

Moderna to deliver 25 mn vaccines to Australia by 2022

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US pharmaceutical company Moderna on Wednesday agreed to deliver 25 million COVID-19 vaccine shots to Australia by the end of next year as the country deals with a lagging immunization campaign.

Moderna will deliver 10 million doses this year and by 2022 deliver 15 million booster shots that are still being tested but meant to neutralize variants of COVID-19, the company and the Australian government said in a statement.

"We appreciate the partnership and support from the government of Australia with this first supply agreement for doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine and our variant booster candidates," Moderna CEO Stephane Bancel said in a statement.

This month, Moderna released positive results from trials of a modified vaccine aimed at the South African and Brazilian COVID-19 variants, and of a third dose of its initial vaccine.

Australia's COVID-19 vaccine campaign has lagged behind those of other countries and the government's target. This week Canberra set a new goal of vaccinating all willing adults by the end of this year.

So far, Australia has delivered 2.5 million vaccine shots, versus the roughly 50 million jabs needed to vaccinate the entire population.

After a series of problems with vaccine delivery and the use of the AstraZeneca [vaccine](#) for those under 50, the government is now in talks to manufacture promising mRNA vaccines domestically.

Australia has ridden out the [coronavirus](#) pandemic by effectively sealing itself off from the rest of the world, and with a series of snap local lockdowns.

It remains one of the few places where there is no widespread community transmission and daily life is relatively normal.

But very few Australians are immunized and there have been repeated outbreaks linked to quarantine facilities, raising fears that its success could be fleeting.

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