



Australian Government
Department of Health

Ref No: MC21-023888

Ms Elizabeth Hart
PO Box 1701
BURNSIDE SA 5066

Dear Ms Hart

Thank you for your correspondence of 23 July 2021 to the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, regarding the human biosecurity emergency and medical advice. The Minister has asked me to reply.

As you are aware, emergency measures have been necessary to manage the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sadly, as at 17 August 2021, 965 Australians had died from COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. There were 10,185 COVID-19 deaths reported globally in the 24-hour period preceding National Cabinet's 13 August meeting alone. Australia's emergency response, grounded in expert medical advice, has put Australia in a very fortunate position compared to so many other countries across the world. Australia has acted decisively to address a risk assessed as posing a severe and immediate threat to human health on a nationally significant scale. As a result, Australia has not experienced the widespread rates of infection, hospitalisation and fatality seen in many other countries.

Since the National Cabinet for Australia's Coronavirus Response (National Cabinet) was established, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) has assumed the role of a subcommittee of the National Cabinet. On this basis, some AHPPC documents are also Cabinet documents or National Cabinet documents, and it is the longstanding practice not to disclose information about the operation and business of the Cabinet, which are confidential.

Noting these constraints, only limited AHPPC documents can be provided, however what can be made available is published on the Department of Health's [website](#). These statements provide an update for the public based on information at a fixed point in time.

Publicly available information about the Chief Medical Officer and Chair of the AHPPC, Professor Paul Kelly, is published [here](#). You can also read a description of the role of the AHPPC on the [Australian Government Directory](#). As the individual members are employees of state and territory governments, you may wish to make further enquiries of those authorities. I would note that as government sector employees, each member would be subject to a professional code of conduct enacted in the jurisdiction in which they are employed.

Thank you for writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Radha KHANI

Radha Khiani
Director
Office of Health Protection and Response
17 August 2021