

Typhoid fever, update

After the confirmation of cases of typhoid fever from passengers on a cruise ship, a health warning was issued on 8 June 1999 to all passengers and crew. This cruise had departed Cairns, Australia on 12 May 1999. The ship travelled to Port Moresby, Samarai Island, Milne Bay (in PNG), Honiara (Solomon Islands), Champagne Bay and Vila (Vanuatu). After disembarkation in Sydney on 25 May, the passengers and some of the crew dispersed to all six Australian States, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and New Zealand.

This alert, from the Communicable Diseases Network of Australia New Zealand (CDNANZ), advised that 3 passengers on this cruise were confirmed typhoid fever cases. At this time there were 2 confirmed cases in Victoria and 1 in New South Wales (NSW). All of these notified cases attended the Kokoda Trail tour on 14 May.

The alert initiated a national response coordinated by a working party nominated by CDNANZ.

Most passengers and crew who had returned to Queensland, ACT, Western Australia, South Australia and New Zealand were interviewed. In NSW and Victoria, only passengers and crew who had attended the Kokoda trail tour were interviewed.

All passengers and crew who were interviewed were asked to submit at least one faecal specimen. In some States blood and urine samples were requested as well. Passengers and crew who were working in occupations with a high risk for transmission for *Salmonellatyphi* were required to submit three faecal specimens, with clearance for return to work pending return of negative samples.

In the intervening period between the detection of the first case and 30 June 1999 a total of 12 participants of the Kokoda Trail tour had *Salmonellatyphi* detected in specimens. There were 4 cases from Victoria, 6 from NSW and 1 each from Western Australia and New Zealand. Surveillance is ongoing.