

COVID-19 Morning Briefing

Thursday, 25th June 2020

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CURRENT STATUS

In response to the Coronavirus public health emergency that continues to spread across the globe, Isentia has compiled a comprehensive briefing of the key media coverage to hopefully assist you in navigating the event.

Australia

The Australian Department of Health's latest update is June 24th and is reporting that 7,521 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Australia. 2,180,424 tests have been conducted across Australia.

Updates from the Australian Department of Health can be found here:

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

New Zealand

The New Zealand Ministry of Health's latest update is June 24th and is reporting that there are 11 active cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand and they are at Alert level 1. New Zealand has had 1,516 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19.

Updates from the New Zealand Ministry of Health can be found here:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

Across the world

Across the world there have been more than 9 million confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Get the key highlights from [COVID-19 press conferences](#)

IN AUSTRALIA

LOCATION	CONFIRMED CASES
Australian Capital Territory	108
New South Wales	3,159
Northern Territory	29
Queensland	1,066
South Australia	440
Tasmania	228
Victoria	1,884
Western Australia	607
TOTAL	7,521

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KEY COVERAGE

Military deployed to Melbourne's quarantine hotels

The Age, Other, 25/06/2020, Dana McCauley, Rob Harris and Sumeyya Ilanbey

Up to 1000 Australian Defence Force personnel will be sent to Melbourne including to quarantine hotels around the city in an attempt to stem a growing COVID-19 outbreak, after the Victorian government requested military support from Canberra. Defence officials were finalising plans with the state's health authorities late on Wednesday to determine how the ADF teams would be deployed in order to slow the rapidly spreading virus.

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Coronavirus Australia: Victoria calls in military as virus cases surge

Herald Sun, Other, 24/06/2020, Samantha Maiden

The Australian Defence Force will deploy 300 soldiers to patrol COVID-19 hotel quarantine sites and assist in hotspot suburbs amid rising concern over a spike in virus cases. Victorian Premier Dan Andrews requested the assistance, confirming it was finalised in consultation with the states Wednesday morning.

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Coles and Woolworths reintroduce strict buying limits as Victorians panic buy

Herald Sun, Other, 24/06/2020, Rebekah Scanlan

Victorian supermarkets have been forced to reinstate product limits in response to a recent surge in demand. Woolworths have enforced purchase limits of two items on toilet paper, hand sanitiser, paper towel, flour, sugar, pasta, mince, UHT milk, eggs and rice across its stores in the state this afternoon.

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ABC, 7:30, 24/06/2020, Leigh Sales

Interview with Sanjaya Senanayake, infectious diseases expert, ANU. Sales says Vic has called in the military to help contain the spike in the number of coronavirus cases.

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Channel 9, A Current Affair, 24/06/2020, Karl Stefanovic

Pre-recorded interview with Greg Hunt, Health Minister. Stefanovic says Vic is in the grip of a frightening new Coronavirus crisis, which could affect everyone.

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GOVERNMENT

COVID-19 transmission Warnings directed at ethnic minorities

The Australian, Other, 25/06/2020, Yoni Bashan

NSW Health officials are now pre-emptively targeting Sydney's ethnic communities in a bid to prevent COVID-19 complacency, as concerns increase about a second wave of infections occurring in Victoria and the potential for one to flare up among NSW multicultural groups. Meetings will be held with community leaders, and social media campaigns will warn of the potential for the virus to spread, even though infection rates seem low.

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Coronavirus Australia: QLD Premier calls for "spirit of federalism" to help VIC

The Australian, Other, 24/06/2020, Sarah Elks

Annastacia Palaszczuk says the rest of Australia needs to help Victoria get its coronavirus outbreak under control "in the spirit of federalism". Queensland's Premier flagged a "serious discussion" at national cabinet on Friday about the Victorian situation but left the door open for her state's border to reopen to all states on July 10.

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Scott Morrison pledges \$250m to revive arts sector

The Australian, Other, 24/06/2020, Geoff Chambers

Scott Morrison will use a \$250m arts package to revive Australia's entertainment scene and work with national cabinet leaders to further ease COVID-19 restrictions and unlock music festivals, theatres, and live venues. Some of the country's largest cultural institutions that are facing threats to their viability because of the coronavirus lockdown will be handed \$35m in direct financial support under the plan

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PM Scott Morrison rejects plea from Australian music icons to extend JobKeeper for musicians and actors

Herald Sun, Other, 24/06/2020, Samantha Maiden

Scott Morrison has rejected the plea of Tina Arena and Jimmy Barnes to extend JobKeeper for musicians and actors beyond September instead opting for a \$250 million COVID-19 lifeline for the arts sector. The arts funding package, to be known as 'JobMaker', sends a strong signal that the Prime Minister wants to end the \$1500 a fortnight JobKeeper wage subsidy and move to assistance packages for specific industries.

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Australian food products now require proof of virus-free status before entering China

ABC Online, Other, 24/06/2020, Eden Hynninen

Australian producers sending food and edible agricultural products to China will now be required to sign a declaration to prove the items are free from COVID-19, following an outbreak at a Beijing market. Since the cluster of COVID-19 infections nearly two weeks ago at the Xinfadi wholesale market, the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) is now asking for a Letter of Guarantee that imported foods and products comply with China's food laws and regulations from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

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ABC News, Afternoon Briefing, 24/06/2020, Patricia Karvelas

Interview with Michael Sukkar, Assistant Treasurer. Karvelas states the Vic Government has asked for help from the Defence Force as it struggles to cope with increased demand for COVID-19 testing.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 24/06/2020, Michael Rowland and Lisa Millar

Interview with Gladys Berejiklian, NSW Premier. Rowland says Berejiklian has a very strong word to her constituents about dealing with people from Melbourne.

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CORPORATE

This issue could define post-pandemic leadership

Australian Financial Review, Other, 24/06/2020, Natasha Boddy

Workplace experts say employee wellbeing and mental health will be one of the biggest issues facing leaders in the post-pandemic world, and employers who haven't responded well during the COVID-19 crisis are in for a bumpy ride. A survey of more than 34,000 workers in Australia and New Zealand found workers have become increasingly concerned about job security, mental health and wellbeing during COVID-19.

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Business urges further help

The Australian, Other, 24/06/2020, Patrick Commins

Almost one in ten businesses say they only have enough cash to last another month, amid calls from business groups for more targeted support beyond the scheduled September cut-off of the JobKeeper payment. An Australian Bureau of Statistics survey on the impact of COVID-19 on businesses revealed that just shy of 30 per cent of firms estimated that their cash reserves would support fewer than three months of operation under current circumstances.

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Woolies reinstates restrictions in Victoria as coronavirus cases prompt panic buying

The Australian, Other, 24/06/2020, Eli Greenblat

Woolworths, the nation's biggest supermarket chain, is reintroducing purchase limits in Victoria after a spike in coronavirus cases in the state prompted panic buying again in some Melbourne suburbs. A source told The Australian that the decision by Woolworths to reinstate buying limits on key grocery staples was made early Wednesday morning following scenes of panic buying in parts of Melbourne.

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US painkiller to be sold in Australian pharmacies to shore up supply

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 25/06/2020, Emma Koehn

Global pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson has been given approval to sell its US painkiller brand Tylenol in Australian pharmacies after a surge in demand for paracetamol during the coronavirus caused supply concerns. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) recently gave the local arm of Johnson & Johnson the approval to bring in a range of Tylenol 500mg tablet packets and infant liquid formulas until April 2021.

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Companies should have to reapply for JobKeeper, Business Council says

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 24/06/2020, Jennifer Duke

Business Council of Australia president Tim Reed is encouraging the government to extend the \$70 billion JobKeeper program beyond September for hard-hit industries while winding back the flat rate wage subsidy for those getting more in their pay packet than before the pandemic began.

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Victorian Woolies brings back purchase limit on items as panic buying hits again

Herald Sun, Other, 24/06/2020, Karen Collier

Renewed panic buying in parts of Melbourne have forced the reinstatement of purchase limits on some essentials at Woolworths and Coles supermarkets across Victoria. Woolies has brought back a purchase limit of two items on toilet paper, hand sanitiser, paper towel, flour, sugar, pasta, mince, UHT milk, eggs and rice in stores statewide.

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ECONOMIC IMPACT

More people believe the pandemic's economic damage will last longer

Australian Financial Review, Other, 25/06/2020, Andrew Tillett

Victoria's spike in coronavirus cases could see Australians retreat into their homes despite recent indications more were reverting to everyday activities without worrying about catching the disease, a researcher says. The Melbourne Institute's latest weekly Taking the Pulse of the Nation survey tracking Australians' attitudes during the pandemic found the proportion of people limiting their activities outside the house, such as going shopping or to a restaurant, or taking public transport, has fallen to 47 per cent.

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Australia stars as IMF paints bleak pandemic picture

Australian Financial Review, Other, 24/06/2020, John Kehoe

The global pandemic recession is far deeper than feared but Australia is a standout performer as the only advanced economy to have its economic outlook upgraded by the International Monetary Fund. The IMF forecasts the local economy to contract a still hefty 4.5 per cent this year, less severe than the massive 6.7 per cent fall it tipped in April.

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Growth hit from coronavirus softer than feared: IMF

The Australian, Other, 24/06/2020, Patrick Commins

The Australian economy is forecast to be one of the world's best performers through the coronavirus recession, despite fresh warnings of an even more dire global downturn than previously expected. The International Monetary Fund in its latest world outlook has revealed the pandemic will lead to a deeper-than-expected 4.9 per cent plunge in global economic activity in 2020 — 1.9 percentage points worse than previously forecast.

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ABC, 7:30, 24/06/2020, Leigh Sales

Australian households were already burdened with debt when the coronavirus pandemic hit. Pansy Leung and her husband Adrian Eastman have been flying for the last 16 years for both Qantas and Virgin Australia International.

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COMMUNITY

Travellers rattled by warnings but still heading to, and from, Victoria

The Age, Other, 24/06/2020, Carolyn Webb

A warning from the NSW Premier managed to spook, but not deter, a hardy army of interstate travellers at Melbourne Airport on Wednesday, who rejected her advice to reconsider travelling to Victoria. The travellers reasoned that politicians hadn't closed the Victorian-NSW border - at least yet - and they didn't feel that travel was unsafe enough to warrant it.

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Tourism operators in southern NSW hit by cancelled bookings after Melbourne coronavirus outbreak

ABC Online, Other, 25/06/2020, Adriane Reardon

Accommodation providers on the NSW South Coast are reeling from a spate of cancelled bookings sparked after Premier Gladys Berejiklian's edict that tourists from Melbourne stay out of her state. Tourist businesses in towns like Eden and Merimbula, which are about an hour's drive from the Victorian border, are scrambling to reassure confused guests and concerned locals they can handle an influx of interstate holidaymakers.

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As Australians stocked up for COVID-19, the price of some fridges and freezers soared

ABC Online, Other, 24/06/2020, Liz Hobday

Consumer advocacy group Choice has found the price of some whitegoods, such as freezers and fridges, soared as Australians stocked up on food at the height of the coronavirus pandemic. According to the research, the price of a Westinghouse chest freezer at Billy Guyatts went up by 63 per cent — from \$916 in October 2019 to \$1,490 March 2020.

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JobSeeker welfare recipients fear end of life-changing Coronavirus Supplement

ABC Online, Other, 24/06/2020, Norman Hermant

Over the past few months life has changed profoundly for single mother Mandy Weber and her teenage daughters, Olivia and Mariah. They can eat three meals a day. That's something they couldn't afford to do before the Coronavirus Supplement added \$550 a fortnight to Ms Weber's welfare payments.

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AGENCIES & SERVICE PROVIDERS

'Huge exercise': Doorknockers hit streets to spread the word about virus

The Age, Other, 24/06/2020, Michael Fowler and Melissa Cunningham

Victoria's public health doorknockers arrived on the streets of Melbourne's COVID-19 hotspots on Wednesday, attempting to overcome barriers in communication with some communities. Carrying basic illustrated guides on managing COVID-19, the pairs of doorknockers were also equipped with QR codes that, when scanned, bring up public health information translated into more than 50 languages - a nod to the Victorian health department's shift to focusing on multicultural and linguistically diverse communities.

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Channel 9, Nine Afternoon News, 24/06/2020, Dougal Beatty

Interview with Julian Rait, President, AMA Victoria. Beatty says a man in his 80s is the latest to die from coronavirus as Victoria recorded 20 new cases overnight.

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Channel 10, The Project, 24/06/2020, Peter Helliar, Carrie Bickmore and Waleed Aly

Interview with ANU Infectious Diseases Physician Professor Peter Collignon. In Victoria, an ongoing spike in new COVID-19 cases has sadly delivered Australia's first coronavirus death in a month with a man in his 80s.

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Radio National, RN Drive, 24/06/2020, Patricia Karvelas

Interview with Dr Tony Bartone, Australian Medical Association. Karvelas notes Victoria's COVID-19 crisis has deepened, with another day of double-digit cases and the death of an elderly man.

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COMMENTARY

AAA rating is no cause for complacency

Australian Financial Review, Other, 25/06/2020

That Moody's ranks Australia among just 10 countries that deserve to keep their AAA sovereign credit ratings amid the sharpest pandemic-induced downturn since the Great Depression is a vote of confidence in the successful handling of the coronavirus crisis. Because of Labor's oversized fiscal stimulus during the global financial crisis and its baked-in big government spending programs, it took nearly a decade to crawl the federal budget back towards the small surplus originally forecast for 2020.

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Victoria pays the price for 'double standard'

Australian Financial Review, Other, 24/06/2020, Jennifer Hewett

It didn't take much for the fear, even hysteria, to return. Long waiting lines at testing clinics in the hotspots of Melbourne; "stay away" warnings to Victorians from NSW, the only other state with open borders; even a modest run on toilet paper and other basics in suburban shopping centres.

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INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE

Coronavirus: Duke of Cambridge visits Oxford vaccine group

bbc.com, General News, 25/06/2020

The Duke of Cambridge met volunteers who are taking part in Oxford University's trial to find a coronavirus vaccine. William visited the Oxford Vaccine Group's unit at the city's Churchill Hospital on Wednesday.

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N.Y. will impose quarantine on visitors from states with big outbreaks

nytimes.com, General News, 25/06/2020, J. David Goodman

A few months ago, New York was suffering through the worst ravages of the coronavirus pandemic. Hospitals filled to near capacity. Hundreds of people died each day, reaching a peak in mid-April.

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Lessons to be learned from Hong Kong's bailout of firms at a time of crisis

scmp.com, General News, 25/06/2020

Some handouts of millions to employers to help save jobs in Hong Kong have raised eyebrows. Critics query whether all recipients of large amounts should be getting public funds. That misses one important point of the government's coronavirus relief package.

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Why S'pore has relatively low Covid-19 death rate

straitstimes.com, General News, 25/06/2020, Salma Khalik

Patients with Covid-19 are faring far better in Singapore than in most places in the world, with 26 deaths out of more than 42,000 infected. Experts say this is because the vast majority of those infected are young and healthy workers and because the healthcare system here has never been overwhelmed, so patients are all able to receive the best care possible.

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