



THE HON BEN MORTON MP
ASSISTANT MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Reference: MC20-089225

Mr Kelvin Tori
Chief Executive Officer
Melton City Council
PO Box 21
MELTON VIC 3337

Dear Mr Tori

Thank you for your letter dated 22 May 2020 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP regarding assistance for Australians stranded overseas. The Prime Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf.

The unprecedented effect of the pandemic has caused significant disruption for much of the world. I understand and share your concern for the residents of the City of Melton, and for any Australians stranded overseas and unable to return home.

On 17 March, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade issued a global bulletin advising Australians overseas to return. Since that time, over 300,000 Australia citizens and permanent residents have returned, most of whom have been able to make use of commercial flights.

DFAT has mobilised at an unprecedented level to help those Australian who have found themselves stranded. It has helped over 24,000 Australian citizens and permanent residents return home on 280 flights, 58 of which were directly facilitated by the Australian Government. At the same time, DFAT has provided significant support during this process: receiving more than 75,000 COVID-19-related calls, and sharing thousands of Smartraveller updates.

Thank you for writing to the Prime Minister.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ben Morton'.

BEN MORTON

30 / 6 / 2020

