



## THE TORRES STRAIT LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP



### JOINT MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE

24 September 2021

#### **TORRES STRAIT REGION - COVID-19 SOUTH FLY RIVER REGION, PAPUA NEW GUINEA: TORRES STRAIT TREATY**

Joint statement from Torres Shire Council, Mayor Cr. Vonda Malone, and Torres Strait Island Regional Council Mayor Cr. Phillemon Mosby.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has received advice from the Australian High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea that the Mabudawan Health Centre (MHC) in the South Fly River Region has seven (7) confirmed COVID-19 cases over the weekend.

Five (5) of the confirmed cases are PNG Rangers and one (1) is an employee of an Australian-funded program. These cases were identified through the standard COVID-19 testing program. One case is a patient that was admitted to MHC for other health reasons who was tested after developing mild symptoms. All cases have been directed to undertake mandatory isolation, with the admitted patient transferred to the MHC isolation ward.

DFAT has advised that a PNG health team is being mobilised with support from a DFAT surge team to investigate the cases further.

A whole-of-government approach from agencies, including Australian Border Force, Australian Defence Force and Queensland Police Services, are currently underway to continue monitoring the Australia- PNG border with the aim of minimising the risk of cross-border transmission and to protect Torres Strait Island communities.

DFAT is engaging with the Western Provincial Health Authority (WPHA) as the lead authority to ensure the department receives updated information on the situation. This includes additional support to the WPHA to ensure that the Mabudawan clinic and Daru Hospital continue to service the health needs of Treaty Villages.

At this point over 50 per cent of Treaty Village adults have received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and 11 per cent of the adults in the treaty villages are fully vaccinated. The vaccination program in PNG treaty villages is ongoing.

Queensland Health is continuing to provide support and roll-out clinics throughout the Torres Strait region to offer vaccinations. All Torres Strait residents are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated for protection against the pandemic.

*\*Further information on LDMG activation statuses is available on both the [Torres Shire Council](#) and [Torres Strait Island Regional Council](#) websites.*

#### **Media Enquires:**

Torres Strait Local Disaster Management Group (TSLDMG):  
Phone. 07 4069 1336 Email. [admin@torres.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@torres.qld.gov.au)