

Australia approves Pfizer vaccine for rollout in February

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Australia's medical regulator has formally approved the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, with the first doses expected to be administered in late February, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced Monday.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) granted provisional approval for the Pfizer product, making it the first COVID-19 vaccine to get the [green light](#) in Australia.

"I note this is not an emergency approval, as has been done in some other jurisdictions around the world," Morrison told reporters.

"This is a formal approval under the ordinary processes of the TGA and we are one of the first countries... to have gone through that comprehensive and thorough process here in Australia to ensure the approval of that vaccine."

Australia has secured 10 million doses from Pfizer—enough to vaccinate five million people—with [healthcare workers](#) and the elderly expected to receive the first jabs.

Morrison cautioned that the rollout would start with "very small beginnings" in late February, instead of the mid-February timetable his government had promised, due to production and delivery challenges globally.

He said the vaccination programme should be complete by October.

It means Australia will begin inoculating its citizens months after the United States and United Kingdom, despite Morrison's boast earlier in the pandemic that his country would be "at the front of the queue".

Largely virus-free Australia has fared comparatively well in its COVID-19 response, with 909 deaths from about 28,700 cases in a population of 25 million.

The country has also secured more than 50 million doses of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, with the majority set to be manufactured

locally, but the TGA is yet to grant approval.

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