

26 June 2021 | [Operations](#) ^[1]

Virgin Australia confirms positive case of COVID-19 ^[2]



BRISBANE, 26 June 2021: Virgin Australia can confirm that a Sydney-based cabin crew member has tested positive to COVID-19 after undertaking a rapid result test this evening. State and Federal health authorities have been notified.

The crew member is now in isolation, and Virgin Australia is rapidly contacting all team members who are close contacts. Virgin Australia is requiring those crew members to cease flying, get tested and isolate.

All passengers on flights the crew member operated will be contacted by health authorities and advised on the correct protocol. The aircraft this crew member has flown on are being deep cleaned overnight, as are any Virgin Australia spaces the crew member visited. Virgin Australia is working with the relevant airports to ensure all public spaces are also being deep cleaned.

The affected crew member is a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case from a known cluster in Sydney. Virgin Australia understands the crew member was not aware they were a close contact of a positive case until after they completed their last flight today.

NSW Health advises that five flights, as outlined below, on which the crew member flew from 24 June 2021 are of concern. The crew member may have been infectious during that time.

The crew member also had an overnight layover in Melbourne on 25 June 2021, staying at the Holiday Inn Express Southbank. While in Melbourne, the crew member remained in hotel isolation under prescribed COVID protocols for overnighting crew members from New South Wales.

Affected flights are:25 June 2021

VA939 Sydney-Brisbane

VA334 Brisbane-Melbourne

26 June 2021

VA827 Melbourne-Sydney

VA517 Sydney-Gold Coast

VA524 Gold Coast-Sydney

Any close contact team members will be removed from their rostered duties and will be required to isolate for a minimum of 14 days and test in accordance with appropriate State health protocols. In addition, Virgin Australia has asked that household members of close contact team members be tested and isolate for a minimum 14 days in line with state health guidelines.

QR Codes for all relevant locations will be made available to health authorities for the purpose of contact tracing.

Given the border restrictions in place with respect to NSW, all of these flights, with the exception of VA334, were carrying limited numbers of passengers for the purpose of essential travel only. Passenger flight manifests have been provided to all of the relevant health authorities.

This crew member always wore a face mask while onboard and when interacting with the public and adhered to infection control and COVID safe protocols implemented by Virgin Australia throughout the course of duty. The crew member has also complied with the requirements implemented by state health authorities. Virgin Australia is in close contact with the crew member and is providing ongoing support.

Virgin Australia is doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our people and our passengers. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Virgin Australia has introduced strict COVID-safe plans and protocols on and off its aircraft to minimise the risk of transmission to passengers and crew. These plans and protocols are revised regularly and consider the latest public health directions and advice from states and territories. The latest COVID-19 case locations, including flight alerts can be found on the relevant state or territory health websites.

Virgin Australia wishes to advise that all services this weekend are continuing to operate as normal.

Additional information:

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Virgin Australia has introduced strict COVID-safe plans and protocols on and off its aircraft to minimise risk of transmission to passengers and crew. These plans and protocols are revised regularly and consider the latest public health directions issued by states and territories.

These include:

- Following the Domestic Passenger Journey Protocol which mandates the use of face masks in airports and on domestic commercial flights;
- Increasing and maintaining the high cleaning standards of cleaning high touch and high traffic areas on the ground and in our aircraft using a special long-lasting antibacterial and antimicrobial cleaning agent, including wiping down and sanitising seatbacks and headrests between flights;
- All aircraft undergoing a rigorous and thorough nightly cleaning procedure, which includes the disinfecting of seats, tray tables, armrests, window and shades, seatback entertainment screens, lavatories, galleys, doors and interior walls.
- Encouraging the use of online check-in wherever possible, using the Virgin Australia app, or via the Virgin Australia website;
- Implementing a pre-departure COVID-19 health acknowledgement as part of the check-in process, which all guests are required to complete in full;
- Collection of contact details at the time of booking, or prior to commencement of travel, to provide to Health authorities if necessary;
- Asking guests boarding flights to maintain social distance and scan their own boarding passes to reduce unnecessary contact;

- Provision of hand sanitiser before, during and after flights; and
- No longer accepting cash as a form of payment at the airport.

Crew are also specifically required to:

- Maintain high hygiene standards in the cabin, including practicing proper hand-sanitising procedures;
- Only use Virgin Australia assigned crew transport; and
- Undertake in-room self-quarantine when overnighing in red zones.

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