

Media Release

The Hon Danny Pearson MP

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HIGH-RISK INDUSTRIES TARGETED IN EASTER COVIDSAFE BLITZ

High-risk businesses and industries across Victoria will be targeted for COVIDSafe checks over the next three weeks in a blitz designed to keep workers and the community safe during Easter and school holidays.

The Andrews Labor Government's High-Risk Industry Engagement and Enforcement Operation will be visiting an additional 500 businesses each week – taking the total number of sites checked during the blitz to 3,900.

The operation is beginning with seafood, meat and poultry businesses this week in the lead up to Easter, as well as supermarkets who also see increased activity before a long weekend.

This will include a focused strategy for the Queen Victoria Market to coincide with expected large crowd numbers before Good Friday – with follow-up visits with businesses previously identified as non-compliant.

Authorised Officers will check that the business has an up-to-date COVIDSafe Plan and that their QR Code system is operating and being used properly by staff and customers.

If issues are identified during the inspection the Authorised Officers will work with the business to fix the problem and make sure they know their obligations under the Chief Health Officer's Directions.

A range of retail, hospitality and licensed venues will also be a focus of the three-week strategy. Other businesses and industries the Operation will be working with include hospitality, warehousing and distribution centres and commercial cleaning services.

With Victorians encouraged to holiday locally, Airbnb has reported a surge in bookings between 2 and 9 April. This data will be used to target locations with high numbers of visitors, so that cafes, restaurants and other local businesses can also receive COVIDSafe checks during the three-week blitz.

The Operation will focus this week on Bass Coast, Mornington Peninsula, East Gippsland and Yarra Ranges – before moving on to the Surf Coast, Geelong, Glenelg, Bellarine Peninsula, Colac-Otway, Warrnambool, Ballarat, Alpine, Hepburn and Grampians regions.

To date there have been more than 15,500 coronavirus-related physical visits carried out across regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne, along with nearly 7,000 virtual enquiries. This has resulted in a total of 825 coronavirus related compliance notices being issued.

Quotes attributable to acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services Danny Pearson

“Every Victorian should be proud of just how far we’ve come with tackling this pandemic –this blitz is about making sure we can keep the community safe while focusing on social and economic recovery.”

“We know most businesses are doing the right thing, but we’ll be out in force over the next few weeks to make sure COVIDSafe plans are in place and being adhered to – supporting high-risk industries and workplaces stay safe, stay open.”