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Safe Travel Zones – Advice to Industry

Safe Travel Zones: New Zealand, Singapore, Japan and the Republic of Korea

The Australian government has established Safe Travel Zone arrangements for:

- New Zealand
 - All fully vaccinated travellers who have only been in either Australia and/or New Zealand for 14 days prior are permitted to travel between Australia and New Zealand, without the need to apply for a travel exemption into participating jurisdictions.
- Singapore
 - Fully vaccinated Singaporean passport holders who are departing Singapore directly to Australia (i.e. no transit between the two countries) are permitted to travel to Australia without the need to apply for a travel exemption into participating jurisdictions.
- Japan – from 15 December 2021
 - Fully vaccinated Japanese passport holders who are departing Japan directly to Australia (i.e. no transit between the two countries) are permitted to travel to Australia without the need to apply for a travel exemption into participating jurisdictions.
- Republic of Korea (South Korea) – from 15 December 2021
 - Fully vaccinated Korean passport holders who are departing South Korea directly to Australia (i.e. no transit between the two countries) are permitted to travel to Australia without the need to apply for a travel exemption into participating jurisdictions.

Fully Vaccinated

To meet the requirements under a Safe Travel Zone arrangement, travellers will need to be fully vaccinated in accordance with the Australian definition for fully vaccinated. The details of Australia's definition for fully vaccinated is provided in the *Advice to Industry – Re-opening the International Border* document.

Airlines will need to verify that passengers meet the Australian definition for fully vaccinated at check-in. The same rules that airlines currently follow for verifying the vaccination status of Australians and permanent residents will also apply to passengers seeking travel under a Safe Travel Zone arrangement. Further details on the rules for verifying the vaccination status of passengers can be found in the *Advice to Industry – Re-opening the International Border* document.

Evidence of a negative COVID-19 PCR test

Evidence of a negative COVID-19 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test taken within 3 days of scheduled departure is required for inbound travel to Australia (the first flight if there are one or more connecting flights booked for travel to Australia), unless an exemption applies. Further details on the PCR test requirements for all travellers can be found in the *Advice to Industry – Re-opening the International Border* document.

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Eligibility

Travellers will need to meet all relevant criteria set-out in Table 1 below to be considered eligible for quarantine-free travel under each relevant Safe Travel Zone arrangement.

Table 1 – Safe Travel Zone Eligibility Criteria

| Safe Travel Zone | Fully Vaccinated | Negative PCR Test 3-days prior to departure | Possess a valid visa | Passport | Last country of departure prior to arrival in Australia | Time required in last country of departure |
|-------------------|------------------|---|----------------------|--------------|---|--|
| New Zealand | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Any | New Zealand | 14 Days in either Aus or NZ |
| Singapore | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Singaporean | Singapore | Any (inc. transit) |
| Japan | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Japanese | Japan | Any (inc. transit) |
| Republic of Korea | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | South Korean | South Korea | Any (inc. transit) |

Not eligible: Travellers who do not satisfy the requirements for travel under a Safe Travel Zone

If a traveller does not meet the requirements for travel under a Safe Travel Zone arrangement, they may be eligible to travel to Australia under different arrangements if they:

- are an Australian citizen or permanent resident; a New Zealand citizen usually resident in Australia; or their immediate family member
- hold one of the eligible visa subclasses [listed](#) on the Department of Home Affairs [COVID-19 and the border](#) website (from 15 December)
- are [exempt from Australia’s travel restrictions](#) or have been granted a [travel exemption](#).

A travel exemption can be requested through the Department of Home Affairs’ [Travel Exemption Portal](#). Travel exemptions are assessed on a case by case basis.

Children aged 12-17

Under each Safe Travel Zone arrangement, unvaccinated or partially vaccinated children aged 12-17 years old who travel to Australia, will be exempt from passenger caps and eligible for reduced quarantine requirements when they arrive in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, when;

- they are citizens of the country applicable to the Safe Travel Zone (for example, they are Japanese citizens travelling under the Japan Safe Travel Zone arrangement); and
- they travel with parent/guardians who are all fully vaccinated.

If the child is travelling with adult family members who do not meet the definition of fully vaccinated, then the entire family group will be subject to managed quarantine and passenger caps.

Examples of travellers who are eligible and not under Safe Travel Zone arrangement

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singaporean passport holder flying directly from Singapore to Sydney (no transit) • Korean passport holder flying directly from Korea (no transit) • Japanese passport holder flying directly from Japan (no transit) | <p>✓ Eligible for Safe Travel Zone arrangement</p> |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singaporean passport holder flying from the United States to Sydney, transiting directly from Singapore to Sydney • Korean passport holder flying from the United States to Sydney, transiting directly from Korea to Sydney • Japanese passport holder flying from the United States to Sydney, transiting directly from Japan to Sydney | <p>✓ Eligible for Safe Travel Zone arrangement</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singaporean passport holder flying from the United States to Sydney, transiting directly from Japan to Sydney • Korean passport holder flying from the United States to Sydney, transiting directly from Japan to Sydney • Japanese passport holder flying from the United States to Sydney, transiting directly from Singapore to Sydney | <p>✗ Not eligible for Safe Travel Zone arrangement. May be eligible to travel under other arrangements if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are an immediate family member of an Australian citizen or permanent resident • hold an <u>eligible visa</u> (from 15 December) • have another travel exemption. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singaporean passport holder flying directly from Hong Kong to Sydney • Korean passport holder flying directly from Hong Kong to Sydney • Japanese passport holder flying directly from Hong Kong to Sydney | <p>✗ Not eligible for Safe Travel Zone arrangement. May be eligible to travel under other arrangements if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are an immediate family member of an Australian citizen or permanent resident • hold an <u>eligible visa</u> (from 15 December) • have another travel exemption. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singaporean passport holder flying from Singapore, transiting directly from the Philippines to Sydney • Korean passport holder flying from Korea, transiting directly from Thailand to Sydney • Japanese passport holder flying from Japan, transiting directly from Hong Kong to Sydney | <p>✗ Not eligible for Safe Travel Zone arrangement. May be eligible to travel under other arrangements if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are an immediate family member of an Australian citizen or permanent resident • hold an <u>eligible visa</u> (from 15 December) • have another travel exemption. |

Airline Responsibilities

The Advanced Passenger Processing (APP) system is being used to automate 'Ok to board' messages for passengers who meet key conditions applicable to travel under each Safe Travel Zone.

Due to technical limitations of the APP system, 'Ok to board' messages will also be generated for some passengers who may not meet all the conditions for travel.

Table 2 below details the approach that has been taken within APP to operationalise each Safe Travel Zone:

Table 2 – Safe Travel Zone APP processing

| Safe Travel Zone | Whitelisting Approach | Whitelisting turned on from |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| New Zealand | All flights from New Zealand arriving in NSW, VIC or the ACT | 0001 AEDT on 1 November 2021 |
| Singapore | All Singaporean citizens, regardless of country of departure | 0001 AEDT on 21 November 2021 |
| Japan | All flights from Japan to Australia arriving in NSW, VIC or the ACT | 1600 AEDT on 14 December 2021 |
| Republic of Korea | All flights from South Korea to Australia arriving in NSW, VIC or the ACT | 1600 AEDT on 14 December 2021 |

‘Ok to board’ messages should be honoured for:

- Foreign nationals who meet the conditions for travel under a Safe Travel Zone arrangement set out in Table 1 above;
- Australian citizens, permanent residents, immediate family and passengers with an approved individual travel exemption;
- New Zealand citizens who are usually resident in Australia;
- travellers who possess a valid visa which has been listed by the Department of Home Affairs as eligible for travel to Australia without needing to apply for a travel exemption.

Where a foreign traveller is attempting to travel to Australia and they do not meet the requirements above, the airline should not board them (even when an ‘Ok to board’ message has been received) unless they have a travel exemption confirmed by the Border Operations Centre (BOC). Particular attention should be paid at check-in to ensure any traveller with a ‘Visitor’ visa meets the citizenship requirements for travel to Australia under the relevant Safe Travel Zone.

It is recognised that this is a manual workaround requiring effort from airlines. The Safe Travel Zone arrangements are not expected to be an enduring solution for travel to Australia. The manual workaround provides an interim solution to enable the phased reopening of Australia’s international boarder.