

NEW ZEALAND

# Covid 19 coronavirus: Kiwis get airborne in first transtasman bubble flight

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Australian Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack has announced New South Wales and Northern Territory borders will open to Kiwi travellers from October 16. Video / Sky News

NZ Herald



There's excitement at Auckland Airport as people get their first chance for quarantine-free travel to Australia since the outbreak of Covid-19 in March.

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Airport staff are also remarking to each other about how good it is to see people back in the international terminal.

Travellers will still face 14 days' quarantine upon return to New Zealand, at a cost of \$3200.

Nearly all of those booked on the first flight due to leave mid-morning have one-way tickets. Around 200 people are expected to board this morning.

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Air New Zealand chief executive Greg Foran said in order for the airline to continue to carry passengers safely and identify passengers with travel not originating in New Zealand, it had introduced "quarantine" and "quarantine-free" flights.

"The quarantine-free flights will be for travellers originating from New Zealand who are flying from Auckland to Sydney and are not required to quarantine on arrival in Australia."

Quarantine flights would be open to passengers who do not meet the Safe Travel Zone criteria and would be required to quarantine on arrival in Australia.

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It's flight day for a one-way air bubble with select Australian states. Photo / Marty Melville

Passengers are being warned if they want to interstate beyond New South Wales they will need to ensure they have checked state and territory travel restrictions and have the appropriate exemptions or approvals to travel as these continue to change.

The New Zealand government is working on setting up a two-way quarantine-free system but has said it will only do so when safe.

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