoming severely ill from the disease, but it also reduces their risk of spreading it to others.

35. In the context of international travel, this assumption implies that vaccinated travellers:
 - a. pose *less risk* of importing or exporting the virus
 - b. pose *less risk* of transmitting the virus to others if they are infected
 - c. are *less likely* to get severely unwell (personal protection)
 - d. are *less likely* to place a burden on the health care system.
36. Requiring proof of vaccination allows the stratification of people by the risk they present, and enables a more nuanced approach to testing, and isolation/quarantine requirements based on that risk.
37. It is important, however, to understand just how much risk is mitigated through vaccination, and what risk a vaccination certificate bearer might present to others.

Science

What does the science say?

38. While no COVID-19 vaccine can block transmission of the virus 100 percent, it is clear that vaccines, particularly the Pfizer vaccine, can substantially reduce transmission of the virus. Evidence on the magnitude of the reduction in transmissibility is still emerging.
39. In order for a person to transmit the virus to another person (infectiousness), they must first become infected, which depends on their 'susceptibility' and degree of protection. The Pfizer vaccine has approximately 90% vaccine effectiveness against the first of these steps - viral infection - relative to unvaccinated individuals.
40. As an absolute measure of risk, once vaccinated, approximately <0.5% of Pfizer-vaccinated individuals become infected ('breakthrough' infections). While it is possible for these individuals to infect others, the rate at which a vaccinated infected person can transmit the virus is unknown. However, there is emerging evidence that people vaccinated with Pfizer are less infectious and that vaccinated cases tend to be more asymptomatic, have lower viral loads, and a shorter duration of infection.

Vaccine standards

41. There is variability in the efficacy of different COVID-19 vaccines currently in use internationally. Effectiveness against transmission can vary depending on the type of vaccine and the dominant variant in circulation. While most vaccines offer protection against severe disease, some do not appear to offer the same level of protection against transmission.
42. Prevalent variants and the type of vaccine are important considerations for New Zealand when implementing proof of vaccination for inbound travellers, if the goal is to prevent the importation of the virus.

Not everyone develops the same immune response

43. Vaccination certificates are not immunity certificates. Not everyone will mount the same immune response to the vaccination - the same vaccine may be very effective in protecting one recipient and less so in another. So, while vaccination certificates are a record of a vaccination event they do not prove that a person is immune to the disease.

And some people cannot be vaccinated or may not have had the opportunity to be vaccinated

44. Should requiring proof of vaccination be introduced as a requirement for inbound travellers, consideration needs to be given to people who cannot be vaccinated, such as children or people with particular health conditions. Currently there are a variety of approaches in place for children seeking to travel internationally. Some countries require full testing and managed isolation and quarantine; some require 14 days self-isolation; and others waive all testing and isolation requirements if children are travelling with fully vaccinated family members or caregivers.
45. Whether or not inbound travellers have had the opportunity to be vaccinated may also be a consideration. This may be an issue for maritime crew for example.

Vaccine standards for international travel

The core vaccination standards are relatively consistent

46. Countries that have introduced vaccination status as a consideration at the border tend to have common criteria such as confirmation the required doses have been administered with the correct intervals, and that the last dose was received at least 14 days prior to travel. As the evidence is still emerging on the duration of vaccine induced immunity, some are also specifying that the last vaccination is received within six months prior to entry.

But some vaccines are more widely accepted than others

47. There is more variability in which vaccine a country recognises for cross-border travel. Not all vaccines are accepted consistently across jurisdictions. Some countries refer to the full set of WHO approved vaccines, while others specify a narrower list.
48. The WHO recommends that countries recognise all COVID-19 vaccines validated by the WHO Emergency Use Listing (EUL) or those approved by a Stringent Regulatory Authority (SRA). On 1 July 2021, COVAX issued a statement urging all regional, national and local government authorities to recognise as fully vaccinated all people who have received COVID-19 vaccines that have been deemed safe and effective by the WHO and/or the 11 Stringent Regulatory Authorities approved for COVID-19 vaccines when making decisions as to who is able to travel or attend events.
49. The COVAX statement noted that any measure that allow only people protected by a subset of WHO-approved vaccines to benefit from the re-opening of travel into and with that region would effectively create a two-tier system. It stated this risks further widening the global vaccine divide and exacerbating the inequities we have already seen in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. The COVAX statement also noted that moves to prioritise one vaccine over another for international travel were already undermining the confidence in life-saving vaccines already shown to be safe and effective, affecting uptake of vaccines and potentially putting lives at risk.

Unintended risks

Vaccination certificate schemes could have unintended consequences that risk public health

50. In assessing the benefits of ascertaining the vaccination status of inbound travellers, any potential unintended public health consequences also need to be considered.
51. Where vaccination certificates are a condition of certain entitlements, such as being granted an entry visa or being exempt from testing or MIQ requirements, the credential itself can become a valuable commodity. This may increase the risk of falsification or fraud. Depending on what other measures are wrapped around an inbound traveller (such as pre-departure testing or testing on arrival), there is the potential that a non-vaccinated person using a falsified credential could unwittingly import the virus and transmit COVID-19 to unvaccinated or vulnerable people.
52. While on one hand, benefits associated with a vaccination certificate could incentivise more people to receive a vaccine, it could also mean that some individuals may be less willing to disclose their medical history and (potential) contraindications which could increase the risk of adverse events.
53. Further, if the scope and use of vaccination certificates are not clearly defined, there is a risk that they could be used for purposes other than those originally intended, such as by third parties (e.g. commercial entities, insurance companies), which could lead to a distrust in the health system, the government's COVID-19 response or to vaccine hesitancy.

There is a need to be clear about the intended uses for a vaccination certificate

54. The WHO recommends that member states set out clear and specific policies, and laws if needed, on the limits to legitimate uses of a vaccination certificate. It states that use of vaccination certificates to restrict the right to freedom of movement and other human rights is only justified when it supports the pursuit of a legitimate aim during a public health emergency and is provided for by law, is proportionate, of limited duration, based on scientific evidence, and not imposed in an arbitrary, unreasonable or discriminatory manner.
55. Separate to international travel, some jurisdictions have introduced policies to require proof of vaccination to enter specified public venues and settings, such as museums, cinemas, and indoor events. There are significant ethical, legal, equity and public health considerations regarding limiting access to public settings based on vaccination status that are not covered in this briefing.

A disproportionate focus on individual vaccination status could underplay the importance of collective effort

56. A further concern that has been raised is that a focus on individual proof of vaccination may underemphasise the collective nature of the challenge. It risks treating a collective problem as an individual one, and inadvertently suggests a binary certainty whereby holders of trusted certificates are 'safe', and those without are 'risky'. Ultimately it will be national and international vaccination population coverage that will offer greater protection.

Trust in the credential

How can we have confidence in the authenticity of a vaccination certificates

57. At present there are numerous formats being issued internationally, many of which are paper based, have no security features and are not able to be digitally verified. Until international standards are adopted more widely, this variability will present significant challenges for verifying vaccination status of international travellers into New Zealand.
58. The authenticity of a vaccination certificate may be less imperative for countries where the incidence of community transmission is still relatively high. For countries that have a low level of risk tolerance for COVID-19 entering across the border the need for confidence in the vaccination credential is much greater.
59. Key considerations for easing the border rules for vaccinated travellers should include our degree of confidence:
 - a. in the authenticity of the vaccination certificate
 - b. that the bearer of the certificate was the person who received the vaccination
 - c. that the vaccine the person received meets our standards of efficacy.
60. Customs officials are working on a system that will include a pre-travel health declaration to collect information necessary for border agencies to process arriving travellers according to the level of COVID-19 risk.
61. Ideally, COVID-19 health credentials (such as vaccination or test certificates) would be verified digitally prior to travel, as the manual assessment of vaccination credentials is not only resource intensive but slows passenger flow through airports. Manual assessment also relies on subjective verification that is open to variability.
62. Digital verification of a test or vaccination certificate would involve scanning the QR code. This would reveal who the certificate is issued to, details around the test result or vaccine doses administered, along with a cryptographic digital signature confirming that the certificate was issued by a trusted entity. This ensures the information remains secure and provides confidence that the credential is authentic and has not been tampered with.

Setting vaccination standards for inbound travellers

63. In parallel to the policy work on future health settings for Reconnecting New Zealanders, officials are working through a process to determine:
 - a. which vaccines might we recognise for inbound travellers?
 - b. what "fully vaccinated" means (i.e. number doses, dose intervals, and period of time before travel)?
 - c. what form of proof we might accept?
64. The Ministry of Health has commenced work with Medsafe and the COVID-19 Vaccine Science and Technical Advisory Group (CV-TAG) on vaccination standards for inbound travellers. Given the evolving evidence, technology and epidemiological situation, any standards New Zealand adopted would need regular review.

65. Once minimum standards are agreed, a process for agreeing which certificates are recognised need to be progressed. It is likely this will involve country-to-country mutual recognition agreements as well as broader reciprocity agreements through international bodies like ICAO or the EU.
66. New Zealand is in discussions with the EU (along with other 30 non-EU countries) about joining the EUDCC scheme. Being accepted as a 'third country' to the EUDCC scheme would allow us to recognise and have high confidence in the vaccination certificates issued by countries in the EUDCC scheme and, in turn New Zealand-issued certificates would be recognised by those countries who have joined the scheme.
67. We envisage mutual recognition agreements wouldn't require reciprocity of border settings. It is likely that New Zealand will require higher standards of entry from some mutual recognition agreement partner countries than would be required for New Zealanders to travel there.
68. New Zealand officials are in regular discussion with Australian counterparts on COVID-19 vaccination certificates. Australia is also developing a digital vaccination certificate which we understand is expected to be available to people vaccinated in Australia around October this year. We will continue to engage with Australia with the aim of mutual recognition of each other's digital COVID-19 certificates.

Equity

69. Criteria to guide the approach to COVID-19 vaccination certification in New Zealand includes the following equity considerations:
 - a. vaccination certification will not increase health or other inequities, either domestically or globally
 - b. everyone has the right to obtain and hold an authentic credential that documents their vaccination status.
70. While requiring inbound travellers to provide valid proof of their vaccination status may support efforts to reduce the risk of COVID-19 being introduced through the border, this requirement could risk exacerbating health inequities in the following ways:
 - a. some populations may be disproportionately less likely to have an opportunity to be vaccinated and obtain a valid vaccination certificate
 - b. vaccinated individuals with geographical, financial or disability barriers may also be excluded from obtaining and using a digital vaccination certificate depending on the administration process, cost and design
 - c. vaccinated individuals from countries without the infrastructure to issue suitable vaccination certificates may be disproportionately impacted.

Next steps

71. The Reconnecting New Zealanders work programme is considering matters related to proof of vaccination as part of a risk-based approach to reconnection. Further public health advice on settings for entry pathways is being prepared for the Reconnecting New Zealand Ministerial Group for late August 2021.

END

Memo

New Zealand-issued digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates

Date: 17 August 2021

To: COVID-19 Immunisation Implementation Advisory Group

From: Maria Cotter, Principal Policy Analyst, COVID-19 Policy, System Strategy and Policy

For your: Information

Purpose of report

1. This memo provides you with an overview of work underway to develop COVID-19 digital vaccination certificates for people vaccinated in New Zealand, with the primary aim of supporting international travel.

Vaccination as a tool for managing the pandemic and reopening borders

2. Globally, the rollout of effective COVID-19 vaccines is seen as offering the best pathway to manage the pandemic; enabling safe reopening of international borders and the resumption of most previously enjoyed freedoms.
3. The need for a high level of confidence about a person's vaccination status is driving the push towards verifiable trusted credentials that can prove to a third party that a person has been vaccinated against COVID-19. Knowing a person's vaccination status can enable decisions about the level of public health risk an individual might present and what mitigations might be needed in order to manage that risk.

Internationally, proof of vaccination is becoming a common requirement

4. Different countries are taking varying approaches to how vaccination status affects a person's ability to travel. We are seeing an increasing number of countries, particularly in Europe, remove all restrictions on travel for people who can provide proof of vaccination.
5. It is likely that we will continue to see COVID-19 health credentials (i.e. vaccination and pre-departure test status) form part of the suite of public health measures that countries deploy to keep COVID-19 out at the border, alongside travel bans from high risk countries, testing and managed or self-isolation.
6. At this stage very few countries are requiring vaccination as a *mandatory* condition of entry, with the exceptions to date being Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Samoa, Grenada, Azerbaijan, Equatorial Guinea and Palau.
7. A growing number of countries are also requiring proof of vaccination domestically, to access services such as restaurants, bars and hair salons, or venues such as sports matches, cinemas, and museums. The rationale for these requirements appears to be in part to manage the potential for transmission and also to incentivise vaccination.

Assumptions behind vaccination certificates

8. The assumption underlying the use of COVID-19 vaccination certificates domestically or for international travel is that vaccination not only protects the vaccinated individual from being infected and becoming severely ill from the disease, but it also reduces the risk of transmitting the virus to others.
9. Vaccination certificates provide a record that confirms a person has received a vaccination. However, they cannot prove immunity or guarantee the bearer presents low or no risk of importing or transmitting COVID-19.
10. Key considerations for assessing public health risk based on proof of vaccination includes:
 - a. the level of confidence in the authenticity of the certificate
 - b. that the bearer of the certificate is the person who received the vaccination
 - c. that the vaccine meets agreed standards.

Digital solutions can support trust and confidence

11. A growing black market in fake COVID-19 vaccination and test certificates is reinforcing the need to for countries to adopt global standards for COVID-19 credentials.
12. As paper documents are more open to fraud or falsification and can be easily lost or damaged, digital certificates that have features such as a QR code and a country security signatures can provide greater confidence in the authenticity of the credential.
13. At present there are numerous formats being issued internationally. Until the proof of vaccination becomes more standardised, this variability presents challenges for accepting and verifying COVID-19 health credentials of international travellers.
14. Global standards are beginning to emerge with the European Union's Digital COVID-19 Certificate (EU DCC) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Visible Digital Seal (VDS) as the front-runners. Both approaches are aligned to World Health Organisation guidance for Digital Documentation of COVID-19 Certificates (WHO DDCC).

A New Zealand issued secure digital vaccination certificate is in development

15. Work is underway to develop a New Zealand issued verifiable digital COVID-19 health certificate for people vaccinated in New Zealand. The proposed solution will build on the capability of the COVID-19 Consumer Channel web app that enables consumers to securely log in and view their COVID Immunisation Register (CIR) records. Consumers would be able to request/generate a health certificate with the web app, triggering data for the certificate generator for digital signing and rendering. Certificates will be able to be printed on paper and presented digitally, for example on a smartphone. A mocked up example of what this might look like is provided in Appendix 1.
16. Access to a certificate would be available through two primary channels:
 - a. Digital Self-Service – through secure login to the My COVID Record web app and triggering certificate generation, viewing, printing or downloading.
 - b. Call Centre Assisted Channel – Ministry of Health and/or national call centre agents will be able to identify a caller and trigger the emailing and/or postage of a certificate to them.

17. Special care will need to be taken in the development of the solution and supporting business processes to ensure that the details of the certificate match the details on the travel or identification documents that it will be used with, e.g. passport for the purposes of international travel.
18. The digital vaccination certificate is currently targeted to be publicly available at the end of November 2021, with pilot trials planned for October 2021.
19. We have developed a set of criteria to guide our approach to COVID-19 vaccination certification, which are set out in Appendix 2.
20. In the interim, if people need confirmation of their COVID-19 vaccination for international travel purposes, they can request a letter from the Ministry of Health. Demand for these letters has been high and the Ministry has had to put in place additional resourcing and systems to make the process more efficient. Because these letters do not have any security elements that would reduce the risk of falsification and cannot be digitally verified we do not regard these letters as 'certificates' as such.

International interoperability is important

21. The Ministry of Health is designing the New Zealand issued vaccination certificate to be aligned with emerging international standards. The first version of New Zealand's digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate will use a format that is aligned with the EU DCC. The EU DCC provides the framework for EU member states, and non-EU "third countries" which join, to share a verification system for vaccination, test and recovery certificates. New Zealand is currently working through the process for third country status with the EU.
22. We are continuing to engage with other emerging standards, including the ICAO VDS and the WHO DCC standards, to ensure we can generate COVID-19 health certificates that meet requirements of different jurisdictions. The goal is for those vaccinated in New Zealand to be able to generate both EU DCC and ICAO VDS COVID-19 health credentials. The November 2021 launch will use the EU DCC format in the first instance.
23. The priority is currently on operationalising a digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate. Work around digital COVID-19 test certificates will follow, but in slower timeframe.

There is a need to be clear about the intended uses for a vaccination certificate

24. The WHO recommends that members states set out clear and specific policies, and laws if needed, on the limits to legitimate uses of a vaccination certificate to manage equity and discrimination issues. It states that use of vaccination certificates to restrict the right to freedom to movement and other human rights is only justified when it supports the pursuit of a legitimate aim during a public health emergency. It also needs to be provided for by law, proportionate, of limited duration, based on scientific evidence, and not imposed in an arbitrary, unreasonable or discriminatory manner.
25. To date, the primary rationale for the development of a New Zealand issued digital vaccination certificate has been to enable New Zealanders to travel internationally (outbound) and to enable a more risk-based approach at our border (inbound).

Vaccination certificates could be used within New Zealand regardless of Government policy

26. The Ministry of Health will be undertaking policy work to explore the ethical, legal, equity and public health considerations regarding domestic use of vaccination certificates.
27. Bill of Rights Act 1990 considerations would apply to any legislative requirements or Government-issued guidance to require vaccination certification within New Zealand.
28. However, there is the potential for Ministry-issued vaccination certificates to be used for other purposes within New Zealand regardless of Government policy. Private individuals, businesses and organisations could put restrictions on access to places or services on the basis of vaccination status. Vaccination status is not a prohibited ground of discrimination, so there is no human rights legislative barrier to this unless an individual's reason for not being vaccinated was related to one of the prohibited grounds¹. But there would be a Privacy Act barrier; requiring a person to share their health record would have to be justifiable under Information Privacy Principle 1.
29. Likewise, employers can require that certain work must only be done by vaccinated workers for health and safety reasons, such as managed isolation and quarantine facilities. This is only likely to be justified where the worker is at a high risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19 to others. Government guidance for employers recommends that they first undertake a COVID-19 exposure risk assessment before introducing any requirement.
30. While people have a right to request their health information already, it is possible that the introduction of Ministry-issued vaccination certificates could, later in the vaccine rollout, unintentionally encourage some private entities to request proof of vaccination. We will need to monitor whether this occurs. Should it become an issue that is having a significant impact on individuals (such as access to essential services), we could explore options to mitigate this. For example, legislative change to prevent proof of vaccination being required in certain instances.

The Reconnecting New Zealand strategy will shape how vaccination certificates are used for inbound travel to New Zealand

31. Confidence in the vaccination status of people wishing to travel to New Zealand can assist with assessment and mitigation of public health risk prior to travel and provide a more calibrated approach to testing and isolation/quarantine requirements.
32. The Reconnecting New Zealand strategy will inform when, how, to whom and the pace at which we re-open our border, and the measures we might wrap around a vaccinated traveller. At the Reconnecting New Zealanders to the World forum on 12 August, the Prime Minister signalled that a Traveller Health Declaration System would play a role in New Zealand's reopening border strategy
33. This system will be needed to risk assess individual passengers prior to arrival and ensure that they are directed to their appropriate testing or isolation requirements on arrival. The system will include proof of vaccination certificates, pre-departure test certificates, and traveller declared data such as contact details and travel history. The platform will eventually provide a single place for passengers to make their complete travel declaration, removing the need for

¹ Such as age, pregnancy or religion.

a physical arrival card. Work to develop a Traveller Health Declaration System is being led by Customs New Zealand with key input from the Ministry of Health, Immigration New Zealand and other agencies.

34. There are several key issues that are being worked through, such as what fully vaccinated means, what vaccines will be accepted, what is the pathway for children who cannot be vaccinated and what credentials will be accepted.
35. The Ministry of Health has commenced work with Medsafe and the COVID-19 Vaccine Science and Technical Advisory Group (CV-TAG) on establishing which vaccines would be recognised for inbound travellers. Given the evolving evidence, technology and epidemiological situation, any list of acceptable vaccines will need regular review.
36. A process for agreeing what form of proof we would accept from overseas jurisdictions will also be progressed as part of the Reconnecting New Zealand work programme. The rigor around what New Zealand accepts as a valid proof of vaccination needs to reflect the Government's highest priority to use the border as its key line of defence to keep COVID-19 out of the New Zealand community.
37. New Zealand is in discussions with the EU (along with other 30 non-EU countries) about joining the EU DCC scheme. Being accepted as a 'third country' to the EU DCC scheme would allow us to recognise and have high confidence in the vaccination certificates issued by countries in the EU DCC scheme and, in turn, New Zealand-issued certificates would be recognised by those countries who have joined the scheme.
38. New Zealand officials are in regular discussions with Australian counterparts on COVID-19 vaccination certificates. Australia is also developing a digital vaccination certificate, using the ICAO VDS standard. We understand it is expected to be available to people vaccinated in Australia around October this year.
39. We are mindful of the potential impact of digital COVID-19 health credentials on the ability of people from Pacific Island countries to travel, and on their COVID response and recovery efforts more generally. As New Zealand's work in this space evolves, we will share information with Pacific Island governments. There is risk that the framing and regulation of this approach could become fragmented in the Pacific. Systems developed outside the region may not be fit for purpose or operationally practical for several smaller island states.

Equity

40. Criteria to guide the approach to COVID-19 vaccination certification in New Zealand includes the following equity considerations:
 - a. vaccination certification will not increase health or other inequities, either domestically or globally
 - b. everyone has the right to obtain and hold an authentic credential that documents their vaccination status.
41. While requiring inbound travellers to provide valid proof of their vaccination status may support efforts to reduce the risk of COVID-19 being introduced through our border, this requirement could risk exacerbating health inequities in the following ways:
 - a. some populations may be disproportionately less likely to have an opportunity to be vaccinated and obtain a valid vaccination certificate

- b. vaccinated individuals with geographical, financial or disability barriers may also be excluded from obtaining and using a digital vaccination certificate depending on the administration process, cost and design
 - c. vaccinated individuals from countries without the infrastructure to issue suitable vaccination certificates may be disproportionately impacted.
42. Equity will be one of the factors considered in the advice to Ministers on entry requirements for the three pathways under the Reconnecting New Zealand work programme. It will also be a consideration in any advice on domestic use for vaccination certificates.

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Appendix 1.

Example of what a New Zealand issued vaccination certificate could look like



Appendix 2.

Criteria to guide the design and delivery of New Zealand issued COVID-19 vaccination certificates

Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vaccination certification will not increase health or other inequities, either domestically or globally. ○ Everyone has a right to obtain and hold an authentic credential that documents their vaccination status.
Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vaccination certificates are designed to minimise the risk of health, social, and economic harm. ○ Vaccination certification processes will not be a barrier to, or discourage uptake of, the COVID-19 vaccine. ○ Potential for unintended consequences (such as a false sense of security and reduced adherence to other public health measures) are identified and mitigated.
Evidence-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The use of vaccination certificates is guided by public health and scientific evidence or advice.
User accessibility and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The certification process is convenient, user friendly and promotes trust and confidence. ○ There are multiple channels available to obtain a vaccination certificate. ○ Both digital and non-digital (i.e. paper) certificate options are available. ○ The checking (verification) process is convenient, user-friendly easy and efficient for certificate holders.
Individual ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People can choose whether, when and with whom they share their vaccination credential. ○ People can request for correction of their data contained in their certificate.
Compatible and interoperable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vaccination certificates are designed to be consistent with international standards and interoperable with international and domestic border systems. ○ Vaccination certificates are easily verified by New Zealand border agencies (e.g. scannable at a NZ SmartGate).
Trustworthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vaccination certificates are designed to be verifiable by other government border agencies using a trusted Public Key Directory (PKD). ○ Users have trust and have confidence in the vaccination certification system. ○ Vaccination certificates have inbuilt elements that provide confidence in the certificate's authenticity and assurance that the data has not been modified. ○ Vaccination certificates are designed to reduce the potential for counterfeit or fraud.
Privacy and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The storage, provision and use of vaccination certification data is consistent with the Health Information Privacy Code 2020. ○ The certificates use security features that are consistent with the New Zealand Government's information security standards. ○ Vaccination certificates will be designed to include the minimum amount information about an individual as possible.
Efficient and cost effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certification processes will not negatively impact the operation of the vaccination rollout or place undue burdens on other parts of the health system. ○ The issuing of a vaccination certificate can occur after the vaccination event. ○ The design of the certificate supports efficient verification (i.e. at the time of booking, or at the border). ○ Certification and verification systems are cost effective and efficient for New Zealand. ○ Certification and verification processes minimise any unnecessary processes or duplication of effort.

Flexible

- Solutions for proof of vaccination are designed to be scalable and flexible to adapt to changing domestic and international requirements
- Certificate design includes an expiry date and can support revocation.

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Memo

COVID-19 digital vaccination certificate update and international vaccination requirements

Date:	26 August 2021
To:	COVID-19 Vaccine Ministers
From:	Joanne Gibbs, National Director, COVID Vaccination and Immunisation Programme
For your:	Information

Purpose

1. This paper provides a progress update on work underway to develop a New Zealand issued digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate. As requested at your earlier meeting, it also discusses some of the international developments for vaccination as a border entry requirement.

Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **Note** that a New Zealand issued digital vaccination certificate will be in a technical pilot at the end of September and made widely available by the end of November 2021.
- b) **Note** that the design of the New Zealand issued digital vaccination certificate will be aligned to the international standards to support interoperability.
- c) **Note** that the Ministry of Health is working closely with other government agencies involved in the Travel Health Declaration system, and the Reconnecting New Zealand work programme.
- d) **Note** that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade are monitoring international developments regarding COVID-19 vaccination requirements in other countries.

Background

2. Increasingly countries are requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination (including what type of vaccine, when it was administered and where), and/or test results as part of the bundle of measures that determine if, and under what conditions, a person may cross their borders.

3. A growing number of countries are also requiring proof of vaccination domestically, to access services such as restaurants, bars and hair salons, or venues such as sports matches, cinemas, and museums. The introduction of these requirements varies and appears to be in part to manage the potential for transmission but also to incentivise vaccination.
4. Given the benefits of vaccination and the high risk of COVID-19 transmission there is a need for a high level of confidence about a person's COVID-19 health status. This is driving the push for verifiable credentials that can provide a high level of confidence about the bearer of the certificate's COVID-19 health status.
5. As paper documents are more open to fraud or falsification and can be easily lost or damaged, digital certificates that have features such as a scannable QR code and cryptographic country security signatures can provide greater confidence in the authenticity of the credential.
6. Furthermore, a growing black market in fake COVID-19 vaccination and test certificates is another motivator for the adoption of global standards and minimum requirements for these credentials.
7. The Ministry of Health considers providing a verifiable credential that can prove vaccination status and/or test results using a single standard is required. Such credentials will be necessary for people vaccinated or tested in New Zealand who are wishing to travel overseas where countries with these requirements in place. They will also allow us to operationalise assessment of vaccination requirements for return entry into New Zealand, as part of Reconnecting New Zealanders strategy.
8. Global standards are beginning to emerge with the European Union Digital COVID-19 Certificate (EU DCC) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Visible Digital Seal (VDS) as the front-runners. Both approaches are aligned to the recently published World Health Organisation guidance for Digital Documentation of COVID-19 Certificates (WHO DDCC).

A New Zealand digital vaccination certificate is in development

9. As you have been previously advised, work is underway to develop a system to produce New Zealand issued digital COVID-19 certificates for people vaccinated or tested in New Zealand.
10. The priority is currently on the vaccination certificate. Work around digital COVID-19 test certificates will follow, but in slower time.
11. The Ministry of Health is designing the New Zealand issued vaccination certificate to be compatible with emerging international standards, so it can be recognised by as many countries as possible. The first version of New Zealand's digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate will use a format that is aligned with the EU DCC.
12. We are continuing to engage with other emerging standards, including the ICAO VDS, to ensure we are able to generate health credentials that meet requirements of different jurisdictions. The goal is for those vaccinated in New Zealand to be able to generate both EU DCC and ICAO VDS COVID-19 health credentials. Supporting multiple different certificate formats will provide New Zealand with greater flexibility for international travel.

13. The proposed solution will build on the capability of the 'My COVID Record' web app that will enable consumers to securely log in to a website and view their personal COVID Immunisation Register (CIR) records.
14. People who have been vaccinated in New Zealand will be able to request or 'generate' a health certificate with the web app, triggering data for the certificate generator for digital signing and rendering. Certificates will be able to be printed out on paper or presented digitally, for example on a smartphone. A specimen example of what a paper version might look like is set out in annex 1. You will note there is a QR code that allows the information to be collected and verified.
15. Access to a vaccination certificate would be available through two primary channels:
 - a. Digital Self-Service – through secure login to the My COVID Record web app and triggering certificate generation, viewing, printing or downloading.
 - b. Call Centre Assisted Channel – Ministry of Health and/or national call centre agents will be able to identify a caller and trigger the emailing and/or postage of a certificate to them.
16. Other countries including Australia have recognised that people will use different names in the health system to those used in official documents (e.g. passports). Care will need to be taken in the development of the solution and supporting business processes to ensure that the details of the certificate match the details on the travel or identification documents that it will be used with. For the purposes of international travel, it will be important that the name and date of birth on the certificate match the person's passport number.
17. The security seal is provided by the passport service – this confirms that the content on the certificate (in the QR code) has not been altered.
18. The New Zealand issued certificate would only be available to people who have received their COVID-19 vaccinations in New Zealand, as the record will rely on information in the COVID Immunisation Register. We are still working through a solution for people who have received an initial vaccination overseas and one in New Zealand.
19. The initial standard we intend to follow (EU-DCC) does not require a passport number on the vaccination certificate. Name details and date of birth on the certificate are the method for linking this to an individual.
20. We are conscious that applying a passport level security model to the certificate will reduce the ability for New Zealanders to participate. We expect that this may change over time and our solution will be able to accommodate these changes.
21. In order to deliver the self-service solution, which is by far the most efficient and cost-effective method for the health system we require the services associated with this to be robust and scalable. This is currently underway with testing of the My Health Account and My COVID Record. Normally a product such as this would take many years to establish. For example the My Health Record in Australia took five years to develop and deploy.

22. Due to the security and privacy requirements for the vaccination certificate and the current testing of My COVID Record with a limited number of users we expect that there will be a technical trial of these together from the end of September 2021.
23. The digital vaccination certificate is currently targeted to be publicly available by the end of November 2021 through both direct digital channel and an assisted option through calling an 0800 number.
24. We expect due to our approach we will then rapidly be able to add additional certificate formats and similar certificates for proof of testing.
25. We recognise that Ministers are eager for this to be available as soon as possible. A digital certificate will be a key tool to support New Zealanders to be able to travel internationally and enable a traveller risk-based approach under the Reconnecting New Zealanders strategy.
26. The Ministry continues to work alongside Customs, Immigration New Zealand and other agencies on the Travel Health Declaration System to support a process for the assessment and transaction of COVID-19 health credentials under the proposed traveller risk-based approach.
27. As part of the policy work on health requirements for inbound travellers, officials are working through a process to determine:
 - a. which vaccines New Zealand would recognise
 - b. what fully vaccinated means (number of doses, dose interval, etc)
 - c. what form of proof of vaccination New Zealand would accept.

International developments

28. Over 100 countries have introduced COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of entry or to be exempt from or to be granted reduced quarantine requirements. At this stage, however, only a handful of countries, have introduced proof of vaccination as a *mandatory* requirement (including Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Grenada, Azerbaijan and Palau).
29. This is a rapidly evolving environment, with country requirements often changing at short notice. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade have established an international tracker to monitor these requirements which is circulated to key government agencies on a fortnightly basis.
30. In addition, officials across Government are engaged with both with international standard setting bodies (the WHO and ICAO), through multilateral groups (for example the Five Country Human Biosecurity Working Group (HGB5), and through bilateral engagements. It is likely to continue to remain a complex environment as systems for generating the certificates and processes for country-to-country recognition of COVID-19 certificates evolve.
31. At this stage, what form of proof countries recognise varies considerably. As a general observation, where COVID-19 has become endemic, the standards of proof appear to be less stringent. Where countries are placing a very high priority on using their border as a key defence to keep COVID-19 out, the standards tend to be higher and more defined.

32. As an interim measure until the digital vaccination certificate becomes available, and while international travel remains severely restricted, those vaccinated in New Zealand and who are travelling internationally tend to be using either a confirmation of vaccination letter from the Ministry of Health, a COVID-19 vaccination card, or print-out from their GP.
33. Noting the variety of approaches emerging, the mutual recognition of COVID-19 health credentials is quickly becoming important. New Zealand's position is that any discussion on mutual recognition of COVID-19 health credentials will focus on the technical aspects of verifying authenticity of credentials, as opposed to harmonising border entry requirements. The New Zealand Government will continue to reserve its sovereign right to establish and adapt border measures over time that reflect New Zealand's domestic context and national COVID-19 management strategy.
34. Officials are currently working through the process for engaging with other countries about recognising vaccination certificates. As a first step, we are applying for New Zealand to be granted 'third country' status with the EU digital COVID-19 certificate framework. Being accepted as a 'third country' to the EU DCC trust framework would enable New Zealand border agencies to recognise and have high confidence in the vaccination certificates issued by countries in the EU scheme, and in turn, New Zealand issued certificates would be recognised by all countries who have joined the scheme.
35. We understand a number of countries are in discussions with the EU around joining the framework, including the United Kingdom, the United States, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore and Canada.

Australia and the Pacific

36. New Zealand officials are in regular discussion with Australian counterparts on COVID-19 health credentials. Australia is also developing a digital vaccination certificate, using the ICAO VDS standard. While it will be the first country to use this standard, it is not too dissimilar to the EU DCC standard New Zealand will be using. We have confidence that our border agencies will be able to work through a solution to electronically transact and verify Australian digital vaccination certificates for inbound travel to New Zealand. We understand Australia expect to have its digital vaccination certificate ready for use around October this year.
37. Pacific countries will also likely need to be able to provide verifiable digital COVID-19 health certificates to ensure those vaccinated in those countries can travel overseas. In addition, some Pacific countries (namely, Samoa) have already introduced vaccination as a mandatory entry requirement, and so will be seeking verified evidence that travellers entering have had appropriate vaccination. It will be important that the Pacific countries have access to a solution that aligns with international standards as far as possible. This will be challenging as both the ICAO and EU standards require a high level of technological capability to be able to generate the certificates.
38. As New Zealand's work in this space evolves, we will share information with Pacific Island governments. There is risk that the framing and regulation of this approach could become fragmented in the Pacific. Systems invented outside the region may not be fit for purpose or operationally practical for a number of smaller island states. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is scoping work to explore these issues alongside

Australia and Pacific Island countries including options for a harmonised approach between countries within the region.

Next steps

39. At the request of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, this paper will be shared with the Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group for their meeting on 31 August 2021.
40. As part of the suite of report-backs from the July *Reconnecting New Zealanders with the World* Cabinet paper, the Ministry of Health is preparing a Cabinet paper for the Minister for COVID-19 Response on progress in developing the New Zealand issued digital vaccination certificate. This is expected to go to Cabinet by the end of September.

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Appendix 1.

Example of what a New Zealand issued vaccination certificate could look like



Briefing

Update on the development of New Zealand's digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate

Date due to MO: 24 September 2021 **Action required by:** 28 September 2021

Security level: IN CONFIDENCE **Health Report number:** 20212055

To: Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group

Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
Dr Ashley Bloomfield	Director-General of Health	s 9(2)(a)
Shayne Hunter	Deputy Director-General, Data and Digital	s 9(2)(a)
Maree Roberts	Deputy Director-General, System Strategy and Policy	s 9(2)(a)

Minister's office to complete:

- Approved Decline Noted
 Needs change Seen Overtaken by events
 See Minister's Notes Withdrawn

Comment:

Update on the development of New Zealand's digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate

Security level: IN CONFIDENCE **Date:** 22 September 2021

To: Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group

Purpose of report

1. This report provides an update on the development of digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates for people vaccinated in New Zealand.
2. This report discloses all relevant information and implications.

Summary

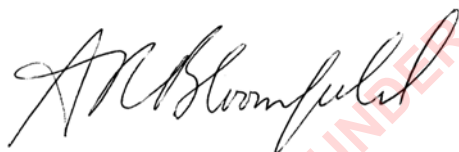
3. The Ministry of Health is progressing work to issue digital COVID-19 health certificates for people vaccinated or tested in New Zealand. As the principal use case has been for the purposes of international travel, the certificates are being designed to be compatible with emerging international standards so they can be recognised by as many countries as possible.
4. Access to these certificates will be available via two main channels:
 - a. digital self-service – through a secure login to the My COVID Record application, which will trigger the generation of the certificate which can be viewed online or downloaded and printed.
 - b. call centre assisted channel – the call centre agents will be able to identify the caller and trigger the generation of the certificate which can be emailed or posted out.
5. It is expected that those vaccinated in New Zealand will have access to this system from late November.
6. At this stage, there is no single international standard for vaccination and test certificates, and a wide variety of formats are being issued. Likewise, the level of proof international jurisdictions accept at their borders varies significantly.
7. The initial design of New Zealand's certificates will align with the European Union (EU) standard for digital COVID-19 certificates (the EU DCC). This standard appears to be being adopted by more and more countries outside the EU.
8. Given the importance of interoperability, the Ministry of Health has applied to the EU DCC to be part of the EU DCC trust framework, and officials are currently working through this process alongside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

9. Officials are also working through a process to engage with other countries for the mutual technical recognition of New Zealand's and other countries' COVID-19 vaccination certificates.
10. Separate advice is being prepared for the Minister for COVID-19 Response and the Prime Minister on how vaccination certificates for domestic use cases could be issued.

Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **Note** that New Zealand issued digital COVID-19 test and vaccination certificates for international travel will be publicly available by the end of November 2021. **Noted**
- b) **Note** that these certificates will be developed using the European Union standard for digital COVID-19 certificates (EU DCC), which has been endorsed by the World Health Organization. **Noted**
- c) **Note** that officials have applied for New Zealand's COVID-19 certificates to be accepted into the EU DCC trust framework which, if approved, would provide significant interoperability of the certificates with the EU and other non-EU countries in the framework. **Noted**
- d) **Note** that officials are working through processes to commence bilateral engagements on the mutual technical recognition of New Zealand's and other countries' COVID-19 vaccination certificates. **Noted**
- e) **Note** that officials are preparing separate advice for Ministers on how domestic COVID-19 vaccination certificates could be issued and used. **Noted**



Dr Ashley Bloomfield
Te Tumu Whakarae mō te Hauora
Director-General of Health
Date: 23/09/2021

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister
Date:

Hon Grant Robertson
Minister of Finance
Date:

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister for COVID-19 Response
Date:

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Date:

Hon Kris Faafoi
Minister of Immigration
Date:

Hon Michael Wood
Minister of Transport
Date:

Hon Peeni Henare
Associate Minister of Health (Māori Health)
Date:

Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Associate Minister of Health
Date:

Hon Aupito Willian Sio
Associate Minister of Health (Pacific Peoples)
Date:

Hon Meka Whaitiri
Minister of Customs
Date:

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Update on the development of New Zealand's digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate

Context

1. At the 31 August 2021 meeting of the Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group, you received a copy of a memorandum for the COVID-19 Vaccine Ministers on work underway to develop a New Zealand issued digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate. That memorandum also discussed some of the international developments for vaccination as a border entry requirement.
2. This briefing does not intend to repeat the material covered in that memorandum, but rather provides a further update on when the certificates will be available, and how they will be operationalised.
3. An update on the digital vaccination certificate was also a recommendation in the Reconnecting New Zealanders with the World Cabinet paper in July 2021 [CAB-21-MIN-0263 refers]. The office of the Minister for COVID-19 Response advised that a more suitable forum for this update would be at the September Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group meeting rather than at Cabinet.

Globally, digital COVID-19 certificates are becoming more common

4. Internationally the need for a high level of confidence about a person's COVID-19 health status is driving the development of verifiable credentials. As paper documents are prone to fraud and can be easily lost or damaged, digital certificates can provide a secure and electronically verifiable way for a person to provide their vaccination or test status. Digital certificates contain a QR code that securely signs the health record contained within it. These can be scanned by a verifying party (e.g. a border official) using a specific checker app to confirm its authenticity and that it hasn't been altered.
5. While there is growing international demand for an electronically verifiable proof of COVID-19 vaccination and test results, as yet there is no single international standard. Currently there are numerous formats being issued across the globe, which makes checking COVID-19 health certificates by border authorities extremely challenging. We expect over time that there will be greater alignment of formats. However, there is likely to still be many countries without the technical capability to issue digital credentials with cryptographic security features that will continue to use basic paper-based formats.
6. To support World Health Organization (WHO) member states in adopting interoperable standards, in July 2021 the WHO published guidance for recording vaccination status using digitally signed vaccination records. This guidance will be an important step towards a more unified approach. Three New Zealanders participated on the WHO advisory group, including the Ministry of Health's Chief Standards Advisor, Data and Digital.

7. Consistent with the WHO guidance, the European Union (EU) has developed its EU Digital COVID Certificate (EU DCC) which has been adopted by 27 EU and 16 non-EU countries to date. This appears to be emerging as a front runner towards a single international standard, which is a key reason why the Ministry of Health is initially aligning its digital certificate with the EU standard.
8. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has also developed guidelines on visible digital seals for travel related COVID-19 health proofs, (ICAO VDS-NC), and this is also compatible with the WHO standard. To date, Australia appears to be the only country adopting this format for its digital vaccination certificates. Officials are in regular contact with Australian counterparts on its work on this, which includes discussion towards mutual recognition of each country's COVID-19 health certificates.

Progress on New Zealand's digital COVID-19 health certificates

9. As you have been previously advised, the Ministry of Health is developing a system to produce New Zealand issued digital COVID-19 certificates for people vaccinated or tested in New Zealand. This has been developed with the principal use case of supporting New Zealanders to travel internationally and have their COVID-19 health status recognised by overseas authorities.
10. While the priority was initially the vaccination certificate, the system will also be able to issue COVID-19 test certificates.
11. With the forthcoming availability of digital vaccination certificates for international travel, there has been public interest in whether vaccination certificates will become a requirement to access certain venues, settings, or services. Domestic use of COVID-19 vaccination certificates raises questions around equity (access), social cohesion and privacy and would need to be justified by public health benefits. This is the subject of separate advice to Ministers.

The feature to develop COVID-19 certificates will be built on My COVID Record

12. As part of the COVID-19 immunisation programme, the Ministry of Health is building a new digital product called My COVID Record which will enable people to securely access their vaccination and test records using the new My Health Account¹.
13. We will build on the capability of the 'My COVID Record' web application to generate and issue the digital COVID-19 vaccination and test certificates. This will mean people will be able to login online to their personal My COVID Record, view their records, and click on a link to download a vaccination or test certificate.
14. Having a digital self-service solution, rather than issuing each certificate manually, is by far the most efficient, cost effective and scalable way of issuing the certificates.
15. The provision of vaccination certificates via the My COVID Record service is expected to primarily be electronic but people will also have the option of calling an 0800 number and having a certificate emailed or sent to them by post.
16. Initially, when the system goes live, the certificates will be made available as PDF documents that can be printed. It is expected that the next iteration would have the

¹ Note: My COVID Record will not integrate into the COVID Tracer App.

ability for the certificate to be stored in digital wallet apps on a computer or smart phone (e.g. Apple Wallet or Google Pay). Samples of what these PDF certificates might look like are appended (Appendix 1).

17. The personal health data contained in My COVID Record and that which will be used for the certificates will be sourced from the COVID Immunisation Register (CIR) and the national COVID19 test results database, Éclair.
18. A security seal will be applied to each certificate using the same technology that is used for New Zealand passports. This confirms that the content on the certificate (contained in the QR code) has not be altered and that the certificate can be trusted. A certificate reader app would need to be issued so verifiers can read the QR code and check that it is authentic and has not been altered.
19. Privacy and data protection elements are cornerstone elements in the design of any digital solution which must maintain data security. These considerations remain at the forefront of the development of this system and the Ministry of Health is working closely with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner to ensure this meets New Zealanders needs and expectations.

New Zealand digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates for international travel will be available by the end of November 2021

20. My COVID Record is currently being piloted with several hundred people and is expected to be made available to the public within a month. This will allow people to view their COVID-19 records, which is a prerequisite to the certificate generation feature.
21. The certificate generation feature is currently in a technical testing phase and international certificates will be available for testing with several hundred New Zealanders in the coming weeks. It is expected that people vaccinated or tested in New Zealand would have access to this system from late November 2021. A basic timeline is appended at Appendix 2.
22. As noted previously, this work is focused on the international travel use case. Should Ministers direct it, the same feature on My COVID Record could support generating certificates for domestic use, where people can prove their vaccination status, for example to access large events. This will require additional technical work as it is envisaged that domestic certificates would differ to those generated for international travel purposes.
23. s 9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED]
24. Generating certificates for domestic use will increase the total cost of this. Officials are working to estimate the additional technical work and costs that would be associated with generating domestic certificates and a verifying app should this be required. Separate advice to Ministers considers the public health justification for any requirement to present vaccination certificates in domestic contexts, such as to access certain venues or large gatherings that could be potential 'super-spreader events.'

Aligning our certificate with international standards to support travel

25. The Ministry of Health commissioned an independent assessment of several available standards for issuing health certificates and verifiable credentials, including the EU DCC, SMART Health Cards, and the ICAO VDS-NC. In late June 2021, as an initial starting approach, officials from the Ministry of Health, the New Zealand Customs Service, and the Department of Internal Affairs agreed to align New Zealand's certificate with the EU DCC format (as mentioned in paragraph 18).
26. We will continue to engage with other emerging standards, including the ICAO VDS, to ensure we are able to generate COVID-19 health certificates that meet requirements of different jurisdictions. We may need to be able to issue different certificate formats while international standards settle.

International jurisdictions and mutual recognition

27. Given the importance of interoperability, the Ministry of Health has applied to the EU to be part of the EU DCC trust framework. Officials are currently working through this process with the EU alongside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
28. The EU DCC sets out a robust framework for the issuance, verification and acceptance of interoperable COVID-19 health credentials, consistent with WHO guidelines.
29. Becoming a third country to the EU DCC will provide confidence that New Zealand's COVID-19 certificates:
 - a. meet the agreed standards and that technological systems are interoperable with the EU DCC framework
 - b. can be digitally verified for their authenticity, validity, and integrity
 - c. contain a standardised data set.
30. Being part of the EU DCC trust framework would enable New Zealand border agencies to recognise and trust the COVID-19 vaccination and test certificates issued by countries in the EU scheme, and in turn, New Zealand issued certificates would be recognised by all countries who have joined the scheme.
31. Officials are also working through a process to commence bilateral engagements with other countries on the mutual technical recognition of New Zealand and partner countries' vaccination certificates.

Equity

32. Principles to guide New Zealand's approach to COVID-19 vaccination certification includes the following equity prerequisites:
 - a. vaccination certification would not increase health or other inequities, either domestically or globally
 - b. everyone would have the right to obtain and hold an authentic credential that documents their vaccination status.
33. It is intended that access to the digital COVID-19 certificates will be made available through both digital self-service and non-digital support channels, so everyone who

needs a certificate can do so, and no particular group is excluded because the system is inaccessible to them.

Next steps

34. The Ministry of Health is providing regular progress reports on the development of New Zealand's digital COVID-19 certificates to the Minister for COVID-19 Response and the COVID-19 Vaccine Ministers group. A further update for the Reconnecting New Zealanders Ministerial Group can be provided at the October meeting if required.
35. Separately, officials are preparing advice for Ministers on COVID-19 vaccination certificates for domestic use.

ENDS

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Appendix 1.

Examples of COVID-19 test and vaccination certificates (note the final design will differ)



14-00003





COVID-19 Test Result Certificate



New Zealand Government
Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri

**Let's work together
to stamp out the virus**

By staying home if you're sick,
washing and drying your hands,
keeping track of where you have been,
and wearing a face covering,
you'll be doing your bit to keep our
Whānau and communities safe.

then fold this →

Your Verifiable COVID-19 Test Result Certificate

Please keep this test result certificate,
which includes medical information you
have received.

Personal details

Surname:

Given names:

Date of birth:

Test result details

Disease / agent:

Type of test:

Date and time of sample collection:

Test result:

Testing centre:

This certificate is only valid when
presented alongside a photo ID.

FOR TESTING PURPOSES ONLY

For verifiers:

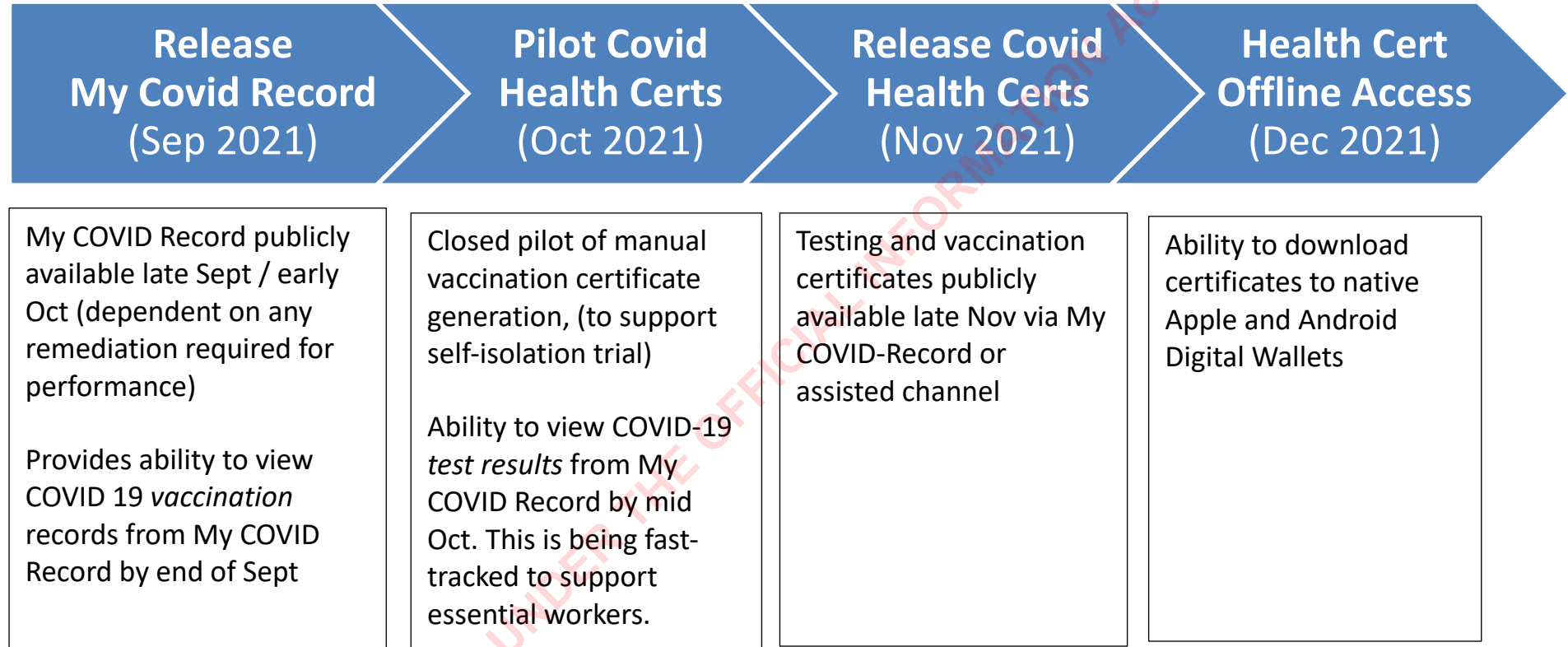
Scan the QR code with a verifier app and check
the name and date of birth match the photo ID.

Ministry of Health approved verifier apps can be
found on: health.govt.nz/vaxcert/verify-app
Other apps may work, but should be used with
caution as they have not been tested.

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Appendix 2

Timeline – NZ COVID-19 Digital Health Certificate Public Release



Pacific Heads of Health Meeting

6 – 7 October 2021

Item 6.1: Regional COVID-19 Certificates in Support of Cross-Border Travel


- New Zealand thanks the World Health Organization (WHO), South Pacific Community (SPC) and Pacific Island Forum (PIF) for developing the concept note on regional COVID-19 certificates, and for setting out the path forward for regional implementation in the Pacific.
- New Zealand is mindful of the potential impact of COVID-19 health certification on the ability of people from Pacific Island countries to travel both intra-regionally and internationally.
- New Zealand will encourage COVID-19 health certification approaches adopted by Pacific partners that are practical, cheap and efficient to implement, recognised across the region, and align with emerging international standards such as the WHO Digital Documentation of COVID-19 Certificates guidelines.
- We are interested in working with Pacific partner governments and regional organisations such as the PIF, SPC and WHO to develop practical and accessible regional vaccine certification guidelines, and if required, support Pacific partners to establish systems and processes.
- We are also interested in gaining more clarity on the timeline for implementation of vaccine certificates, including when Pacific partners envisage vaccine certification will come into force. New Zealand is supportive of reaching agreement on a regional approach as soon as practicable, ideally before February 2022.
- We look forward to collaborating with the Pacific Heads of Health on this matter over the coming months.

Supplementary Talking Points (if required)

- *[If asked about New Zealand and Australia using separate systems]* Most countries are thinking about the development of COVID-19 health certificates. New Zealand is looking to develop an inward bound traveller health declaration system that will be able to recognise and accept a range of certificates. We continue to assess new standards for COVID-19 health certificates as they emerge. Ensuring interoperability is important to facilitate the movement of people in a safe way.
- *[If asked about experience with EU DCC]* As part of our Reconnecting New Zealanders Strategy, we are developing a system to produce New Zealand issued digital COVID-19 health credentials for people vaccinated or tested in New Zealand. This will be aligned with the European Union Digital COVID Certificate (EU DCC) model and we are aiming for it to be available for people vaccinated in New Zealand from December 2021.

DG Memo

Access to New Zealand's International Travel COVID-19 Vaccination Certificates for New Zealanders vaccinated offshore

To: Dr Ashley Bloomfield, Director-General of Health 

From: Maree Roberts, Deputy Director-General, Strategy and Policy

Cc: Michael Dreyer, Group Manager, Data and Digital
Astrid Koornneef, Director, National Immunisation Programme

Date: 17 December 2021

For your: Decision

Purpose of report

1. This memo outlines some emerging issues highlighted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for some New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who have been vaccinated against COVID-19 offshore but are unable to obtain a suitable COVID-19 vaccination certificate for international travel.
2. There are four key groups with varying situations. Your decision is sought on whether the Ministry of Health should change the current eligibility policy, and if so, to agree for work to commence on operationalising a prioritised series of solutions.

Current eligibility for an international vaccination certificate

3. Internationally the vaccination certificate landscape continues to evolve alongside changing border restrictions. There continues to be a mix of certificates being issued, from basic appointment-style cards to more-standardised digital certificates. As digital vaccination certificates become increasingly common, more countries are requiring a higher standard of proof at the border. Without sufficient proof of vaccination, some travellers may face additional testing or isolation/quarantine requirements or may not be able to enter the country at all.
4. As discussed below, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) has approached us to highlight several categories of New Zealand travellers vaccinated overseas encountering difficulties due to an inability to secure documentation to verify their vaccination status when crossing other national borders.
5. The Ministry of Health has been issuing International Travel COVID19 Vaccination Certificates (ITCVCs) since 22 November 2021 using the European Union Digital COVID Certificate (EU DCC) format. Under our current eligibility policy, a certificate can be issued to anyone who has received a COVID-19 vaccination in New Zealand. Data for the

certificate is pulled from the COVID-19 Immunisation Register (CIR). Vaccinations obtained offshore are not recorded on the ITCVC.

6. The rationale for this approach was to ensure that New Zealand certificates provide overseas jurisdictions with a high level of assurance that the vaccination event documented in the certificate actually occurred. In the context of a growing black market in fake vaccination certificates, we also need to ensure New Zealand certificates are regarded internationally as authentic and highly trustworthy travel health documents.
7. This eligibility policy differs to My Vaccine Passes, which can be issued to people who received one or more of their COVID-19 vaccinations offshore. Having a more enabling approach for My Vaccine Pass was to ensure such people can have their vaccination status recognised and are not excluded from accessing services, venues or settings under for the COVID-19 Protection Framework.

Some New Zealanders vaccinated offshore cannot get a suitable certificate

8. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) have approached us with concerns about a growing number of New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who are unable to access a suitable international vaccination certificate for travel. These individuals have been vaccinated outside of New Zealand and both the circumstances and pathways for them to access internationally recognised COVID-19 vaccination certificates vary. This is constraining their ability to travel internationally. MFAT has asked how these New Zealanders might access a New Zealand ITCVC.
9. There are four key groups we are currently aware of:
 - a) 'NZ Inc' employees and their families – currently around 200 people - who were vaccinated at Post by a third country Embassy (facilitated by the New Zealand Government).
 - b) A New Zealand citizen or permanent resident vaccinated in a jurisdiction which will not issue an international travel certificate to a non-citizen;
 - c) A New Zealand citizen vaccinated in Australia, which will not issue international travel certificates to those without a current visa or suitable Australian identification.
 - d) New Zealanders vaccinated offshore who are unable to access a certificate that is sufficiently rigorous and secure to be accepted for entry into a third country (e.g. it is paper based only, not digital).

Group one: A NZ Inc employee and their family who were vaccinated at Post

10. This group includes employees¹ (and their families) of an 'NZ Inc' agency (MFAT, NZTE, Customs, Defence, Immigration, Ministry of Primary Industries, Police, Education NZ) who were vaccinated in their host country through a 'like-minded', third country's embassy². In

¹ For the most part these are staff and families from Wellington, posted offshore. There are a couple of partners who are non-citizens and PRs. There are also some Staff Employed at Post (not all New Zealand citizens or PRs) who were vaccinated under this arrangement (for example in the Post in Mexico, all staff were vaccinated by the UK).

² For example, UK Government FCDO, Australian Government DFAT and Canadian Government Global Affairs

these situations, the vaccination was facilitated by the New Zealand Government, and in some cases that country's diplomats in New Zealand have been vaccinated here.

11. These vaccinations are outside the host country's vaccination programme and therefore, in most instances, the individual is not eligible for a certificate of vaccination for international travel from the host jurisdiction, and likely never will be.³ As the individual is not a citizen or resident of the vaccinating 'like-minded' diplomatic mission they are also not eligible for a certificate from that jurisdiction. Most have a paper record of the vaccination, such as the signed WHO Yellow Book, or a letter from the vaccinating mission.
12. MFAT estimates approximately 200 individuals (staff and families) are affected. These individuals may be denied entry or may be required to undertake isolation from which they would be otherwise exempt, when travelling to another country. Many of these individuals are required to travel to other countries in the course of their role on behalf of the Government of New Zealand and this impedes their ability to do their jobs and imposes extra costs on New Zealand government agencies. The current issue poses a health and safety risk should the person need to travel for medical reasons.
13. MFAT and NZ Inc. agencies can help obtain evidence of vaccination events such as letter from the vaccinating embassy, but these are not in a digitally verifiable form. As these vaccinations were all facilitated by MFAT Posts, MFAT is able to 'vouch' for each individual, and provide details of their vaccination event, vaccine type, dates and number of doses.

Group two: A New Zealand citizen or permanent resident vaccinated in a jurisdiction which will not issue an international travel certificate to a non-citizen

14. We understand of a number of jurisdictions do not issue international travel certificates to a non-citizen even though they were vaccinated in that jurisdiction. These New Zealanders could be left with limited evidence of vaccination; that evidence may not be satisfactory for international travel purposes. We expect this "evidence" would take a variety of formats from personal health records to paper records. These individuals' ability to travel would be significantly hindered. For example, a New Zealander vaccinated in Denmark has sought the assistance of their local member of parliament to access a New Zealand international certificate because Denmark is currently unable to issue certificates to non-citizens/residents. MFAT expects that this group will be quite small in number, but likely each a special case which is administratively complex and time consuming.

6(a)



³ Some individuals have been able to access host jurisdiction certificates by having their proof of vaccination registered through a health provider.

6(a)



6(a)

Group four: A New Zealand citizen or permanent resident vaccinated in a jurisdiction which issues a certificate that does not meet the requirements of another jurisdiction

17. While there are currently only a few jurisdictions that require a digital certificate for entry, there are a significant number where a digital certificate is required to avoid or reduce isolation/quarantine requirements. These New Zealanders may face obstacles to travel internationally for business, family or other reasons.
18. We are aware that several jurisdictions are not yet producing digital certificates, particularly in developing countries including the Pacific. This group could potentially be fairly large, in the tens of thousands.

A pragmatic solution is needed

19. Ministry of Health and MFAT officials agree that a pragmatic solution is needed. We also agree that the New Zealand Government has an obligation to provide a suitable certificate for those in Group one – government employees serving overseas, plus their partners, families and dependents - and that a solution for this group should be the first priority. A solution is also regarded as straightforward, and the need will decline as they are replaced offshore by colleagues vaccinated in New Zealand before departure.
20. Broadening out to Groups two, three and four, the challenge is that we need to ensure our issuance policy maintains the fidelity of New Zealand certificate whilst not inadvertently creating a process that could be open to fraud, e.g. from unvaccinated people who want to get a certificate by making a false claim to identity theft and 'certificate laundering'.
21. We also need to consider the logic and lack of consistency between our international and domestic certificates' eligibility issuance policy, whereby we recognise and enter vaccinations obtained offshore into the CIR for a domestic vaccine pass, but not for an international certificate. The standard of proof to receive a domestic certificate will exceed requirements for most other jurisdictions, so should be well sufficient to grant an international certificate.
22. A number of other jurisdictions already issue international certificates to their citizens if they were vaccinated in a third country. The EU DCC policy allows EU citizens EU Citizens who were vaccinated in a third country to request an EUDCC from the Member State of

s 6(a)

their nationality or residence if they provide reliable proof of vaccination with a vaccine also authorised in that member state⁶. EU Member States are not obliged by the EU to provide these but a number, including Germany, are offering certificates to residents as well as EU citizens. Some others are not currently offering this service. MFAT has confirmed that if New Zealand was to issue EU DCC certificates to New Zealand citizens vaccinated offshore it would not violate any agreements we have with the EU.




23. Those vaccinated outside Australia with an Australia-approved or -recognised COVID-19 vaccine can have the event recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). Evidence must be provided to a vaccination provider who then records the vaccination events on the AIR. Evidence must be in English (or translated) and must include country and batch number. Only individuals who hold an Australian Passport, or a valid Australian Visa⁷ are eligible for a COVID Certificate for International Travel.

Proposed approach

24. An in-principle policy decision to expand New Zealand's issuance eligibility policy is required before any action can be taken by the MOH technical and operational teams. Privacy impact assessment and security approvals would also need to be undertaken before more enduring technical changes can be put in place.
25. It is recommended that we proceed as quickly as possible to broaden the eligibility policy for international certificates to New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who can provide sufficient proof of vaccination. We recommend a sequential approach is taken, with Group one as an immediate priority.
26. If you agree to the following recommendations, Data and Digital and COVID-19 Vaccination and Immunisation Programme (CVIP) teams will commence work to operationalise these solutions.

Recommendations

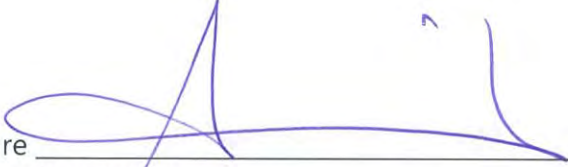
It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|--------------|---|
| a) Note that there are emerging issues for some New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who have been vaccinated against COVID-19 offshore who are unable to obtain a suitable COVID-19 vaccination certificate for international travel. | Noted |  |
| b) Note that the Ministry currently issues international certificates only to those who have received a COVID-19 vaccination in New Zealand. | Noted |  |
| c) Note people can have their offshore vaccination record uploaded into the COVID-19 Immunisation Register to be issued with a domestic vaccine pass (My Vaccine Pass). | Noted |  |

⁶ [EU Digital COVID Certificate | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁷ [Getting help during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - International COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate as proof - Services Australia](#)

- d) **Agree** that a solution is required to support certain groups of New Zealanders who were vaccinated offshore to have access a suitable vaccination certificate that is broadly accepted for international travel. **Yes/No**
- e) **Agree** for Ministry of Health officials to work with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials to provide an interim solution to issue certificates to NZ Inc personnel and their families in Group one, as a priority. **Yes/No**
- f) **Agree** for Ministry Officials to proceed with implementing operational solutions to broaden the eligibility policy for international certificates to New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who can provide sufficient proof of their offshore vaccination(s). **Yes/No**

Signature 
Dr Ashley Bloomfield
Te Tumu Whakarae mō te Hauora
Director-General of Health

Date: 19/12/21

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AM for Minister Verrall: Section relating to "International Travel Vaccination Certificates":

Cooperation on COVID-vaccination certificates

1. As you are aware, New Zealand publically launched the digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate for international travel in November 2021. The certificates use the EU's digital COVID certificate (EU DCC) system. The EU DCC sets out a robust framework for the issuance, verification and acceptability of COVID-19 health credentials, consistent with World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. There are currently 44 other non-EU countries (and territories) part of the EU DCC system, with wide recognition internationally.
2. New Zealand is currently working with the EU, the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau to bring these three realm countries under New Zealand's EU DCC third country status. This would mean those vaccinated in the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau would have access to an EU DCC formatted digital certificate.

Cooperation on COVID-19 vaccination certificates

- Acknowledge cooperation between New Zealand and the EU on digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates, with New Zealand being a third country to the EU's digital COVID certificate (EU DCC) system. We and the EU are currently working with the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau for the three countries to come under New Zealand's EU DCC third country status.

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13th Pacific Heads of Health Meeting (PHoH)

Global Health briefing note for GM

Date/time: 11am – 2pm, 20-21 September 2022 (NZT)

Format: This is a virtual meeting. A Zoom link is available in your diary.

New Zealand Delegation: Salli Davidson, Group Manager Global Health, supported by Global Health team. Colleagues from MFAT's Development People and Planet Division will be attending as observers.

COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate for Cross Border Travel / Oceania Vaccine Voyager

1. The New Zealand Government offered to extend New Zealand's contract with the European Union (EU) and their digital COVID- 19 certificate, to benefit the Cook Islands, Tokelau, and Niue, for cross border travel. This is advantageous for these countries and has a significant reduction in financial cost and fewer potential operational challenges. The onboarding is done as part of New Zealand's third-party status (non-EU country) to include other countries. MFAT has drafted the exchange of letters (EOLs) for this agreement with Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands. MOH has provided data support to Tokelau and Niue (Cook Islands have managed their own data sets), the data must be in the correct format for EU-DCC issuance and the countries will manage data when signed off.
2. The EU needs to make amendments regarding New Zealand's third-party status to include the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. All three countries have met requirements for EU- DCC but are awaiting EU sign off, expected by late September, delayed due to holiday season in the EU. The certificates will be issued in New Zealand but with country information such as logos on them, any vaccinations given in New Zealand can be accessed through 'My COVID Record'. Data and Digital team have been working with each country to develop a system for data sharing for the certificates, with test runs being conducted prior to EU sign off.
3. New Zealand also continues to attend the regular SPC-led technical working group on the development of a Pacific digital vaccine certificate, the Oceania Vaccine Voyager. Accenture, the contracted provider, have completed their work on development of the 6th Common Protocol for the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19 (PHP-C) on Vaccination Certificates for Cross Border Travel. The Protocol is to be considered for endorsement by the Ministerial Action Group on the PHP-C to allow Members further opportunity to review it. Once endorsed, Accenture will work with partner countries on implementation.

Talking points

- **Note** New Zealand also continues to support work with officials in the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau on developing EUDCC based digital vaccination certificates and supports the technical working group for the delivery of the regional Oceania Vaccine Voyager.

- **Acknowledge** that through the technical working group, New Zealand is interested in discussing how support might be expanded beyond COVID-19 to strengthen health systems more broadly.
- **Note** New Zealand's interest in maintaining dialogue and information sharing on shared COVID-19 matters of mutual interest as a means of ultimately strengthening public health capacity across the region. For example, the sharing of evolving approaches to COVID-19 response and current epidemiological status with partners supported response planning around context-adapted, targeted public health measures.
- **Share** that New Zealand has shifted towards a new model of 'living with COVID-19'. As a region, we have the opportunity to learn from the challenges we have faced throughout the pandemic and apply these strategies to future health threats. For example, there are many instances across the Pacific where tailored COVID-19 risk communication and community engagement plans have successfully increased confidence in vaccines.

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COVID-19 VACCINATION CERTIFICATES FOR CROSS BORDER TRAVEL (PHASE ONE)

Kick-off

24 January 2022

9-11am, Vanuatu

accenture

January 2022



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AGENDA

01

Introductions and meet the teams

02

Problem statement and role of solution in region

03

Project charter

04

Next steps & communications

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MEET THE ACCENTURE TEAM

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MEET THE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

RELEASE UNDER E.O. 13526

PROJECT FOCUS

How we can help

- Help Pacific Countries and territories to ascertain the covid-19 credentials of people entering, exiting and transiting.
- Increase the trust host countries can have in vaccine certificates issued across Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

LARGER QUESTIONS AROUND THE PROJECT

What is the expected number of countries that this solution needs to cover?

What is the role of government, port and border services in managing Covid-19 Vaccine Certificates in cross border travel?

What are the known digital capabilities of different stakeholders across the jurisdictions who will be participating?

EXPECTED RESULTS:



Landscape analysis:

Explore, understand the myriad of solutions and digital measures in place globally to manage cross border travel



Protocol Agreement:

Identify the business requirements and use cases for a Covid-19 Vaccine Certificate for PICT to enable cross border travel.



Technical Conditions:

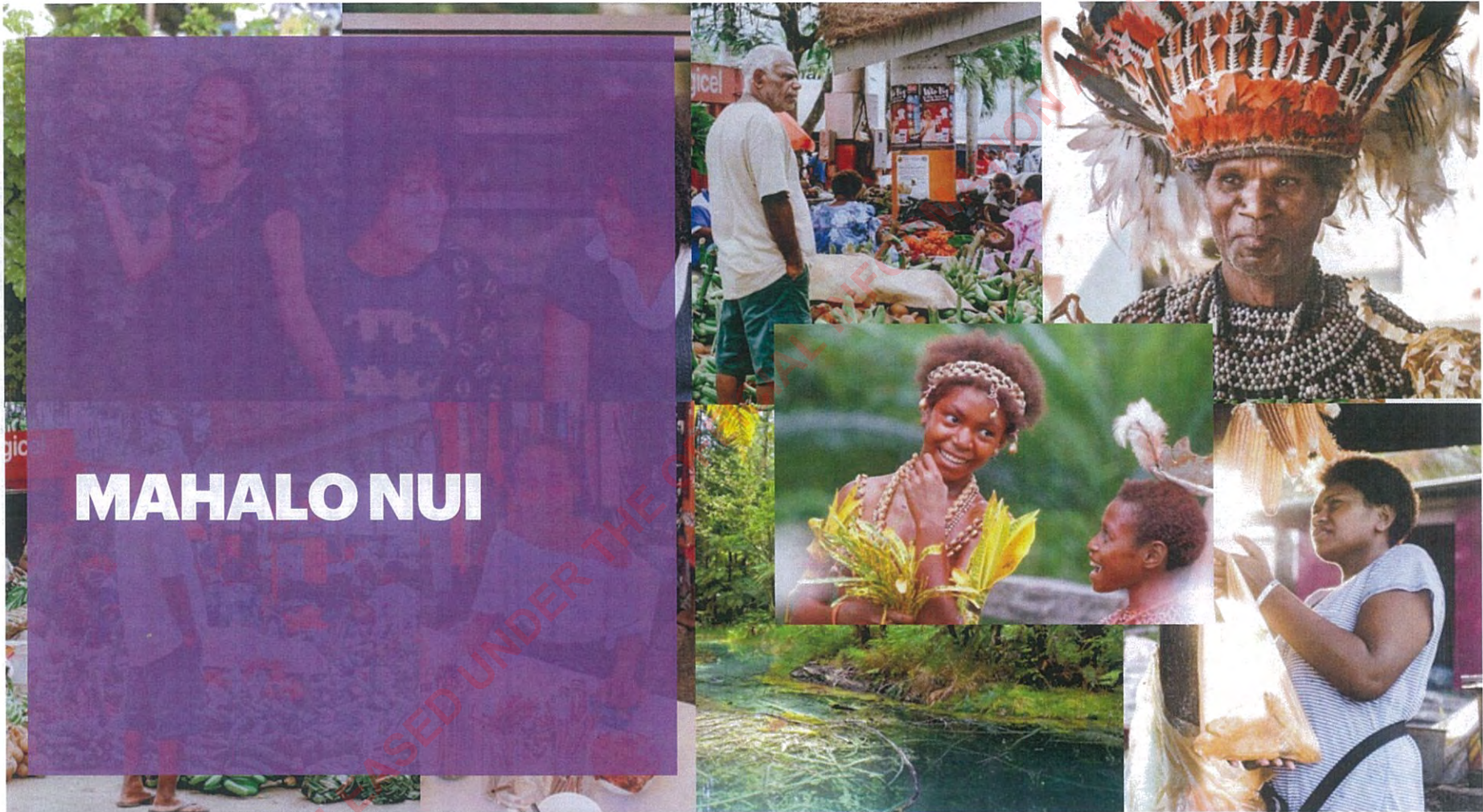
Identify the technical requirements for a Covid-19 Vaccine Certificate for PICTs to enable cross border travel. Propose an Enterprise Architecture for a Covid-19 Vaccine Certificate for cross border travel

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NEXT STEPS

- Agree Project Charter
- Schedule requirements gathering workshops and regular check-ins
- Develop detailed project plan
- Conduct workshops
- Review Landscape Analysis

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Partnerships

COVID-19 VACCINATION CERTIFICATES FOR CROSS BORDER TRAVEL (PHASE ONE)

PROJECT CHARTER


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January 2022



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PREAMBLE

This project charter is based on the current understanding of the project.

This is a draft for discussion to clarify the team's understanding and align with the Covid-19 Vaccine Certificate for Cross Border Travel Technical Working Group (TWG). We need to agree on this to commence the project.

The team recognises that SPC and TWG will advise Countries and nominate the right individuals and countries to participate in the stakeholder consultation.

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OVERVIEW

PROJECT CONTEXT

In the current Covid-19 pandemic, countries globally are working to manage cross border travel; understanding covid status of travellers to safely reopen borders, increase tourism and reunite families.

For the Pacific, it is essential to reach initial agreement on purpose, shared objectives, principles and standards and to build consensus among countries on how to collectively solve this challenge from the outset. Any solution must also consider the timeline of the pandemic and global trends.

This is the true spirit of regional cooperation and collaboration. The regional agreements – both in the form of a Protocol Agreement and Technical Conditions Agreement - will ensure a common understanding to a common standard and prevent the duplication of effort, further fragmentation of systems and processes that will be difficult to harmonize in the future. Equally important, this will ensure inclusion so that nobody gets left behind and at the same time, further strengthen public confidence.

This initiative will require a multi-sectoral approach involving various government agencies with regulatory responsibilities such as health and medical services, immigration and customs, civil air and maritime transport authorities, police and border services, labour, tourism, foreign affairs, trade and industry, and economic development.

From a technology standpoint, there is no “one size fits all” or “one solution” for all countries. Digital certificates in the Pacific should be inclusive and simple enough with their design and governance to ensure that it is feasible to implement. The selected design format, or formats, of the certificates, will have implications on how they are issued and how the content of the certificates is stored, secured and verified.

We will ensure a safe and privacy protecting approach that does not further exacerbate the digital divide across the Pacific.

COMPLEXITIES

There are several variables in the Pacific that exacerbate the complexity. Understanding these variables and the implications of choosing the right solution to adoption is critical to success. These variables include, but is not limited to:

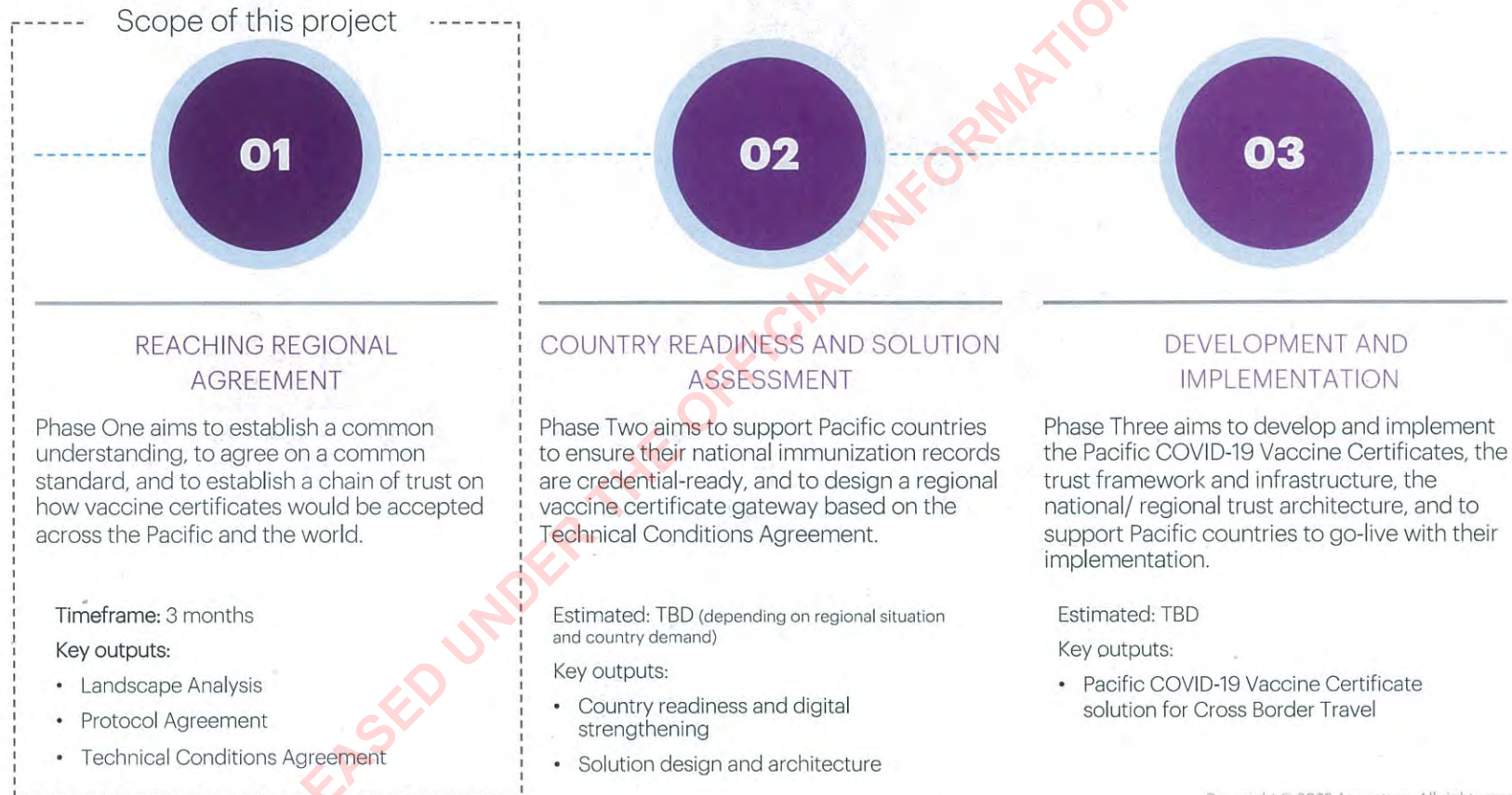
- Providing non-repudiable vaccine credentials for travel – no matter who you are or where you come from.
- Country policy on COVID-19 vaccines and recognition of other COVID-19 vaccine certificates on a reciprocal basis.
- Access to digital solutions for travellers at air and maritime port of entries.
- A cross border solution depends on host countries ability to verify certificates. This must be taken into consideration when choosing or creating a standard to PICT.
- Data requirements will depend on the scenario of use and mutually agreed format of the COVID-19 certificates. However, starting positions matter. Current vaccine data management practices, electronic immunization registry or health information systems adoption, undeveloped identification systems, inadequate network and security infrastructure, and varying degrees of data quality of population immunization data magnifies the complexity of this regional initiative even further.
- Security and privacy requirements to protect citizen and traveller data entering, exiting or transiting to their final destination.
- Changing border entry requirements due to variants and the countries' respective public health and national security response.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

- a) Help countries ascertain the covid-19 status of people entering, exiting and transiting their country.
- b) Increase the trust host countries can have in vaccine certificates issued across the Pacific Island Countries and Territories

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OVERVIEW OF PROJECT



PHASE 1: OBJECTIVE

To reach a regional agreement for a COVID-19 vaccination certificate solution in the Pacific to facilitate cross border travel.

The solution will need to take into account different vaccination rates and immunisation data between nations, and different maturity levels of border infrastructure connectivity.



APPROACH

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The proposed principles guiding the solution are:



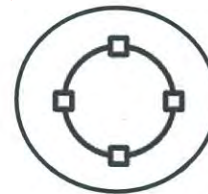
INCLUSIVE



IMPLEMENTABLE



SCALABLE



INTEROPERABLE



ADAPTABLE



APPROPRIATE



SECURE



USABLE

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Guiding Principles in depth (1 of 2)

Guiding Design and Architectural Principles	Rationale
<p>1. Inclusive While digital technology will form the foundation of the solution for cross border travel, proscribed processes should not mandate citizen access to any digital technology. A process for paper certificates should be available for citizens.</p>	<p>The population of PICT experiences a wide digital divide. No citizen should be prevented from cross border travel due to this solution.</p>
<p>2. Implementable The solution recognizes differences in technical infrastructure across PICT borders (e.g., e-Passports for citizens or existing prearrival solutions). The proposed solution needs to be quick to implement and work in both online and offline environments.</p>	<p>PICT government departments, public health agencies and border infrastructure have mixed access to Wi-fi and technology. The solution should work to be implementable for the broadest number of countries possible.</p>
<p>3. Scalable The focus of the solution is to verify covid status (vaccine, PCR test) however as cross border travel increases, the solution needs to be designed to promote responsiveness and agility to scale to demand. The solution needs to be able to support an increase in throughput of travelers and support changes in policies.</p>	<p>Cross border travel has not reach pre-pandemic numbers, however the solution will need to be able to support numbers that will rise again.</p>
<p>4. Interoperable The solution should work with international vaccine certificates to enable global travel and allow support for multiple data standards to cater to a wide ecosystem.</p>	<p>International travel will continue to increase. Overtime, different certificates will need to be accepted to optimize the value of the solution.</p>

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Guiding Principles in depth (2 of 2)

Guiding Design and Architectural Principles	Rationale
<p>5. Configurable Travel policies that Pacific Island Countries and Territories may enforce to change overtime. The solution should be based on a configuration approach rather than require for additional code for quick, targeted changes.</p>	<p>As new outbreaks occur and our understanding of travel requirements change, countries may need to update rules that govern departure and arrival processes. The solution will need to be adaptable for these changes.</p>
<p>6. Appropriate Data The solution should only store the minimum required data to support cross border travel. Data management and ensuring compliance with privacy legislation will be the responsibility of each jurisdiction however any solution should be designed with proactive data management in mind. In addition, this principle should work to avoid collecting data multiple times.</p>	<p>Storing data may open the solution up to being compromised, the solution should remain lean as possible working to achieve the proposed objective.</p>
<p>7. Easy to use The solution needs to be easy to use for both citizens and employees. Updates to policy and rules engine should be fast and not add considerable processing time to allow for rapid adoption and minimize errors during usage.</p>	<p>Having an easy-to-use solution will ensure quick adoption of systems and ensure minimal impact to cross border travel processing time for both citizens and employees.</p>
<p>8. Secure The solution needs to ensure that all sensitive data is secure with authorized access to protect user data.</p>	<p>As the solution may involve storing and handling of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) of individuals, security must be built purposefully designed into the system.</p>
<p>9. Catalytic The solution will be a catalyst to help strengthen other digital systems, including electronic immunization systems, by ensuring latest acceptable standards and best practices are rooted in the design.</p>	<p>By being forward looking and adopting the latest standards, the solution will help raise the bar of other digital systems.</p>

PROJECT SCOPE

In Scope

- Landscape analysis of global (and Pacific) approaches to managing the covid-19 credentials for cross border travel.
- Workshops to understand the business and technical requirements.
- Propose a single high level enterprise architecture for a digital covid-19 certificate for cross border travel solution that is adaptable for multiple countries.
- Note: Approval of deliverables will be required from SPC only, rather than seeking approvals across all jurisdictions or the Technical Working Group.

Out of Scope

- An individual Pacific Islands Covid-19 Vaccine Certificate solution for each country.
- The workflow and processes or requirements for each jurisdiction to accept travellers entry/exit/transit based on their Covid-19 status.
- Accenture will not provide legal or policy advice in regards to the Covid-19 Vaccine Certificate solution for cross border travel.
- The solution is not intended for domestic restrictions.

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DELIVERABLES

01

Vaccine Certificate Global Landscape Analysis

- Assessment of global models implemented to enable cross border travel

02

Protocol Agreement

- Use Cases for solution
- Chain of trust framework

03

Technical Conditions

- High level business and technical requirements
- Pacific COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate Enterprise Architecture

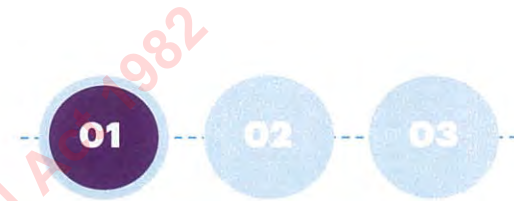
Working toward a Regional MOU

- Finalised Protocol agreement and technical conditions
- Support the TWG to develop the MOU



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TIMELINE OVERVIEW



Once the project charter has been accepted, a detailed project plan will be provided.

Work steam	Week	Description	Expected outcome
Workstream 1: INITIATION: Project Initiation (1 Week)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host virtual introduction meetings • Confirm project objectives • Confirm role of Technical Working Group (TWG) representation, outreach and stakeholder engagement process • Surface priorities • Finalize stakeholder map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsed work plan and ways of working / project charter for the following 12 weeks
Worksteam 2: Project Planning (1 Week)	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop workshop materials • Define outline of Protocol Agreement Report • Define outline of Technical Conditions Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of workshop materials • High level outline of Protocol Agreement Report and Technical Conditions Report
Workstream 3: Protocol Agreement (4 Weeks)	3-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global landscape analysis and solutions • Virtual workshop: Present landscape analysis • Virtual workshop: Defining use-cases, including bilateral and regional approach • Virtual workshop: Policy and ethical use • Virtual workshop: Defining framework for reciprocity, mutual recognition and obligations • Develop Protocol Agreement • Virtual workshop: Present Protocol Agreement • Revise/Amend Protocol Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and Present Global Landscape Analysis to understand where the rest of the world sits • Clear understanding for Accenture team of what is required for use-cases , the different policy and ethical frameworks and chain of trust • Initial version of Protocol Agreement completed • Finalised version of Protocol Agreement completed

TIMELINE OVERVIEW (CONT.)



Once the project charter has been accepted, a detailed project plan will be provided.

Work steam	Week	Description	Expected outcome
Workstream 4: Technical Conditions (3 Weeks)	7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current and evolving global standards Define MDS, information exchange and interoperability standards Develop national and regional trust architecture model Develop Pacific Vaccination Certificate for Cross Border Travel Enterprise Architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-level business and technical requirements (i.e. Technical Conditions) Enterprise architecture of the Pacific Vaccination Certificate for Cross Border Travel Enterprise Architecture
Workstream 5: Finalise MOU (2 weeks)	10-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation to PIFS Regional Task Force Presentation to Pacific Heads of Health Support development of MOU Revise/ amend MOU, Protocol Agreement and Technical Conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved executive summary of the Protocol Agreement and Technical Conditions Support SPC to Regional MOU drafted in desired format Approved final version of the Protocol Agreement and Technical conditions in desired format
Workstream 6: Project Close (1 Week)	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrap it all up! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All deliverables handed over Access revoked from any client systems

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GOVERNANCE

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PROJECT TEAM

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PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

- Pacific Community (SPC) Vaccine Technical Working Group.
- Representatives of jurisdictions, sectors and industries.

Approval Process

- SPC will be responsible to approve deliverables.



REGISTERS

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ASSUMPTIONS

*This list of assumptions is not exhaustive and will need to be continually maintained and reviewed throughout the project.

#	Assumption	Description
1	This solution is not intended to replace any national/multilateral medical vaccination document.	This project is focused primarily on cross border travel. It is not intended to be a medical vaccination document.
2	The solution will aim to be configurable and adaptable to suit the largest number of PIC/Ts. It is acknowledged no one solution will fit every jurisdictions needs completely.	Member States will be responsible for implementing the policies necessary to support the workflows, complying with their legal obligations under national and international law, including any applicable obligations related to respecting human rights and data protection policies.
3	This solution should not assess an individual's vaccine status, rather it intends to present the information for a jurisdiction to assess.	Due to the fast-changing nature of the Covid-19 pandemic and variance in vaccine acceptance world-wide, this solution looks to present an individual's vaccine status for each jurisdiction only.
4	All citizens who want to travel internationally will have a passport.	It is assumed that PICT citizen wanting to travel will have a passport.
5	It is the responsibility of the issuing authority to ensure the legitimacy of a vaccine certificate.	No validation mechanism is built into the solution to verify the legitimacy of the vaccination certificate and issuing authority is assumed to bear responsibility to protect the integrity of the document.
6	All jurisdictions will have a centralised store of vaccinated citizens' immunization credentials.	Single source of truth per jurisdiction exists when it comes to the vaccination status of the population.
7	The technical working group will be responsible for the legal assessment of any proposed solution.	Technical working group will facilitate an appropriate legal and policy assessment of the solution to ensure alignment to the guidelines of WHO, EU and another governing bodies.
8	Jurisdictions will be responsible to ensure the solutions meets any relevant legal and regulatory framework.	Jurisdictions to ensure solutions alignment to legal and regulatory framework during the design and implementation phase of the solution.
9	Individual travellers are responsible to meet the requirements of the host.	It is assumed that the travelling citizen will undertake appropriate planning measures to understand specific travel requirements at the destination area, country of the region
10	It is assumed that stakeholders will partake in the requirements gathering workshops within the timeline of the project.	Appropriate stakeholder participation during design requirements gathering sessions despite stringent timeline.

RISKS AND ISSUES

*This list of risks and issues is not exhaustive and will need to be continually maintained and reviewed throughout the project.

#	Risk / Issue	Description	Owner
1	There is a risk that the issuing authority can fraudulently or incorrectly create legitimate digital certificates.	Most certification models place the responsibility of trust on the issuing authority (the jurisdiction). A digital solution will not eliminate the threat of fraud but can reduce the ability of individuals to fraudulently create vaccine certificates.	PICT
2	If bespoke standards are proposed for PICT there is a risk that international countries wont be able to verify the digital certificates.	Certificates depend on a verification including potentially access to a public key store.	PICT
3	Some PICT may not have national vaccination records that are credential worthy.	Countries' vaccination records may not be complete, accurate and verifiable.	PICT
4	Many of the PIC/Ts may not currently have digital health information privacy and security policies in place	There is a risk that a requirement to store health information digitally may expose countries without the infrastructure to securely store this information.	PICT
5	Many citizens do not have cell phones or access to digital technology	There is a risk in creating a digital solution that may increase the digital divide.	TWG
6	If stakeholders are not able to engage with the project team within the timeline of the project, there is a risk that critical requirements may be missed or the project delayed further.	The tight timelines of this project mean that engagement from participants is critical. The team will be as flexible as possible however there is a risk that some stakeholders may not be able to partake in all workshops.	SPC, TWG
7	As covid-19 is a changing rapidly, and may become endemic within 2022, this may change the requirements of several jurisdictions.	The TWG and its nominated stakeholders must account for every possible forward looking scenario to the best they can.	SPC, TWG

DEPENDENCIES

*This list of dependencies is not exhaustive and will need to be continually maintained and reviewed throughout the project.

#	Dependency	Owner	Due Date
1	Technical Working Group to develop the Regional MOU.	SPC/TWG	TBC
2	Availability of PICT to participate in requirements gathering workshops with the right participants.	SPC	TBC
3	The responsibility to organise requirements gathering sessions is with SPC.	SPC	TBC
4	Technical Working Group to provide the legal assessment of the solution.	SPC/TWG	TBC

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COVID-19 VACCINATION CERTIFICATES FOR CROSS BORDER TRAVEL (PHASE ONE)

TWG – Protocol
Agreement Overview
22 March 2022

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PROTOCOL AGREEMENT

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Protocol Agreement Contents

1 Introduction

2 Functional Overview

Main Objectives

Key Stakeholders

Assumptions

Operating Concept

Non-binding Principles

Use Case Diagrams

3 High-Level Functional Requirements

Issuing certificates

Verifying certificates

Revoking certificates

Rules engine

Travel portal

4 High-Level Technical Requirements

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SOLUTION OVERVIEW – 1

The Protocol Agreement describes the following broad solution

PICTs will issue digital travel certificates as evidence of vaccination or negative COVID-19 test results to citizens and residents conforming to the widely accepted EU DCC certificates

- The solution will account for PICTs not immediately adopting the technology supporting issuing digital certificates by defining non-digital credentials that comply with the WHO DDCC:VS

The solution will adopt the technology infrastructure provided by the EU DCC program as the foundation to issue EU DCC certificates

- The open-source “issuer app” will be tailored to meet agreed requirements of all PICTs (e.g. include Passport Number in issued certificate; issue separate certificates for vaccinations and test results)
- The “issuer app” would then be further tailored for each PICT to represent country specific requirements (e.g. include national language in certificate, tailor user interface to suit national requirements, use correct cryptographic keys to sign certificates)

The solution will adopt the technology infrastructure provided by the EU DCC program as the foundation to verify EU DCC certificates

- The open-source “verifier app” will be tailored to meet agreed requirements of all PICTs (e.g. operate on PICT-available infrastructure, operate offline as needed, verify as many different types of digital travel certificates as practical)

SOLUTION OVERVIEW – 2

The Protocol Agreement describes the following broad solution (cont'd)

The solution will adopt the trust framework provided by the EU DCC program to authorise and verify digital travel certificates

- These matters will be covered in the Technical Conditions document

The solution will define a digital travel portal to be operated by each PICT to facilitate international travel to the PICT that is compliant with the PICT public health requirements for safe re-opening. The digital travel portal is described with varying levels of complexity to allow PICTs to adopt as much of the portal as they require

- The minimum level is a recommended standard for publishing COVID-19 Travel Requirements for the information of international travellers and travel operators
- The next level is a template format for a pre-arrival portal that allows travellers to upload travel documents and COVID-19 health information for assessment by an authorised officer in the PICT prior to travel
- The final level relies on the implementation of a rules engine that could automate the processing of (most of) the pre-arrival submissions on the travel portal

Optionally

The solution will describe the inclusion of an optional rules engine that would accept pre-defined traveller and COVID-19 health data and assess whether that data indicates compliance with the PICT's COVID-19 Travel Requirements



DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

FUNCTIONAL OVERVIEW

This section describes the solution at the highest level

The **main objectives** reiterate the goals of the solution design established at the beginning of the project

The **key stakeholders** outline the main players involved in implementing and operating the solution

- The **acknowledgements** section notes the people who have contributed to the solution design and we are grateful for their contributions and enthusiasm

The **assumptions** reiterate the working hypotheses that underpin the solution, established at the beginning of the project

The **operating concept** describes how the solution is expected to operate in the PICT once implemented

- These sections attempt to describe how the solution will operate from a non-technical perspective

The **use case diagrams** also describe how the solution is expected to operate in the PICT once implemented

- These diagrams describe the solution in more detail and from a technical perspective
- They provide the framework for describing the high level requirements

HIGH-LEVEL FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

This section describes the outline of the solution

The high-level functional requirements make authoritative statements about functionality that the solution might provide

- Statements that say “must” are mandatory functions for the solution
- Statements that say “should” are important functions for the solution but are not needed for a minimum implementation*
- Statements that say “could” are useful functions for the solution that PICT can choose to implement when and if they need that functionality

Important requirements that extend the EU DCC model are:

- Include the Passport Number of the traveller in the COVID-19 travel document that is issued
- Issue separate vaccination and negative test result certificates
- Record details of all certificates issued in a secure, centralised database
 - The minimum data stored is the certificate number, certificate type, and date of issue
 - Optionally, also store personal identity and personal health information encoded in the certificate in the database

***NB:** This structure leads to critical functional requirements for issuing digital travel certificates as “should” (“must” is reserved for the non-digital minimum functionality). When implementing a digital solution, such requirements would be read as “must”

HIGH-LEVEL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

This section describes the minimum technical capabilities of the solution

The technical requirements establish baseline capabilities for the operation of the certificate issuing and verification system

- The requirements stipulate that the digital certificate “issuer app” will be available for extended business hours, six days a week
- The requirements stipulate that the “verifier app” will be available constantly (to account for border operations) and be able to verify certificates while offline (not connected to the internet)
- The requirements stipulate that the digital travel portal will be available constantly
 - Pre-arrival processing, if implemented, would only operate for the business hours that each PICT chose
- Many of the technical requirements rely upon (and point back to) the technical specifications established by the EU

All technical requirements should be re-considered carefully in the detailed design phase to account for individual PICT needs and technology capabilities

OCEANIA VACCINATION VOYAGER

COVID-19 VACCINATION CERTIFICATES for cross border travel (Phase One Transition)

Weekly Project Status Report

Week Ending: 10 June 2022



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Weekly Status: Project Progress

Overall	Scope	Cost	Resources	Schedule
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Status Summary

- Received feedback on the communication products and survey instrument from NZ and Australia.
- Internal drafting, review and refinement of the community e-updates and survey instrument for deployment.
- The refined communication products and survey and were presented to the TWG for final feedback and approval.
- Additional sets of iteration to further refine/ improve survey prior to deployment.
- PIFS will be deploying the survey to all Pacific Island Countries and Territories, with SPC copied in.

Key Accomplishments - This Period

- Final refinement of the survey instrument, deployment email and reminders.
- Refined the communication products and turned the write ups to succinct community e-updates. This will be deployed after the survey.
- Monitoring key vaccination certification systems and travel requirement rules from G20.
- Dissemination of the survey to all Pacific Island Countries and Territories through the TWG
- Started data quality assessment of Niue COVID-19 immunization records

Planned Activities - Next Period

- Monitor which countries have completed the survey and offer support to countries who require assistance
- Release e-updates to the same recipients of the survey through the TWG
- Start working on the explainer video.

Weekly Status: Risks and Issues

Status for Week Ending: 10-Jun-2022

Key Project Risks / Issues (Solution risks/issues not included in this list)				
ID	Description	Owner	Severity	Due Date
1	If stakeholders do not complete the country readiness survey within the timeframe prescribed (2 weeks upon receipt), there is a risk that the project will be delayed. There is also a risk of incomplete answers to the survey. To mitigate risk, we will work with SPC and TWG members to jointly monitor progress and reach out to get missing answers to key questions.	SPC	High	24 June 2022
2	WHO advises that the Covid-19 vaccine certificate is necessary while Covid-19 has a 'pandemic' status. There is risk that this changes in 2022 and therefore changes the needs of the project. However, this solution presents multitude of uses in light of other communicable diseases such as measles, polio, malaria and yellow fever that could threaten PICT.	SPC	High	July 2022
3	Legal framework allowing the solution to be implemented not being in ready-state	SPC	High	July 2022

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ID	Key Milestones	Planned	Status	Comments
1	Draft Communications Strategy, Branding Strategy and Communications Timeline	17-May-2022 (TWG endorsed) 7 June 2022	Done	First draft submitted to TWG, which was endorsed and approved. Updated in response to the latest feedback items from TWG and pivot towards not doing any public release of communications products
2	Community E-Updates 1 & 2	7-Jun-2022	Done	Feedback received, e-updates refined and ready for dissemination
3	Infographics 1 & 2	2-Jun-2022	Done	No material feedback received from TWG members; Approved
4	EU DCC 3rd party attestation review, survey development and implementation	10-Jun-2022	In Progress	TWG (PIFS with SPC copied) to disseminate
5	Explainer Video	28-Jun-2022	Not Yet Started	Awaiting confirmation of the contract with a production company. The infographics will be used to create the storyboard and script for the explainer video. Aiming to release the week of 27 June
6	Opinion Editorial	28-Jun-2022	Not Yet Started	Will draft once explainer video script has been started
7	Social Media Posts during Key Leaders' Meetings	12-Jul-2022	Not Yet Started	Key Leaders' Meeting will be held from 12-14 July

Thank you

