



THE TORRES STRAIT LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE

24th March 2020

TORRES STRAIT & NORTHERN PENINSULA AREA REGIONAL RESTRICTIONS COVID-19 (NOVEL CORONAVIRUS) PANDEMIC

On Sunday (22/03/20), the Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk, Premier of Queensland and the Honourable Craig Crawford, Minister for Fire and Emergency Services enacted a *declaration of a disaster situation – state level* in accordance with the Disaster Management Act 2003. This covers the entire state, including the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area regions.

Following this, yesterday (23/03/20) members of the Torres Strait Local Disaster Management Group (TS LDMG) held an extraordinary meeting to declare regional restrictions and community protection measures in response to the global COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Pandemic.

All key regional agencies were represented in this forum including Mayors from the Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC), Torres Shire Council (TSC), Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council (NPARC), and Queensland Health as the lead agency for this pandemic.

Whilst at the State level the focus has moved to transmission reduction, the paramount focus of the TS LDMG is preventing COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) from entering the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area region(s). As a result, travel restrictions will apply to those entering the Local Government Areas of Torres Shire Council (TSC), Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council (NPARC), particularly from mainland Australia and via the border from Papua New Guinea. At this stage inter-island travel of residents has not been restricted, however the TS LDMG may reconsider this, shall the need arise.

The following key resolutions were made, *and moved*, during this extraordinary meeting;

1. That the LDMG declares that effective 1700hrs on 23 March 2020, a mandatory self-isolation period of 14 days applies for all person entering the Local Government Areas of Torres Shire Council, Torres Strait Island Regional Council and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council, except for those persons authorised by law or by the respective Chief Executive Officer of the relevant Local Government Authority. In circumstances where persons are exempt their employer will notify the CEO of the relevant Local Government Authority of the persons pre-screening clearance.
2. That the LDMG declares that effective 1700hrs on 23 March 2020, a mandatory self-isolation period of 14 days, at a point of entry outside the Local Government Areas of Torres Shire Council, Torres Strait Island Regional Council and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council applies to all persons returning from overseas. On completion of the mandatory self-isolation

period those persons will notify the respective CEO of their relevant Local Government Authority of the successful completion of the said self-isolation period and sign a declaration to that affect. Thereafter, at the discretion of the CEO of the relevant Local Government Authority a further period of isolation may apply to those persons at an approved isolation facility. Should the CEO of the relevant Local Government Authority determine that a further period of isolation should apply then in that event the CEO will provide a notice in writing to the said person to that affect.

3. That the LDMG declares that effective 1700hrs on 23 March 2020, all persons who have returned to the Local Government Areas of Torres Shire Council, Torres Strait Island Regional Council and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council notify the CEO of the relevant Local Government Authority such that the CEO may determine whether a mandatory period of self-isolation for up to a period of 14 days at their residential address should apply.
4. That the LDMG requests that Torres Shire Council, Torres Strait Island Regional Council and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council develop standard operating procedures in relation to the activation of their respective Business Continuity Plans, Local Disaster Management Plans and standard messaging in relation to COVID-19 emergency.
5. That the LDMG requests the relevant Commonwealth and State Department and Agencies develop an integrated whole of government response for the liaison, monitoring and enforcement of the international border with PNG and Indonesia in relation to COVID-19 Emergency.

Key Information and Contact Points:

- **Regional Entry Registration to Torres Strait & Northern Peninsula Area:**

From 5PM (AEST), Tuesday 24th March 2020, all persons entering the communities listed below, by aircraft or vessel, are required to submit regional entry documentation.

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| Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boigu (Talbot) Island • Dauan (Mt Cornwallis) Island • Saibai Island • Mabuig (Jervis) Island • Badu (Mulgrave) Island • Arkai (Kubin) Community at Moa Island • Wug (St Pauls) Community at Moa Island • Kirirri (Hammond) Island • Iama (Yam) Island • Warraber (Sue) Island • Poruma (Coconut) Island • Masig (Yorke) Island • Ugar (Stephen) Island • Erub (Darnley) Island • Mer (Murray) Island |
| Torres Shire Council (TSC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday Island (Waiben) • Horn Island (Ngurupai) • Prince of Wales Island (Muralag) • Friday Island (Gealug Island) |

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| Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council (NPARC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seisia • New Mapoon • Bamaga • Umagico • Injinoo |
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Regional entry and declaration documentation can be submitted online by visiting:
<http://www.torres.qld.gov.au/covid-19/register>

• **Local Government Authority Chief Executive Officers:**

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| Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) | Bruce Ranga Email: bruce.ranga@tsirc.qld.gov.au |
| Torres Shire Council (TSC) | Dalassa Yorkston Email: dalassa.yorkston@torres.qld.gov.au |
| Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council (NPARC) | Graeme Gillam Email: ceo@nparc.qld.gov.au |

• **Self-Isolation Practises:**

- For information about self-isolation practises, call 13 HEALTH (13 432584) or visit: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-isolation-guidance>
- For support during self-isolation, visit: <https://headtohealth.gov.au/covid-19-support>

• **Recommended Health Information Sources:**

Queensland Health

- Call 13 HEALTH (13 432584) or visit: www.health.qld.gov.au/coronavirus

Australian Department of Health

- Visit: www.health.gov.au
- National Coronavirus Helpline - Call 1800 020 080 (Available 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week)

Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service

- Visit: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/torres-cape>

• **Recommended Financial Support Information Sources:**

Support for Individuals and Households

- Visit: <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/households>

Support for Businesses

- Visit: <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/businesses>
- Visit: <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/support/novel-coronavirus>

- ENDS -

Media Enquires:

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