



## THE TORRES STRAIT LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP



### **MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE**

6 January 2022

### **TORRES STRAIT REGION - COVID COMMUNITY UPDATE & WEATHER WARNING**

#### **COVID-19 Update**

The Torres Strait Local Disaster Management Group (TSLDMG) receives daily updates on COVID - 19 cases from Torres and Cape Hospital Health Services (TCHHS). The most recent update has confirmed there are 50 new cases in the Torres and Cape area as a whole including 2 cases on Thursday Island and 1 on Horn Island.

A reported case on Saibai Island was from a non-community member with the person having been fully isolated and now away from the community. All persons affected by COVID-19 have undertaken all required steps to minimise transmission.

The TSLDMG request to declare restricted access and lockout to the Torres Strait Region has not been considered by the Chief Health Officer (CHO). This means there will not be a lockdown or lockout for the region. However at the request of Mayor Malone for the TSLDMG the CHO is considering putting in place additional COVID safe measures such as Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) to apply for the Torres Strait to ensure community safety with movement into the region and within communities. Regular dialogue with the CHO will also occur to ensure direct communications with elected leaders for effective monitoring and response to the COVID outbreak. The TSLDMG will adhere to the decisions made by the CHO and Queensland Health as they are the lead agency for COVID management during the pandemic.

Due to the uncertainty of the current outbreak, all agencies (Government and Non-Government), businesses and residents are strongly recommended to reconsider non-essential travel into, within and out of the region during this period to help reduce chances of further COVID-19 cases and transmission in the Torres Strait.

Both Council's strongly encourage the Torres Strait community, agencies and businesses to consider measures they can undertake to help reduce virus transmission. For businesses and agencies, please consider work-from-home arrangements, where practical, for staff. For residents, please continue to utilise QR codes when shopping and visiting venues, wear a mask in public and use hand sanitizer regularly and as needed.

Councils also recommend that residents and agencies refrain from large gatherings and community consultations. Should you proceed with hosting an event within the Torres Shire and Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Areas, it is your responsibility to ensure that your COVID-19 Plans and Checklist are completed and to seek further information or guidance from your respective Council.

TSLDMG would like to remind the community in order to stop the further spread of the virus, all residents are strongly encouraged to continue COVID safe practise to keep yourself, loved one and our community safe.

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Get tested if you have even mild COVID-19 symptoms – then go home and stay home.
- Wash your hands often, with soap or sanitizer.
- Wear a mask if you can't socially distance, or when mandatory masks are required.
- Check-in with the Check-in Qld app.
- Get the COVID-19 vaccine – including your booster dose when it's time.
- Put in place a COVID-19 Readiness Plan.
- Social distancing, regularly wash their hands and wear face masks in order to help stop transmission of the virus

Mayor Mosby advised that additional protocol and measures will be put in place to reduce people movement into the TSIRC Local Government Area (LGA). All non-essential travel into the TSIRC LGA is not likely to be supported by Council. Mayor Mosby encourages community members to utilise the QR Codes when shopping, and at marine facilities (jetties) on each of the respective islands.

### **Weather Warning**

Severe weather is projected to impact the Cape and Torres Strait regions. Heavy rainfall is expected to become more likely across the Torres Strait later this week and into the weekend. Current modelling shows that a tropical low will form on the east of the Cape late Friday or Saturday.

Residents are recommended to monitor Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) and respective Council's website for regular for updates.

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

#### **Media Enquires:**

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