



PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
JOINT AGENCY TASK FORCE  
NATIONAL OPERATIONS CENTRE 19  
(JATFNOC19)



## MEDIA RELEASE 29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2020

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Avinun Tru, Bona Ravian,

Today is Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March, and it I'm privileged on behalf of the Government to bring you this afternoons update.

We have now screened 29,195 passengers.

Our Persons of Interest stand at 6,365 and our team have worked tirelessly to follow up and discharge 3757 people, with 2595 people under surveillance.

From our index patient – our Rapid Response team have successfully screened and cleared 55 per cent of all persons of interest.

As of this afternoon, our hotline has received 1,345 calls, 80 calls have been referred for verification and 46 have been fully verified. Currently our team are monitoring 17 people from home.

Yesterday I spoke about the 9 samples that were pending results at the Institute of Medical Research. I am happy to report that all 9 samples have returned negative. So far we have conducted 85 tests in total.

We have received Provincial Plans from all our health authorities and are in the process of reviewing. Starting tomorrow we will commence disbursement of funds and will prioritize the training of our health workers, and the setting up isolation and quarantine areas.



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I'm happy to report that all provinces have set up pre-triaging centers and we will develop our provincial hospitals in phases and in accordance with their plans.

I am very pleased with the work of our PHA's, our technical staff and the Senior Executive Management team at the National Department of Health.

The safety of our health workers is paramount, and recently I addressed our Nurses in Port Moresby who were anxious about their safety. We are working through their list of concerns through the Port Moresby General Hospital Management.

In regard to PPE I'd like to report by Region on our distribution so far:

**1. HIGHLANDS REGION**

Hela, SHP, EHP, WHP, JIWAKA, and CHIMBU have all received their first batch of PPE. Our team from ENGA will be driving to Mt Hagen to pick up tomorrow.

**2. NGI REGION**

Have all received their PPE except for AROB.

**3. SOUTHERN REGION**

All PHA's have received their PPE except for Oro and Western Province

**4. MOMASE REGION**

All provinces have received their first allocation of PPE



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I have asked our Communications team to print 500,000 more awareness posters and to ensure they are visible throughout the country. Our Controller has given me access to his PPC's to assist us with dissemination.

Lastly, let me convey my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who is working today. I ask for understanding from their families – your mums and dads, sisters and brothers are doing a wonderful job and keeping our country safe.

Thank you as well to the media here – who are the key to keeping our people, connected. Your role is vital.

The Government has been overwhelmed by the support we have received from our Foreign Counterparts, Aid Partners, corporate entities and Government Agencies who have contributed in one way or another towards our COVID-19 operations.

I leave you today like I do everyday with our key 5 messages.

1. Wash your hands often
2. Cough into your elbow
3. Don't touch your face
4. Keep a safe distance from others
5. Simply stay at home.

Remember the virus doesn't move, unless people move it. When we stop moving, the virus stops moving.

**Hon. Jelta Wong, MP**  
Minister for Health and HIV AIDS

