

TE TIRA ĀRAI URUTĀ  
**NZ ROYAL COMMISSION  
COVID-19 LESSONS LEARNED**

# PĀNUI

COVID-19 Inquiry Newsletter: Issue 16

03 FEBRUARY 2025

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



**Phase Two has today opened an online portal to support the collection of public submissions to the Inquiry.**

A primary focus for Phase Two is reviewing key decisions made by the New Zealand Government regarding certain aspects of the

COVID-19 response during 2021 and 2022. We will use this assessment to provide advice to the Government on how Aotearoa New Zealand could make decisions during future pandemics.

To help us provide this advice, we want to hear from you on how certain key Government decisions affected or changed your lives during the pandemic. By sharing your experience, you'll help the Inquiry provide carefully considered, practical recommendations to the New Zealand Government that will help us prepare for and manage any future pandemics.

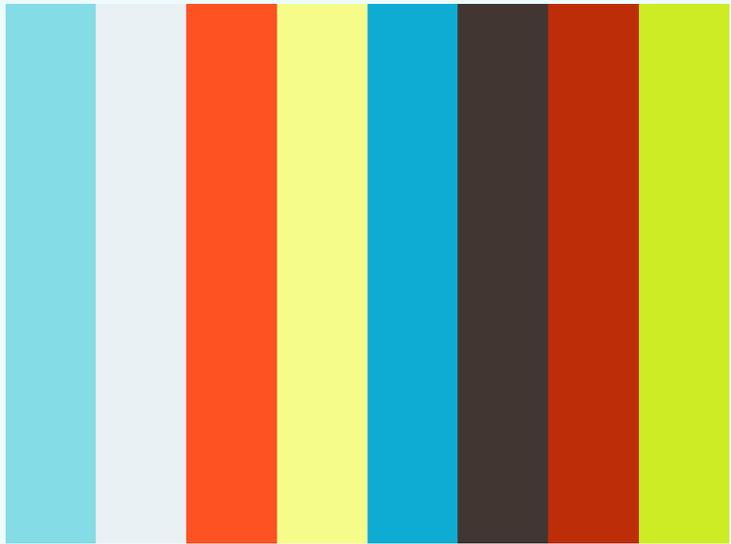
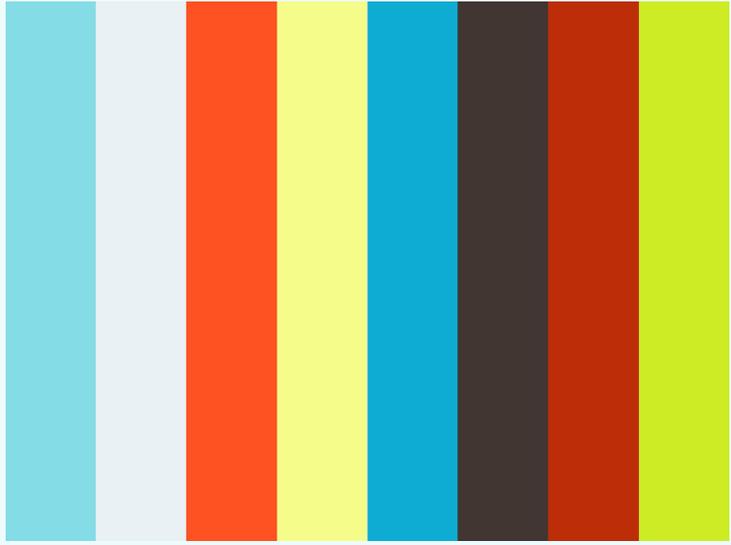
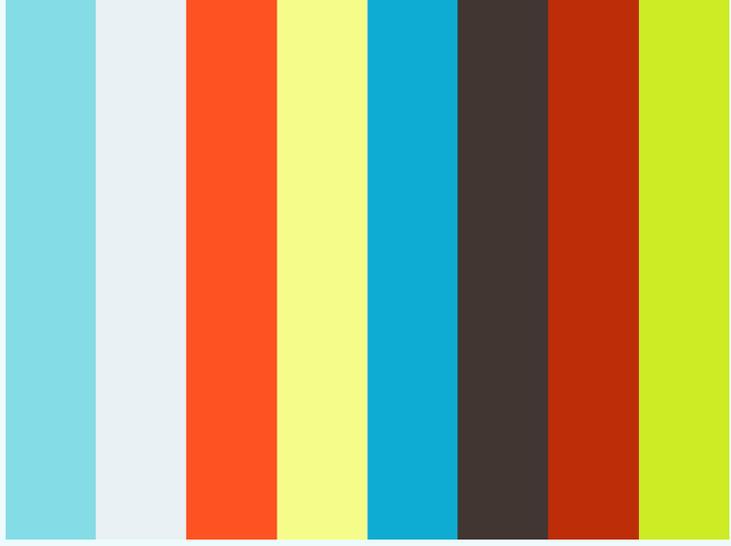
You can read more in this pānui about the submissions process and the key Government decisions covered by Phase Two.

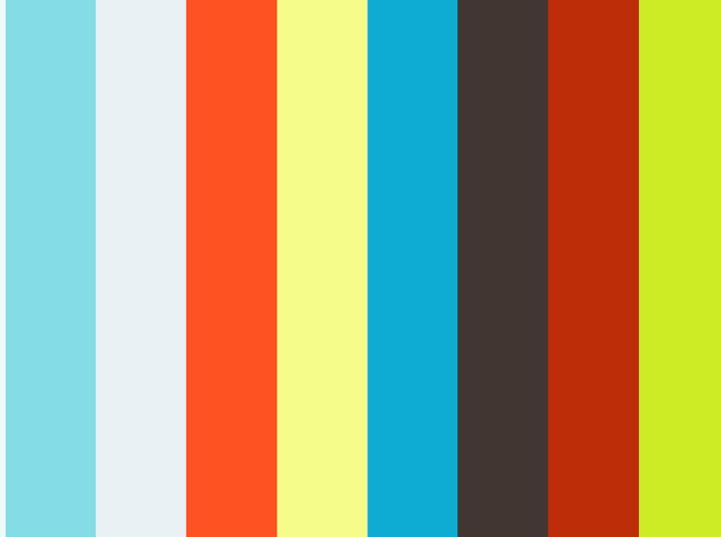
Please visit [covid19inquiry.nz](https://covid19inquiry.nz) to make your submission. The submissions portal will close at midnight on 27 April 2025.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant effects for all New Zealanders, and hearing from the public is an important part of our work. From my fellow Commissioners and I, thank you for taking the time to engage with the Inquiry and contribute to Aotearoa New Zealand's pandemic preparedness.

As well as launching public submissions, we have begun collecting evidence from key Government agencies and other sources. We are also focused on planning the work of the Inquiry for the rest of the year, and we look forward to updating you all on those in future issues of this pānui.

You can also learn more about our purpose and objectives, as well as more about my background and the background of my fellow Commissioners, in the videos below. Further information is also available on our [website](#).





Lastly, thank you for your continued interest in the work of the Inquiry as we progress this second phase. We look forward to keeping you up to date on our progress throughout the coming months.

Ngā mihi nui,

**Grant Illingworth KC**  
Chair – Phase Two



## PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS PORTAL



**The Inquiry has launched an online portal to collect public submissions at [www.covid19inquiry.nz](http://www.covid19inquiry.nz).**

If you wish to make a submission to the Inquiry, please visit this portal before **27 April 2025**. We need to receive all submissions by this date to

make sure we have time to consider them properly.

If you have already emailed the Inquiry with your submission, you do not need to do anything further – your submission will be considered by the Inquiry.

If you want to make a submission from now on, please use the submissions portal to do so.

## Background information

Phase Two has been directed to review key decisions in certain areas made by the New Zealand Government between February 2021 and October 2022. A **key decision** is a decision made by the Government that has a significant impact on a large number of people or that has a significant cost at a regional or national level (or both).

The Inquiry has been asked to review key decisions regarding:

- **Vaccines**, specifically mandates, approvals, and vaccine safety.
- **Lockdowns**, specifically the lockdowns of late 2021/early 2022.
- **Testing, tracing, and other public health tools**, like RAT tests.

By reviewing these decisions, the Inquiry will be able to provide recommendations to the Government on how Aotearoa New Zealand could better prepare for and manage any future pandemics.

We want to hear from you about how key decisions (like the use of longer lockdowns, or making RAT tests free, for example) in the areas listed above affected or changed your life, or the lives of your whānau or friends.

You could tell us how these decisions by the Government had an effect on your work or

business, your relationships, important life events, your health, or your education, for example.

Please tell us about your experiences in these areas during 2021 and 2022.

## How to make a submission

You can make a submission at [covid19inquiry.nz](https://covid19inquiry.nz).

Making a submission is easy. You'll be asked to read some information about the topics Phase Two is looking into, and then to share any experiences you have relating to those topics. You can either write your submission using our online form, or you can write it in a Word document or PDF and attach it to the online submission form.

After you have shared your experiences, we would appreciate you sharing some information about yourself. Providing this information is optional, but we really encourage you to fill it in. This information helps our Inquiry better understand your perspective and make sure we hear from a range of people. It also means we can contact you about your submission if we need to.

As well as English, submission forms and information about the process will be available in te reo Māori, Samoan, Tongan, Hindi, Simplified Chinese, NZSL, Easy Read, Braille, Audio, and Large Print. If you would like to know when these formats are available, please enter your email address into the [form here](#).

If you have any questions about making a submission, please visit our [website](#) or email us at [InquiryintoCOVID-19lessons@dia.govt.nz](mailto:InquiryintoCOVID-19lessons@dia.govt.nz).

## INFORMATION REQUESTS – GOVERNMENT AGENCIES



**A key focus for the Inquiry is the gathering of evidence. As part of this work, the Inquiry has sent requests for information to a range of Government agencies and other sources during January.**

These requests have been issued under Section 20(a) of the Inquiries Act 2013, which allows the Inquiry to require any person to:

1. produce any documents or things in that person's possession or control or copies of those documents or things:
2. allow copies or representations of those documents or things to be made:
3. provide information to the inquiry, in a form approved by the inquiry:
4. verify by statutory declaration any written information, copies of documents, or representations of things provided to the inquiry

The Inquiry has provided agencies with a list of the key decisions relevant to the Inquiry's scope, as well as a list of information the Inquiry wants to receive on each decision.

If your agency has not received an information request from the Inquiry, we may be in touch at a later date to seek information from you. If you have any questions, please contact the Inquiry team on [InquiryintoCOVID-19lessons@dia.govt.nz](mailto:InquiryintoCOVID-19lessons@dia.govt.nz).



## KEEP UP WITH THE WORK OF THE INQUIRY

As well as this pānui, you can also receive updates about the Inquiry on:

- [Facebook](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [YouTube](#)

You can also find updates about the Inquiry on our [website](#).

OUR PURPOSE IS TO  
**LEARN FROM AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND'S EXPERIENCE  
OF THE PANDEMIC**  
TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE



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