DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA

Proactive Release

The following item has been proactively released by the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister:

COVID-19 Weekly Monitoring Report, Tuesday 9 June 2020

COVID-19
Weekly Monitoring Report

Tuesday 9 June 2020

[IN-CONFIDENCE]

Current strategy: Elimination by keeping it out, finding it and stamping it out.

Current Alert Level: 1

This weekly report responds to COVID-19 Ministerial Group's 9 April directive for All-of-Government officials to develop a set of measures and regular reporting that will inform future decisions on changing Alert Levels or the overall strategy, and to report them regularly.

The report places information about COVID-19 in New Zealand and health system capacity alongside evidence of the effects of the restrictions on the economy and society more broadly, and public attitudes towards, and compliance with, the restrictions.

This report covers:

The contents of this report reflect the principal matters that need to be taken into consideration when determining whether to change alert levels.

There are some gaps in measures and data, and these are noted where applicable. All-of-Government officials will continue to improve the measures.

Key changes and developments from last week

Developments to note:

- The trend of New Zealanders being less concerned about COVID-19 identified in last week's report has continues through the later stages Level 2. Perception of risk, demand for testing and public compliance reports continued to decline, while mobility continued to increase. Enquiries increasingly shifted to questions of opening borders and when the shift to Level 1 would occur.
- The social and economic benefits of reduced restrictions are continuing to be evident, with growth in creditor payment holidays slowing along with demand for special needs grants for food. Feelings of loneliness and isolation and have continued to decline.
- On balance, most indicators suggest that domestic-driven business activity got almost back to pre-COVID levels under Level 2. Real-time data for card spending, energy demand, broadband use, and traffic volumes are all at or near levels seen pre-COVID.
- A sharp jump in the value of the New Zealand dollar's (based on the trade weighted index) points to increasing confidence in New Zealand's relative economic prospects potentially associated with the expectation of elimination being achieved.

Changes to the report:

- With the absence of recent and remaining active cases we have removed several of the figures relating to cases and health system capacity. Timeliness data for testing and tracing remains but has not been updated from recent reports due to lack of new data.
- In the coming weeks we will look to revise the report to improve its relevance under Level 1.

COVID-19 in New Zealand

Case numbers have remained stable in recent weeks with no new cases reported in the last fortnight. There are no active cases (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Summary of COVID-19 in New Zealand as at 9am 9 June

0	**Active cases**
29	**Days since last imported case reported**
33	**Days since last import-related case reported**
18	**Days since last locally-acquired epidemiologically-linked case reported**
39	**Days since last locally-acquired, unknown source case reported**
21	**Days since most recent onset date**
8	**Significant open clusters**[1]
0	**Clusters with a new case reported in the last 14 days**

Source: Ministry of Health

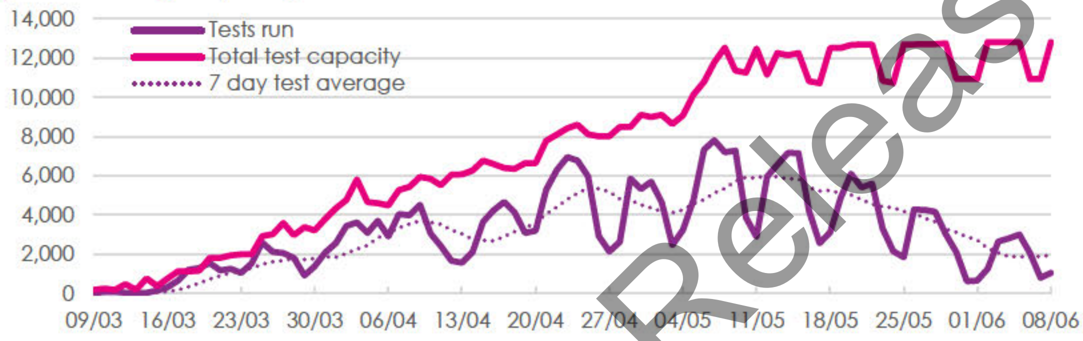
[1] A cluster is considered closed when there have been no new cases for two incubation periods (ie, 28 days) from the date when all cases complete isolation

Testing, tracing and isolation system

Testing rates have declined very significantly from the previous peak reflecting reduced demand for testing (rather than supply). This trend has now been underway for several weeks and the seven-day average is now at the lowest level since late March. This is likely a result of the sustained absence of cases reducing the sense of urgency to seek testing.

Our testing capacity is now consistently over 10,000 tests per day (Figure 2). As at 9 June, complete test stock on hand in labs is 265,000, which is 136 days' supply at current (7-day average) levels.

Figure 2: Testing capacity



Source: Ministry of Health

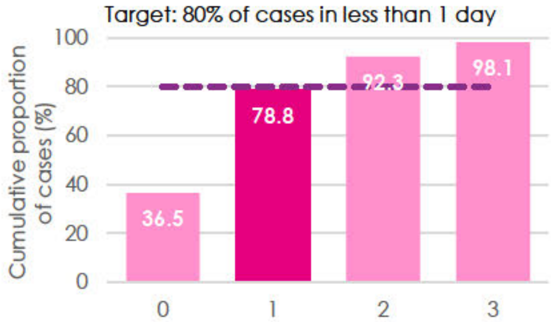
Timeliness of testing system

Figures 3 and 4 have not been updated recently as new data is only made available when there are positive tests or new cases.

The charts below assess the timeliness of the testing system. This includes the time between symptom onset and a swab being received by a lab (Figure 3), and the time between the swab being received and the notification of the test result (Figure 4).

Figure 3: Time between symptom onset and a swab being received by the lab, 13 April - 11 May

Figure 4: Time between a swab being received by the lab and notification of the test result, 13 April - 11 May



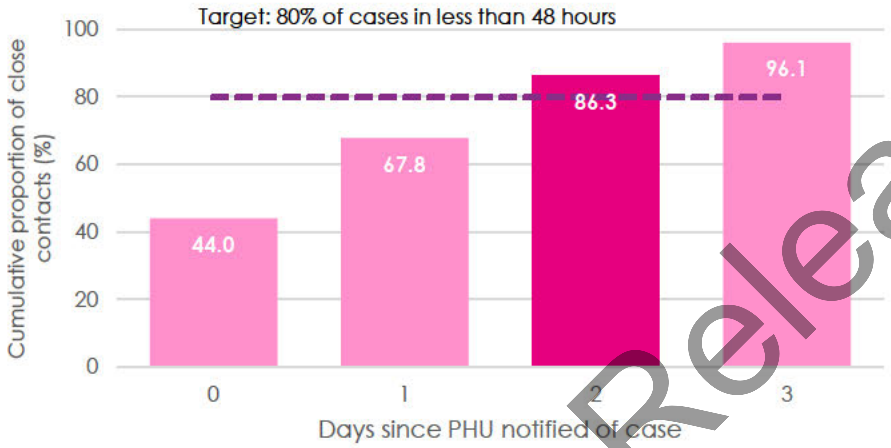
Source: Ministry of Health

Contact tracing

Figure 5 has not been updated recently as new data is only made available when there are positive tests or new cases.

Timeliness measures are the key metric to understanding the performance of contact tracing systems. Figure 5 shows the time between notification of a cases and tracing of all close contacts and the associated target of this being achieved within 48 hours for 80% of cases.

Figure 5: Time between notification of case and tracing of close contact, 13 April to 15 May



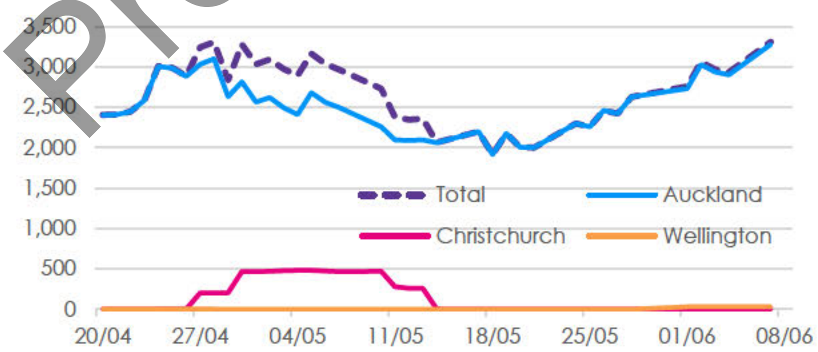
Source: Ministry of Health

Isolation

As at June 9th, we currently have the capacity to manage up to 4,172 people in managed isolation or quarantine at the New Zealand border.

Since the move to Alert Level 2, there has been in increase of people in managed isolation or quarantine (Figure 6). These numbers are expected to increase over the coming month as more New Zealanders and approved entrants are expected to be travelling to New Zealand over the coming month.

Figure 6: Number of people in managed isolation or quarantine



Source: Isolation, Quarantine and Repatriation SITREP, AoG calculation

Health system capacity

PPE

We have sufficient PPE stocks for the health and disability workforce currently, however there are potential challenges in mask supply beyond the next four weeks.

There is good stock of all PPE gear in the country right now (both from the Ministry of Health national reserves and DHB reserves). The sourcing and distribution of PPE are being managed at a national level, however global supply chain challenges remain. Potential future challenges in mask supply are being worked through, including through exploring alternative sourcing options and ensuring that demand across DHBs is well managed.

Figure 7: PPE availability for the health sector and non-health essential services

Product Description	Stock on Hand		Distribution over the last fortnight	PPE on Order	
	DHBs (2 June)	National Reserves (3 June)		Expected in Next Fortnight	Total on Order
N95 Mask (or equivalent)	1,151,567	10,439,920	69,800	8,350,000	11,000,000
Procedure Mask (or equivalent)	5,403,826	30,299,400	1,330,100	18,459,550	91,333,844
Isolation Gown (or equivalent)	494,452	1,445,710	315,100	1,749,000	4,445,400
Disposable Apron	1,062,008	865,850	0	900,000	1,800,000
Glasses/goggles (or equivalent)	115,316	615,513	2,000	400,000	495,101
Face shield (or equivalent)	179,504	660,140	800	240,000	464,840
Nitrile Gloves (all sizes, Each)	16,170,738	2,790,800	2,624,000	53,000,000	243,000,000
Hand Sanitiser (500mL equivalents)	59,627	200,016	0	0	100,000
Hand Sanitiser (2L equivalents)	0	150,012	0	0	0
Detergent Wipe (or equivalent)	575,000	0	0	0	0
Disinfectant wipe (or equivalent)	3,255,228	13,748,550	1,180,600	13,198,008	119,306,008

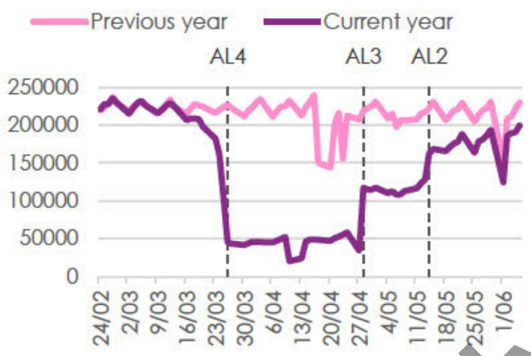
Source: MoH PPE data as at 3 June

Public and business compliance and movement

Direction requests on Apple Maps, light vehicle traffic volumes and mobile phone movement data all suggest that mobility has increased significantly under Alert Level 2, but still remains below pre-COVID levels (Figures 8, 9 and 10). Unlike the shift to Alert Level 3, which involved a single one-off increase, movement continued to increase as Level 2 progressed.

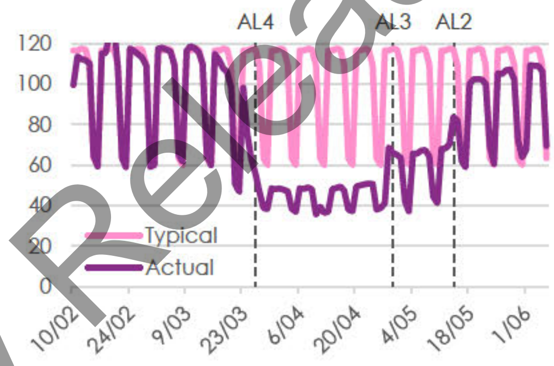
Further increases in movement is likely as more people begin to return to working outside the home, and as the perceived personal and family threat of COVID-19 continues to abate (Figure 11).

Figure 8: Light vehicle traffic volumes in main centres



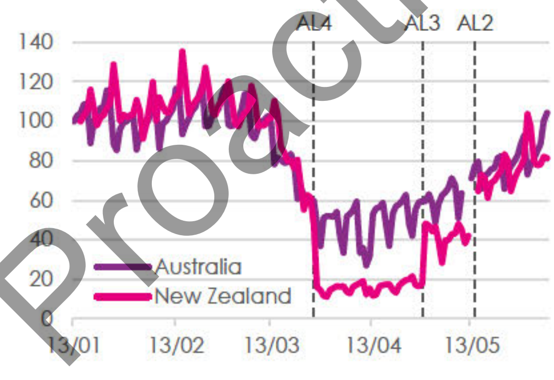
Source: NZTA

Figure 9: People movement (between neighbourhoods) based on mobile phone location



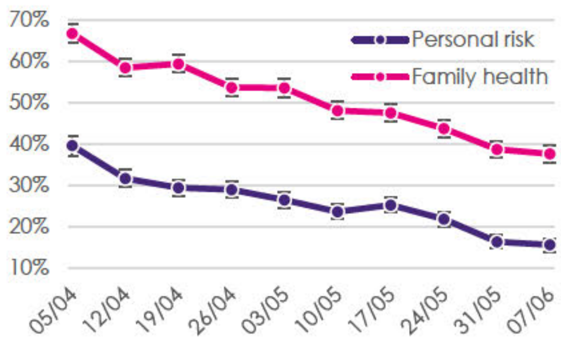
Source: Data Ventures, AoG calculation – st. dev. of SA2 hourly populations

Figure 10: Volume of driving direction requests on Apple Maps (13/01=100)



Source: Apple Mobility Trends

Figure 11: Proportion of people who were worried about the health of their family members, or their personal risk of getting COVID-19



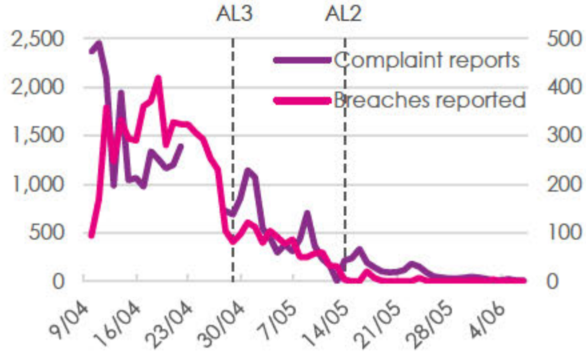
Source: Provisional data from the COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey, Ministry of Health

Note: Provisional data from the COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey is dated as at week end of the survey week

COVID related compliance

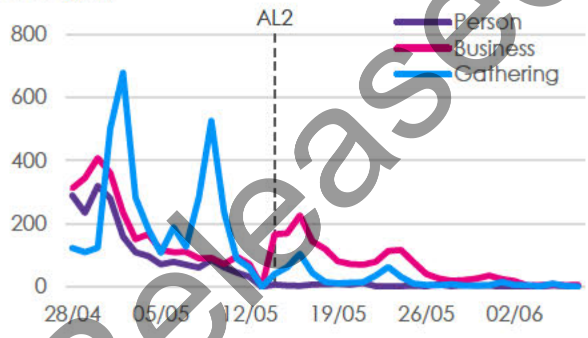
Online public reports of breaches and Police recorded breaches continued through Alert Level 2 (Figure 12) and are now nearly zero. Given the relatively few restictions under Alert Level 2, there are far fewer activities that could have led to a breach. Public complaints for all categories are now very low (Figure 13). This more likely reflects a change in people's propensity to make complaints rather than a significant increase in compliance over previous weeks.

Figure 12: Complaints from public (left axis) and lockdown breaches reported by New Zealand Police (right axis)



Source: NZ Police

Figure 13: Complaints from the public about different types of breaches since Alert Level 3 began



Source: NZ Police

COVID related workplace compliance

In general, the pace of workplace compliance concerns and enforcement has remained stable, and potentially somewhat slowed between Alert Level 3 and 2 despite the greater number of businesses operating.

Worksafe has conducted 848 COVID-19 related assessments of workplaces under Level 2. A total of 940 assessments were undertaken across the whole of Alert Level 3.

A total of 42 Covid related actions have been taken under Alert Level 2, of which 31 were verbal directions.[2] A total of 42 actions were taken across the whole of Alert Level 3.

Worksafe has received 208 COVID-related notifications of concern under Alert Level 2. A total of 328 notifications were received under the whole of Alert Level 3.

[2] WorkSafe Activity Daily Report Monday 8 June

Effects of the measures on society

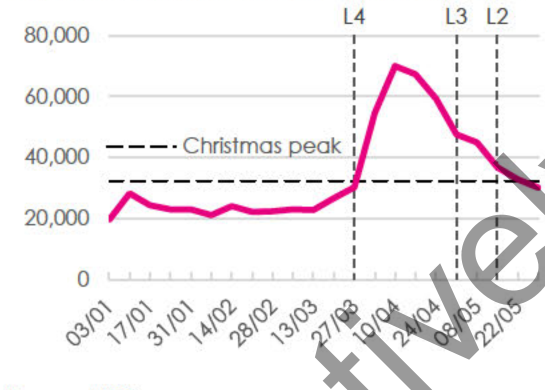
Demand for Special Needs Grants for food continues to slow. Levels are now slightly below other peak times of the year, such as Christmas 2019 (Figure 14). It is difficult to gauge the impact of COVID-19 on demand for Special Needs Grants, over and above other factors, such as the start of Winter Energy Payments and recent operational changes.

The rate of increase in creditor payment holidays has slowed over the past fortnight, increasing by 8% since 23 May, compared to 45% in the fortnight prior (Figure 15).

Police call-out data provides a consistent picture of family harm stabilising close to pre-lockdown levels (Figure 16). Sexual violence calls for service have not changed significantly since the start of Alert Level 2.

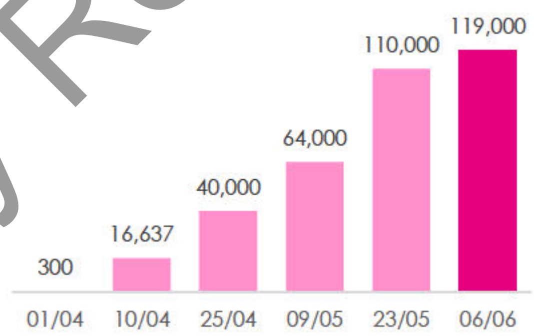
Since Alert Level 4, Reports of Concern (ROC) have averaged 1,150 per week. This is substantially lower than typical levels from last year, however not too dissimilar to levels seen during the school holidays last year (Figure 17).

Figure 14: Special Needs Grants for food



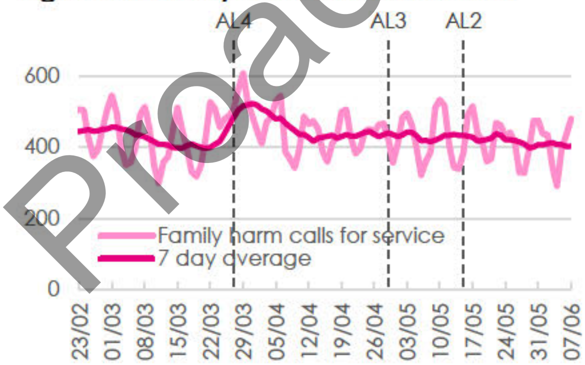
Source: MSD

Figure 15: Creditor payment holidays



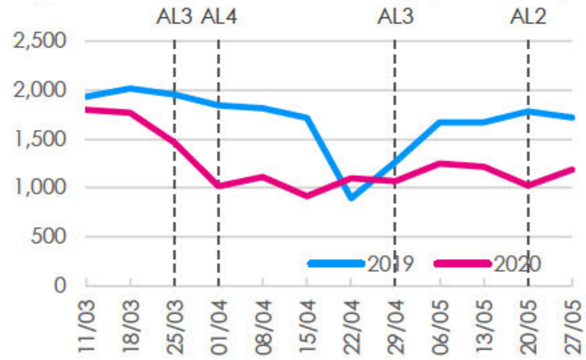
Source: Centrix (see Note 1)

Figure 16: Family harm calls for service



Source: NZ Police provisional data (see Note 2)

Figure 17: Reports of Concern (up to 27/05)



Source: Oranga Tamariki, not official statistics

Note 1: Centrix data does not include all credit providers in NZ, but it does depict an accurate trend

Note 2: To ensure the quality and accuracy of data, Police statistics on Family Harm Investigations and other Official Crime Statistics are updated monthly, one month in arrears. That means statistics for May will be published on last working day of June 2020. To support the effort to supply timely information and establish daily trends relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, the data supplied are sourced from provisional and operational databases for operational use only.

There was a slight increase in the number of contacts to Youthline for the week ending 31 May, however the number of contacts is broadly similar to levels prior to Alert Level 4. Suicide was the main presenting issue, followed by contacts about depression and sadness.

Provisional results from the Health and Wellbeing Survey suggest that, overall, New Zealanders' psychological wellbeing is stabilising at an improved level compared to Alert Level 4. COVID related nervousness decreased slightly over the past week and remains at levels much lower than during Alert Levels 3 and 4 (Figure 18). Depression and anxiety symptoms, while not significantly changed over the past month, are lower than at the beginning of Alert Level 4. Overall rates of self-reported loneliness or isolation are significantly lower compared to any time during Alert Levels 3 or 4 (Figure 19).

Figure 18: Percentage of survey respondents reporting COVID related nervousness

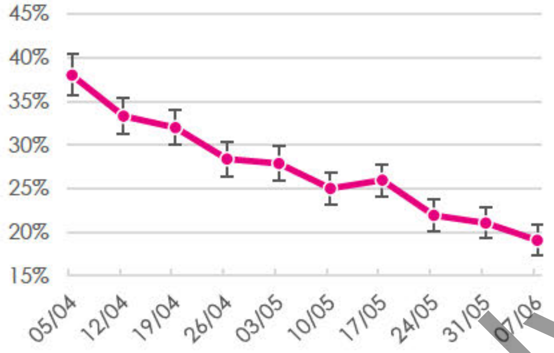


Figure 19: Percentage of survey respondents feeling lonely or isolated

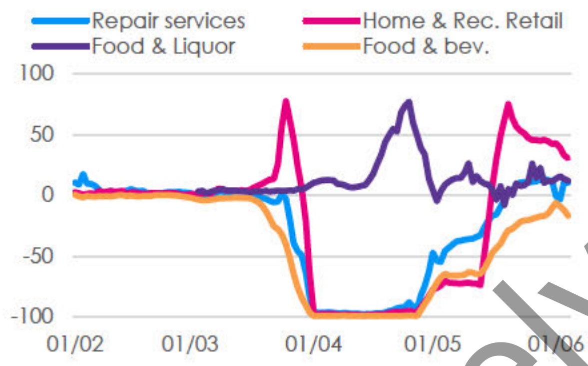
Source: Provisional data from the COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey, Ministry of Health, note that data reported is dated as at week end of the survey week

Effects of the measures on businesses

On balance, most indicators suggest that domestic-based business activity is almost back to pre-COVID levels. For example, real-time data for card spending, energy demand, broadband use, and traffic volumes are all at or near levels seen before NZ went into lockdown.

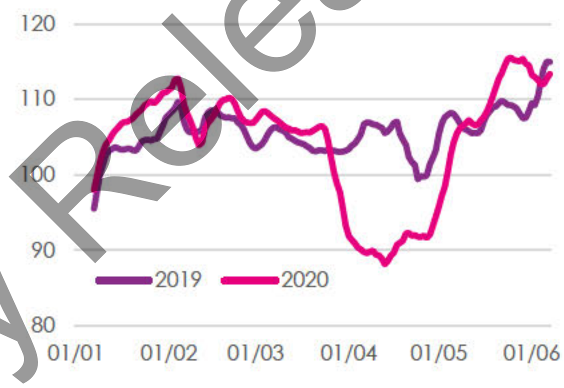
Spending by industry shows that there has been a surge in home and recreational spending and repair services following the easing of Alert levels. Food and beverage services dropped a bit as people took advantage of having a wider variety of shopping available. During lockdown people spent around $1.5 billion less on credit cards than the same time last year (showing the extent of lockdown despite a preference for contactless payment). Outstanding balances on credit cards fell by around $1.0 billion.

Figure 20: Electronic card spending



Source: Statistics New Zealand

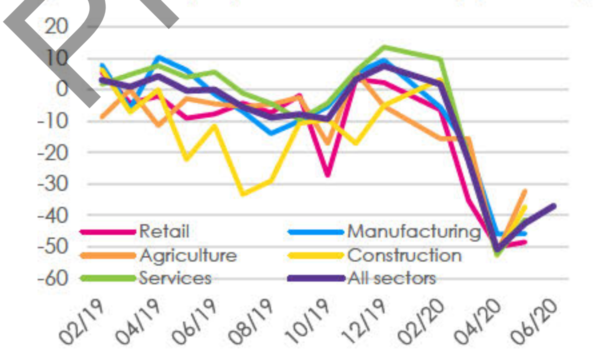
Figure 21: Energy demand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

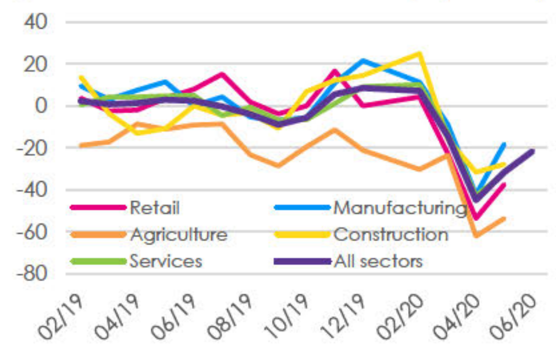
The return to more 'normal' levels of activity is earlier than expected and is likely helping to buoy confidence measures. The June preliminary read of the ANZ Business Opinion Survey showing another lift in confidence of 9 points to -33%. All forward-looking activity indicators lifted from May levels, but they remain extremely weak. Businesses remain extremely downbeat about the outlook for employment. (Figure 22). Investment intentions remain equally weak (Figure 23) and, if proven correct, will act as a key constraint on our long-term productivity aspirations.

Figure 22: Employment intentions (by sector)



Source: ANZ (preliminary results)

Figure 23: Investment intentions (by sector)



Source: ANZ (preliminary results)

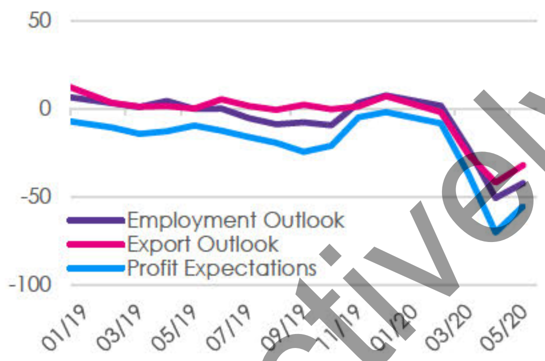
Macroeconomic and fiscal effects of the measures

With the move to Alert Level 1, restrictions have eased to allow the economy to open fully. As we have moved through Alert Levels, activity has increased substantially. Heavy traffic volumes have returned to normal levels, down only 2% on the same time last year. New Zealand's trade weighted index has been increasing over the past fortnight. However, the total value of exports and imports remains below levels at the same time last year.

Treasury estimates that output is reduced by 5 – 10% under Alert Level 1. In the main Budget forecasts, real GDP is forecast to fall sharply in the June quarter, resulting in an annual contraction of -4.6% over the June 2020 year, with GDP falling a further 1% by June 2021. The unemployment rate is expected to approach 10% in the September quarter, and reduce to 8% by mid-2021.

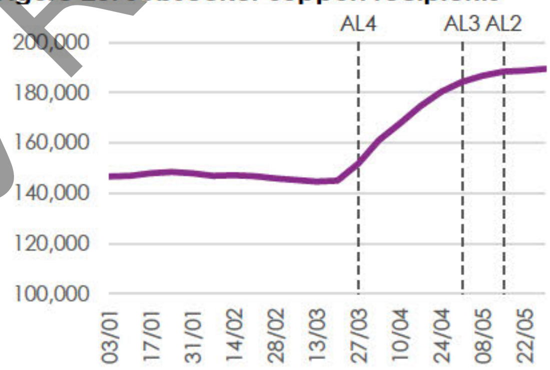
Job losses are underway, with the number of Jobseeker recipients increasing sharply by almost 44,000 since 20 March, though the rate of increase has slowed in the past four weeks, and is leveling off. Over 1.6 million individuals are now covered by the wage subsidy, and over $11 billion has been paid out.

Figure 24: ANZ Business Outlook



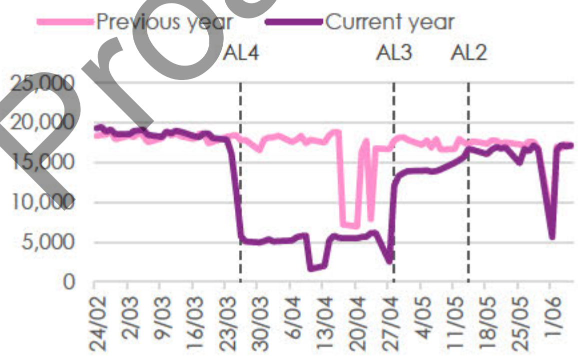
Source: ANZ

Figure 25: Jobseeker Support recipients



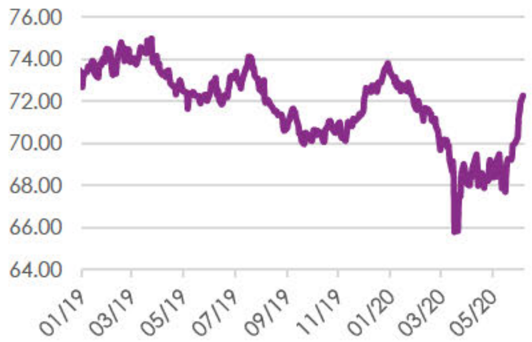
Source: MSD

Figure 26: Heavy traffic volumes in main centres



Source: NZTA

Figure 27: Trade Weighted Exchange Index



Source: RBNZ

Fiscal measures

New Zealand's fiscal response packages for COVID-19 announced to date amount to around $44 billion in committed spending, $15.9 billion of which was announced on budget day. The focus areas of the announced initiatives were: Education; Training and Jobs; Infrastructure; Housing; Business Support; Environment and Energy; Community Wellbeing; Income Support; and Sector Recovery. As at 8 June, $18.4 billion remained in the CRRF. The Small Business Cashflow Scheme has disbursed over $1.22 billion to over 71,000 applicants as at 8 June.

Figure 28: Fiscal costs of commitments and programmes already announced

Spending package	Total impact on net core Crown debt ($m), period to 2023/24
Infrastructure	3,200.084
Education, Skills and Training	4,266.405
Business and Firm	9,597.747
Income Support	19,927.425
Health	1,716.072
Housing	928.268
Other	4,195.07
Total Allocated Spend to date	**43,831.071**
Unallocated CRRF remaining	18,374.459

Public attitude towards the measures

Over the past week there had been high interest in Alert Level 1 following the announcement last week about what Alert Level 1 would be like, and Monday's announcement of the (now realised) move to Alert Level 1.

While the overall volume of questions remains low, the discussion largely revolves around the (now realised) move to Alert Level 1. Questions that have been received break down as follows: 40% about Alert Levels, 17% about Contract Tracing, and 13% about Quarantine Rules.

People asked questions such as: 'Shouldn't we be at Alert Level 1 by now' and 'Why do we have to wait', 'Why doesn't my app work when I try to scan a QR code', and 'Will flight crews have to isolate'. There were also questions about education, financial support and gatherings.

Some New Zealanders were voicing frustration about being in Alert Level 2 when there was only one active case of Covid-19. However, other New Zealanders were celebrating the move to the new normal and are looking forward to no social distancing. With the move to Alert Level 1, and with no active cases, this frustration is likely to dissipate over the coming days.

There are still concerns about the COVID Tracer app, its ease of use, why it doesn't work on various QR codes and that many businesses don't have QR codes that are compatible with the app.

With increasing media attention trans-Tasman travel, there is continued conservation on borders and quarantine rules, with people asking if flight crews will need to isolate and if their family/friends can bring clothes to them if they must isolate.

Traffic on the covid19.govt.nz website has dropped significantly over the alert levels, with an average of 58,111 users per day during Level 2 (Level 3 – 119,563; Level 4 – 209,600 users per day). This may indicate people feel a sense of life returning to normal.