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The Courier

Information and Advice for NSW Transport Operators

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Special COVID-19 Edition

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COVID-19 – How to Stay Safe, Symptoms, What Should I Do If I Feel Unwell; What Do I Need to Know about the COVID-19 Virus; Business Action

The COVID-19 virus continues to create alarm and uncertainty amongst many people. While not wanting to downplay any of the journalistic emphasis that has been created, it is important to recognise the facts and to continue to exercise the necessary attention towards proper behaviour to prevent any further spread of the airborne virus.

How To Stay Safe

- Wash Your Hands Regularly for 20 seconds with soap or hand sanitiser.
- Cover your mouth and nose whenever coughing or sneezing
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Do not wear a mask if you are well.

What Are the Symptoms?

- Fever and tiredness.
- Breathing difficulties
- Muscle pain
- Regular cough and sneezing

What Should I Do If I Feel Unwell?

- See your GP immediately - They will tell you what to do next.
- Rest at home while being treated.
- Inform your employer of your actions.
- Do not assume that you have contracted COVID-19 unless it is diagnosed.

What do I Need to Know about the COVID -19 Virus?

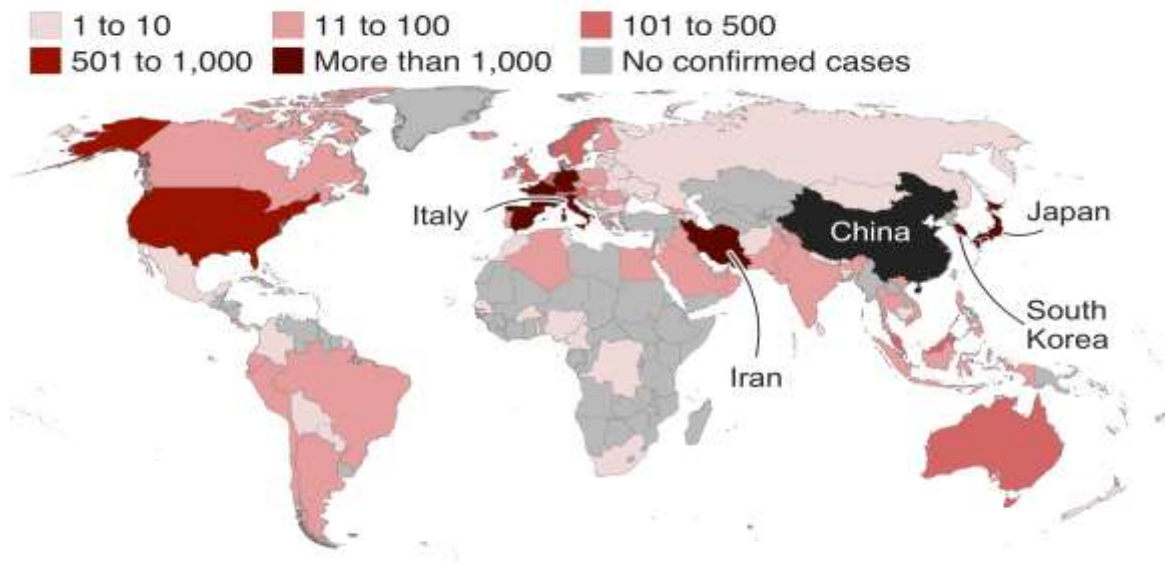
As at 11.00 hrs on March 11 2020, there have been 112 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 3 deaths and 24 recoveries.

- 60 in New South Wales
- 15 in Queensland
- 6 in South Australia
- 2 in Tasmania
- 15 in Victoria*
- 4 in Western Australia
- 10 associated with the Diamond Princess cruise ship

* Note: Victoria case count includes a case detected in NSW. Under the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System reporting requirements the case is considered a Victorian case.

Of the 112 Australian cases reported, 24 of these cases are reported to have recovered.

Cases of coronavirus outside China



Source: WHO, health ministries. Updated: 11 Mar 06:00 GMT

BBC

Business Action

There are a number of actions that can be taken in contingency for an increase in virus activity.

1. Minimise airborne travel.
2. Ensure that personal sanitary precautions are taken in public meetings.
3. Direct employees to see a doctor as soon as symptoms are experienced.
4. Do not assume a person has COVID-19 unless it has been medically diagnosed.
5. Support the individual and family of any employee that may contract this virus.
6. Work on a contingency plan for business continuation should employees self-isolate.
7. Reinforce the above facts to assist in staff and employees are safe and ensuring that the spread of the virus is minimised.

There is no doubt that supply chains will be affected. Initially with 'panic' purchasing of retail products but also with a slowing of overseas supply back into our economy. While some sectors of the transport industry are doing well others have seen a dramatic downturn in volume.

We are hopeful that the Chinese industry will recover quickly from this epidemic and that the ability to resume normal international trading conditions return very soon.

Federal Government Economic Stimulus Package

The Federal Government has announced a \$17.6 billion stimulus package announced to help households and businesses confront the social and economic challenges presented by COVID-19.

Key features of the package include a one-off payment for households with family tax benefits to encourage spending in the economy, as well as an instant asset write-off, accelerated depreciation scheme and cashflow boost for employers, and wage assistance for apprentices and trainees.

For business, the package includes:

- Increasing the instant asset write-off threshold from \$30,000 to \$150,000 and expanding access to include businesses with aggregated annual turnover of less than \$500 million (up from \$50 million) until 30 June 2020;
- The introduction of a time limited 15-month investment incentive (through to 30 June 2021) to support business investment and economic growth over the short term, by accelerating depreciation deductions;
- Cash flow assistance for businesses to help challenges resulting from the economic impacts of the coronavirus and help businesses retain their employees;
- Boosting cash flow for employers that will provide up to \$25,000 (tax-free) back to small and medium-sized businesses, with a minimum payment of \$2,000 for eligible businesses; and
- Supporting apprentices and trainees with eligible employers able to apply for a wage subsidy of 50 per cent of the apprentice's or trainee's wage for up to 9 months from 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020.

Details of the full stimulus package can be found at <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus>.

The transport sector had been hit hard by the impacts of the coronavirus on domestic and international supply chains, with imports and exports experiencing short-term declines due to a reduction in demand from China during the peak of the outbreak there.

We are seeing signs of recovery from China however, and transport operators should have every confidence that demand for consumer goods, building, construction and other raw materials will be sustained by measures outlined in the Commonwealth stimulus package to keep the economy ticking over.

Further Information

ARTIO NSW will be supply further information from the Government on support packages should the virus escalate.

For specific advice on business responsibilities, should you experience hardship, for industrial relations or any other matter, please contact the ARTIO NSW office, tel: 0412 880861; email: hughmc@artionsw.com.au.