



Preparing for the Australian COVID-19 vaccination rollout

Stakeholder Update 13 – Working with communities during the COVID-19 pandemic

22 February 2021

Context

The minerals industry is focused on supporting the Australian Government's COVID-19 vaccination rollout strategy. Through the MCA, the industry developed a national resources sector position statement on COVID-19 vaccinations to detail its approach and key considerations.

The National Resources Sector Position Statement on COVID-19 vaccinations

The MCA led a national process to establish a common resources industry position regarding COVID-19 vaccinations, incorporating the oil and gas sector. The process involved:

- Identifying and understanding health, safety, community and operational risks in collaboration with member companies and state chambers, informed by member company engagement with communities, including local Traditional Owner organisations, mayors, local health organisations and other groups
- Reviewing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Populations Management Plan, learning from Aboriginal health experts and seeking advice and comment on a draft position from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19
- Engaging with mining unions
- Reviewing the Safe Work Australia and other guidelines relating to COVID-19 vaccination.

The position statement makes clear that vaccinations complement stringent health, hygiene and other COVID-19 safe measures. It should be read in conjunction with the National Resources Sector COVID-19 Protocols and supporting guidance and resources.

The position has four guiding statements:

- The resources sector will actively support implementation of the government's vaccine rollout strategy
- Governments should develop a nationally-agreed process for providing confirmation of vaccination
- The sector will continue to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health plans
- Protecting priority communities requires the prioritisation of some resources workers for vaccinations.

The full position statement is available on the MCA's COVID-19 [webpage](#).



How industry will work to support local health plans

The position statement states how industry can support the national rollout strategy and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health plans, including through:

- Maintaining active engagement with local Indigenous health organisations, land councils and Traditional Owner groups to understand priorities, concerns and opportunities to assist
- Promoting tailored information prepared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations, media and groups among its workforce
 - This includes sharing the *Community engagement kit on COVID-19 vaccinations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples* and other national and local resources
- Offering logistical and transportation assistance for equipment, goods and services
- Providing access to qualified medical, health and safety professionals to support the vaccination as required. State mining chambers are engaging with state governments regarding local rollouts as appropriate.

In many cases, this approach should build on ongoing connections.

Highlighting community partnerships and contributions

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown why strong connections between mining companies and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and community organisations are important. Some companies have strengthened existing relationships while others are engaging for the first time.

For example, Newmont Australia recently visited one of South West Aboriginal Medical Services (SWAMS) clinics in Bunbury to learn more about its work. Newmont also donated 300 flu vaccinations to SWAMS.

Next steps

The MCA will ensure its COVID-19 and communities guidance includes case studies, link to new resources and reflect changing circumstances.