



Australian Government
Department of Health

Information Brief
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To: Minister Hunt

Subject: **URGENT INFO BRIEF: ANALYSIS OF COVID VACCINES IN AUSTRALIA**

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Key Issues:

1. While the rate of adverse event reporting for COVID-19 vaccines is markedly higher than for previous vaccines monitored in Australia, this does not mean the COVID-19 vaccines are less safe than previous vaccines. There has been much greater media, political and community discussion of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign than any other in the nation's history as well as widespread and intense promotion of reporting channels to the public and health professionals as part of the broader vaccination campaign. Reporting of COVID-19 vaccine adverse events to the TGA by consumers and health professionals has contributed to the most intensive vaccine safety monitoring ever conducted in Australia.

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Background:Rate of reporting of adverse events

- There was a marked increase in reporting of adverse events in Australia coinciding with the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. This was a result of high public interest in COVID-19 vaccines, the large scale and rapid deployment of vaccines, and the TGA's efforts to promote and facilitate reporting to support robust safety monitoring.
 - The rate of adverse event reporting for COVID-19 vaccines has decreased from 6.6 reports per 1000 doses in April 2021, to 2.1 reports per 1000 doses in October 2021. To 31 October 2021, the TGA had received 76,587 adverse event reports for COVID-19 vaccines.
 - In comparison, the adverse event reporting rate for influenza vaccines in adults in Australia in 2018 was 0.22 per 1,000 doses.
 - Other regulators saw similarly increased rates of adverse event reporting for COVID-19 vaccines. s22
- The higher reporting of adverse events for COVID-19 vaccines compared to other vaccines in the past does not mean that COVID-19 vaccines are less safe than other vaccines. Importantly, reporting of an adverse event to the TGA does not mean that the vaccine caused the event. The TGA encourages people to report adverse events following vaccination even if they are uncertain that the vaccine has caused the event. s22

