



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health**

Ref No: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence of 02 July 2021 to the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, regarding considering travel exemptions for vaccinated Australians. The Minister has asked me to reply.

The Australian Government has not made COVID-19 vaccination mandatory for the general population in Australia, and individuals maintain the option to choose. However, it is important that everyone who can get it, does get it, to help keep themselves and others safe. Anyone with questions about the benefits of being vaccinated is encouraged to talk to their doctor or health professional.

The Australian Government's policies on immunisation are based on advice from independent expert clinical advisory groups, including the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation. At this time, vaccination status is not considered to be a complete or sufficient substitute for other biosecurity measures, which remain in place to minimise COVID-19 health risks associated with international travel. This position aligns with the current advice provided by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The primary objective of vaccinating Australians is to reduce the risk of developing serious disease if a person is infected, rather than reducing transmission of the virus. Early efficacy data released to date has primarily demonstrated that vaccination prevents development of disease if infected with SARS-CoV-2 virus (which causes COVID-19), at least in the short term. Additional data is required to determine whether COVID-19 vaccines also prevent vaccinated individuals from transmitting the virus to others.

If favourable data on vaccination continues to be published over time, then this may trigger a decision as to whether there should be a scale back of other public health measures.

The Government is considering mechanisms for recognising international immunisations for COVID-19, however there are a number of considerations that need to be addressed before this can be implemented safely and effectively.

Any amendments to the current travel restrictions and health requirements of travellers will be implemented once agreed by the Government, as informed by health advice. I encourage you to access the Government's [COVID-19 website](#). This website contains up-to-date information on Australia's overseas travel restrictions.

Thank you for writing and I trust this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

*Radha KHANI*

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