

Ventilation assessments

March 2021

Background

- All hotels used in the COVID-19 Accommodation program were assessed for their suitability before they were included in the program.
- While there are no national or state standards for ventilation, ventilation assessments have already been carried out on health and complex care hotels as a precaution, noting their distinct risk profile. For quarantine hotels, CQV received advice on the ventilation systems from hotel engineers.
- In light of the changing nature of the virus and the emerging risks from variants of concern, we announced in February that all quarantine hotels would undergo an independent ventilation assessment.
- These assessments are being conducted room-by-room. They're being carried out by an occupational hygienist physician, who is an expert in heating ventilation, air conditioning and indoor air quality, supported by a team of engineers and other specialists.

Initial advice and works

- The assessments are underway at all quarantine hotels, as well as hotels being considered for future use in the program.
- A number of properties have been identified for minor remediation works (for the purposes of being used as a quarantine site). Recommended works include rebalancing ventilation systems and replacing building and or toilet exhaust fans.
- The individual assessments will not be considered complete until the remediation works have been completed and validated by the assessor.

CQV actions

- The minor remediation works have been completed or are underway at a number of sites, while other sites are under consideration due to the scale and cost of works identified (for the purposes of being used as a quarantine site).
- CQV expects the majority of assessments and minor works to be completed and hotels validated by mid-April, which is dependent on the availability of parts (including custom made exhaust fans) and contractors.
- Hotels will become operational only once they have been assessed as suitable by the assessor and meet the acceptance criteria.
- The program and the number of hotels being used will progressively scale up when repatriation flights to resume. International flights will resume on Thursday 8 April.
- CQV has established a ventilation working group to review the reports and cross check that the works have been completed. The group includes representatives from CQV and DH, and reports to the IPC Steering Committee.

Overview of ventilation assessment and remediation works

The following table outlines the number of hotels that have been assessed by CQV's independent ventilation expert for consideration as a quarantine hotel. Remediation works are required at some hotels, as identified through extensive testing. All works, once completed, will be validated with further works conducted if required.

Stage	No. Hotels	Comments
Complete	3	Ventilation assessments and relevant works have been completed at three hotels. Simple or nil modifications were required at these hotels.
Partially complete	2	Two hotels require rectifications in limited areas of the hotel. The floors assessed as suitable for use in the quarantine program will be operationalised immediately. Further works will be completed in April on the remaining floors once other hotels are introduced.
Underway	8	<p>All hotels have an action plan detailing the works to be completed, which ranges from rebalancing the HVAC systems, sealing windows, through to the replacement of fans.</p> <p>Works have commenced at four hotels, expected to be completed in late March.</p> <p>The procurement of necessary parts (such as custom-made exhaust fans) and engagement of building contractors is underway for four hotels. Works at these hotels are expected to be completed in April.</p> <p>Hotels will be progressively opened as the works are completed, following further validation by the independent ventilation expert.</p>
Further assessment	6	<p>CQV is conducting further assessments for six hotels due to interim findings. In some instances, the pressure testing completed indicates a large number of rooms are positively pressured (meaning the air can flow from the room to the corridor) requiring rectification.</p> <p>CQV continues to work with each hotel and the independent ventilation expert to determine the most appropriate course of action.</p>