

Covid-19 Vaccine Strategy
Science and Technical Advisory Group

Minutes – Wednesday 2 December 2020 (Confidential)

Date & time	3:15 to 3:55pm, Wednesday 2 December	
Attendees	Ian Town (Chair) David Murdoch (Deputy Chair) Sue Crengle Graeme Jarvis Peter McIntyre Nikki Moreland Helen Petousis-Harris John Taylor Nikki Turner James Ussher	Justine Daw (MBIE) Jonathan Lane (MBIE) Emily Robinson (MBIE) Chriselle Braganza (MBIE)
Apologies	Matire Harwood, Ian Frazer	

Item for discussion	Led by
Administration	
1. Apologies Matire Harwood, Ian Frazer	Ian Town
2. STAG Conflicts of Interest The current COI register was noted, with no new conflicts declared.	Ian Town
3. Review of minutes from last STAG meeting The minutes from the STAG meeting on 18 November 2020 were approved.	Ian Town
4. Matters arising Justine Daw provided updates on matters arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current suite of A3 Science Overviews have been circulated and will be updated as new information becomes available. An electronic repository (Box for Enterprise) has been established for these documents. Please direct any questions to Chriselle or Emily respectively. MFAT will update the STAG on COVAX as further details become available. New Zealand has retained the option to purchase three candidates, two of which have already been assessed as part of the bilateral APA negotiations. The STAG/Science Review Panel will be given as much notice as possible if advice is required on the third candidate. 	Justine Daw

<p>5. Review of work programme</p> <p>Justine Daw noted that the Science and Clinical Review Panel documentation to support the current bilateral APA negotiations is largely complete (pending any further clinical trial data being released).</p> <p>The Taskforce’s intent is to have APAs (either full or in principal agreements) with four candidates before Christmas to provide the coverage that NZ needs, with a diverse portfolio both in terms of candidate platforms and availability.</p> <p>The STAG stressed the need for the Taskforce to communicate the dates of announcements in advance, to enable them to respond to public/media queries.</p> <p>Action: The Taskforce will update the STAG as soon as possible with regard to timings for vaccine announcements.</p>	<p>Justine Daw</p>
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Updates	
<p>6. Update on the Immunisation Strategy and implementation</p> <p>Ian Town provided an update on the development of a high-level framework for the Immunisation Programme, the next major phase of work. The goal of the Framework is to identify the clear pillars of activity that cover the breadth of what needs to be delivered, and organise our work accordingly.</p> <p>Key points were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven pillars of work have been identified, each of which has a series of activities, lead and supporting agencies, and stakeholders. Effective communications and engagement across the pillars will be essential for the programme’s success. • The Distribution and Inventory Management pillar is well underway, with the goal of having everything needed for the full programme in New Zealand by February 2020. Discussions around deployment are ongoing, including the identification and retraining of staff to increase our workforce. • Detailed delivery planning is underway, including ensuring that an interim solution is in place should delivery of vaccines be required earlier in Q1. <p>Discussion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and engagement will be critical for transparency and to build public confidence, recognising that we will not have answers to many of the questions that will be asked to the degree of certainty we would like. • The social research into vaccine acceptance commissioned by the Taskforce will be updated regularly to gauge public feeling. The Communications and Engagement pillar is largely reactive at the moment as new clinical trial data is published, but recognises the need for targeted, as well as broad, surveys. • Suppliers need to be included in the Post-Event pillar to ensure they are able to meet their regulatory obligations. Companies could also be a useful two-way channel for communication/messaging, particularly on issues such as the use of GM in vaccines. <p>Action: MOH to update the STAG on the development of the Immunisation Programme, including an A3 document setting out the deliverables.</p>	<p>Ian Town</p>

Discussion	
<p>7. Workshop - Surveillance, post-marketing and associated needs</p> <p>Prof David Murdoch provided an overview of the 2 December 2020 workshop on <i>Surveillance, post-marketing and associated needs for NZ and Polynesia</i>. The workshop reached a relatively high degree of consensus on priorities for activity and associated investment.</p> <p>A summary paper outlining the discussion and proposed next steps for the programme design will be presented for consideration by the Taskforce at the next meeting (9 December). Two priority areas were proposed (Safety, and a National Cohort Phase IV trial) with further design work needed.</p> <p>Key recommendations from the workshop were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prioritisation of a nationally consistent approach to preparation for immunisation roll-out and post-marketing monitoring and associated trials. • Building on existing tools and approaches, but recognising that the roll-out would require upgrades to key systems. • Commencing trial and associated research activity now so that effective, meaningful and well-designed surveillance can start immediately on vaccine arrival in NZ. This was deemed critical, including in respect of populations not well covered in offshore trials (e.g. Māori and Pacific peoples) <p>Multiple agencies and actors across New Zealand will be needed to collaborate to deliver assurance and support public confidence in vaccine performance.</p> <p>Action: MBIE and MOH to coordinate the drafting of a summary paper for consideration at the next Taskforce meeting on 2 December.</p>	David Murdoch
<p>8. Next Steps for the STAG</p> <p>Ian Town and Justine Daw noted that planning for the transition of governance (including the Taskforce Chair) from MBIE to MOH is underway.</p> <p>With bilateral purchasing agreements nearing completion, Christmas and New Year provides a natural pause. The advice of the STAG members will continue to be sought as new details about vaccines in the portfolio emerge, COVAX Facility candidates are presented, and immunisation planning develops.</p> <p>Rather than fortnightly scheduled meetings, the STAG (and Science and Clinical Review Panel) will reconvene in 2020 at the Taskforce's discretion.</p>	Justine Daw / Ian Town
<p>9. Other matters</p> <p>No other matters were raised.</p>	Justine Daw
<p>10. Meeting close</p> <p>Following the closure of the formal part of the STAG meeting, Dr Peter Crabtree (Taskforce Chair) joined the group and thanked the members for their immense contribution to the Vaccine Strategy over many months.</p>	Ian Town