Respiratory Viruses Surveillance Bulletin

Epidemiological Week 9 (Up to 1 March 2026)

World Health Organization
Western Pacific Region

Contents

Regional situation at a glance

- Regional influenza positivity is 9% and SARS-CoV-2 positivity is below 5% in week 9 of 2026 (Figure 1).
- The predominant circulating influenza virus changed from influenza A (47% of all detections) to influenza B(Victoria) (53% of all detections) (Figure 2).
- Influenza activity has increased in most northern hemisphere countries and corresponds to increases in influenza B(Victoria) detections.
- Influenza activity has decreased across all southern hemisphere countries, except New Zealand.

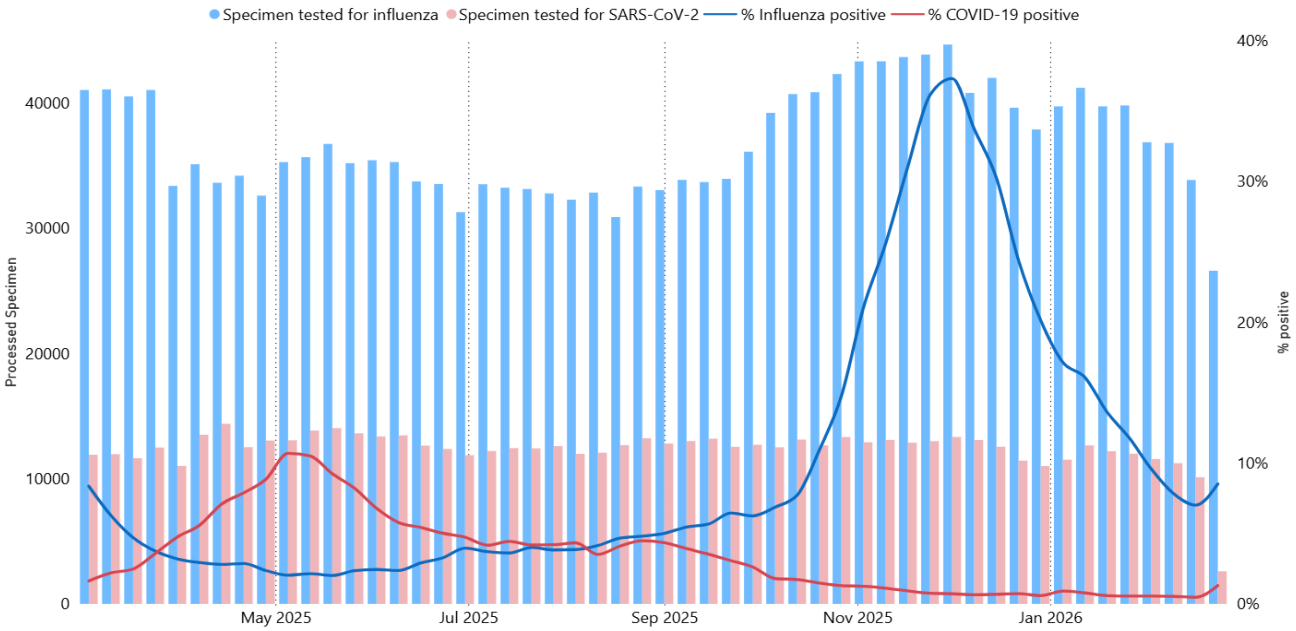

Figure 1: Number of sentinel surveillance specimens tested for influenza and SARS-CoV-2 and positivity rates as reported to RespiMart from countries and areas of the Western Pacific Region, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026 (Source: GISRS surveillance data reported to RespiMart)

Note: Sentinel surveillance specimens are not tested for SARS-CoV-2 in Brunei Darussalam and China. As data submission may not be completed for the most recent week, current trends should be interpreted with caution.

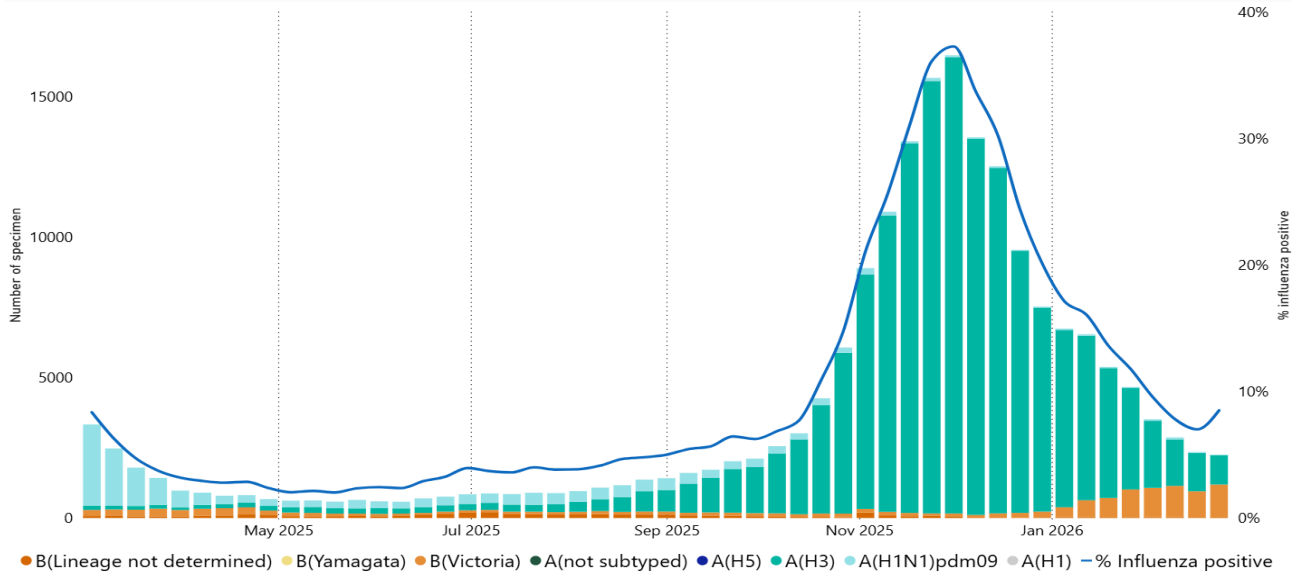

Figure 2. Influenza virus detections by subtype in the Western Pacific Region, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026 (Source: Influenza Laboratory Surveillance Information)

Note: All influenza A specimens are subtyped using PCR primers for H1N1pdm09 and H3N2 subtypes. Therefore, specimens indicated as A(H3) in the following figures are subtyped as A(H3/N2).

Updates from countries and areas by WHO transmission zones

The figures below illustrate sentinel surveillance data submitted to RespiMart from countries and areas in the Western Pacific Region. Countries and areas are grouped by transmission zone[1]. Typically, all sentinel surveillance specimens are tested for influenza and SARS-CoV-2. However, in selected countries (Brunei Darussalam, China, and Malaysia), sentinel surveillance specimens are only tested for influenza. Additionally,

[1] Influenza transmission zones

Pacific island countries and areas are currently only reporting syndromic influenza like illness (ILI) data as virological testing has not been initiated.

For each country and area in a WHO transmission zone, data are presented for the number of specimens tested and percent positivity for influenza and/or SARS-CoV-2, and the circulating influenza subtypes. Each figure illustrates trends based on a rolling 52-week timeframe. The vertical axis scale differs by country to reflect the weekly number of samples tested and to optimize the clarity of the charts.

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 activity in the Eastern Asia transmission zone

Influenza activity has decreased in all countries in the Eastern Asia transmission zone, except Japan and Mongolia, where positivity has increased from 10% to 15% and from 33% to 49% between weeks 8 and 9, respectively (Figure 3). SARS-CoV-2 positivity continues to remain below 5% for countries in this transmission zone, except Japan, where positivity is 8% in week 9. Both influenza A(H3) and influenza B(Victoria) are circulating in this transmission zone, with influenza B(Victoria) being the predominant influenza subtype in China, Japan, Mongolia, and Republic of Korea (Figure 4).

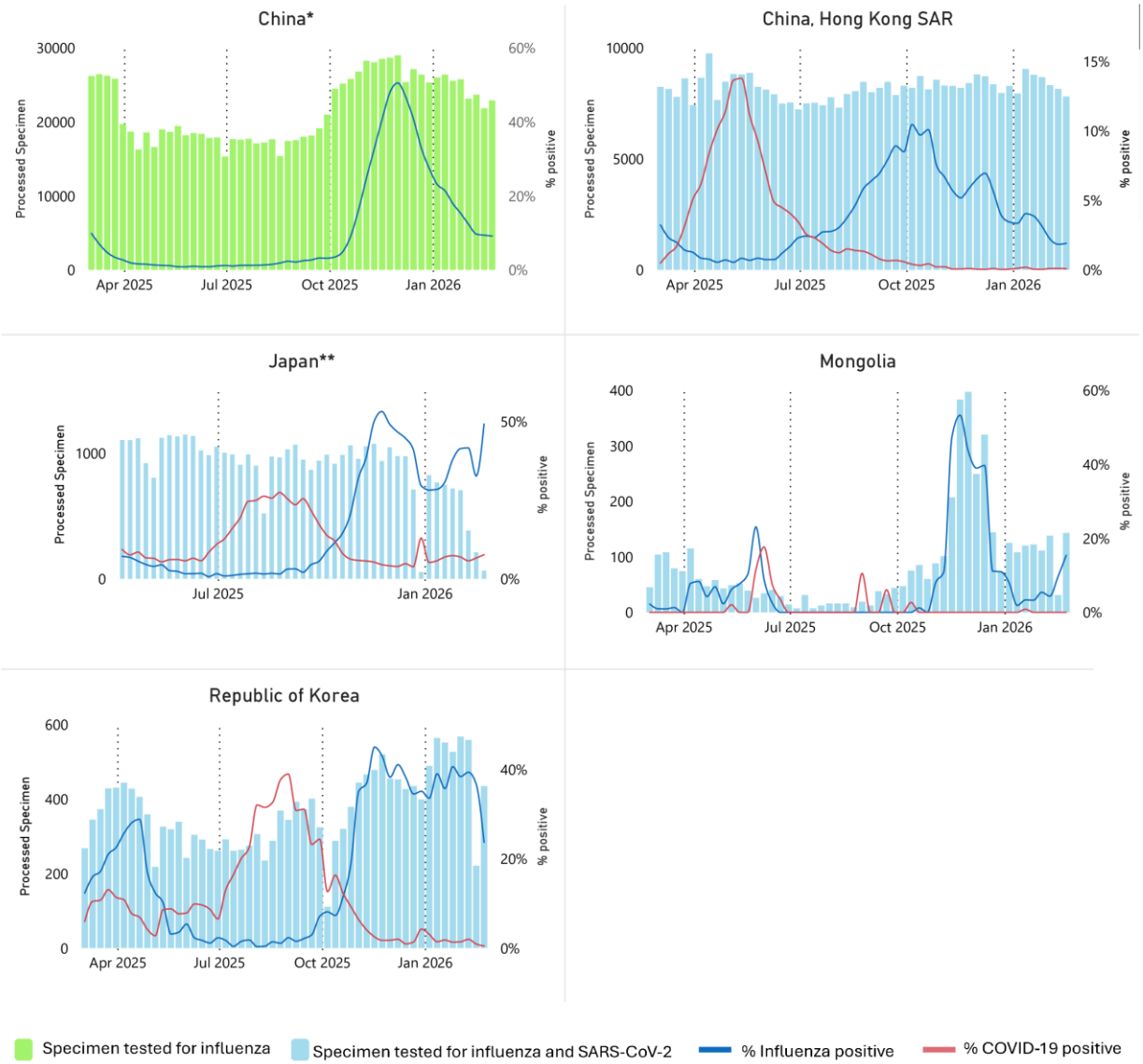

Figure 3: Number of specimens processed and % of specimens positive for influenza and SARS-CoV-2 by week, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026

** China does not test sentinel specimens for SARS-CoV-2. Data for China and China, Hong Kong SAR, are presented separately.*

*** Denominator data are available for Japan since week 15, 2025.*

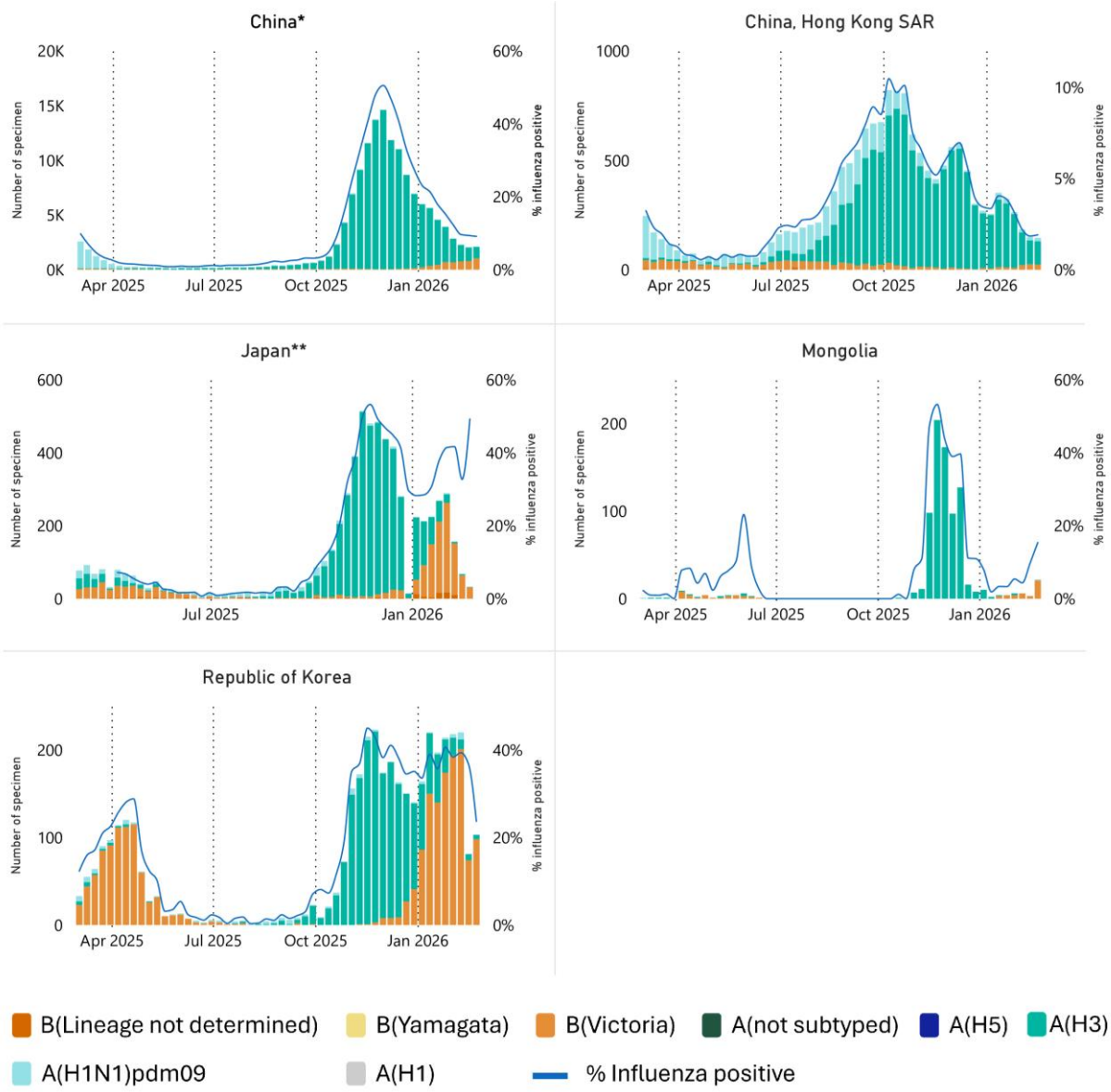

Figure 4: Influenza virus detections by subtype by week, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026

** Data for China and China, Hong Kong SAR, are presented separately.*
*** Denominator data are available for Japan since week 15, 2025.*

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 activity in the South-East Asia transmission zone

Influenza activity has decreased in all countries in the South-East Asia transmission zone, except Singapore, during this reporting period. Influenza positivity in this transmission zone ranges from 0% (Brunei Darussalam, Philippines and Viet Nam) to 15% (Lao PDR) (Figure 5). SARS-CoV-2 positivity remains below 5% in this transmission zone (Figure 5). Both influenza A(H3) and influenza B are circulating in this transmission zone, with influenza B being the predominant subtype in Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore and Viet Nam(Figure 6). No data was received from Cambodia in this reporting period.

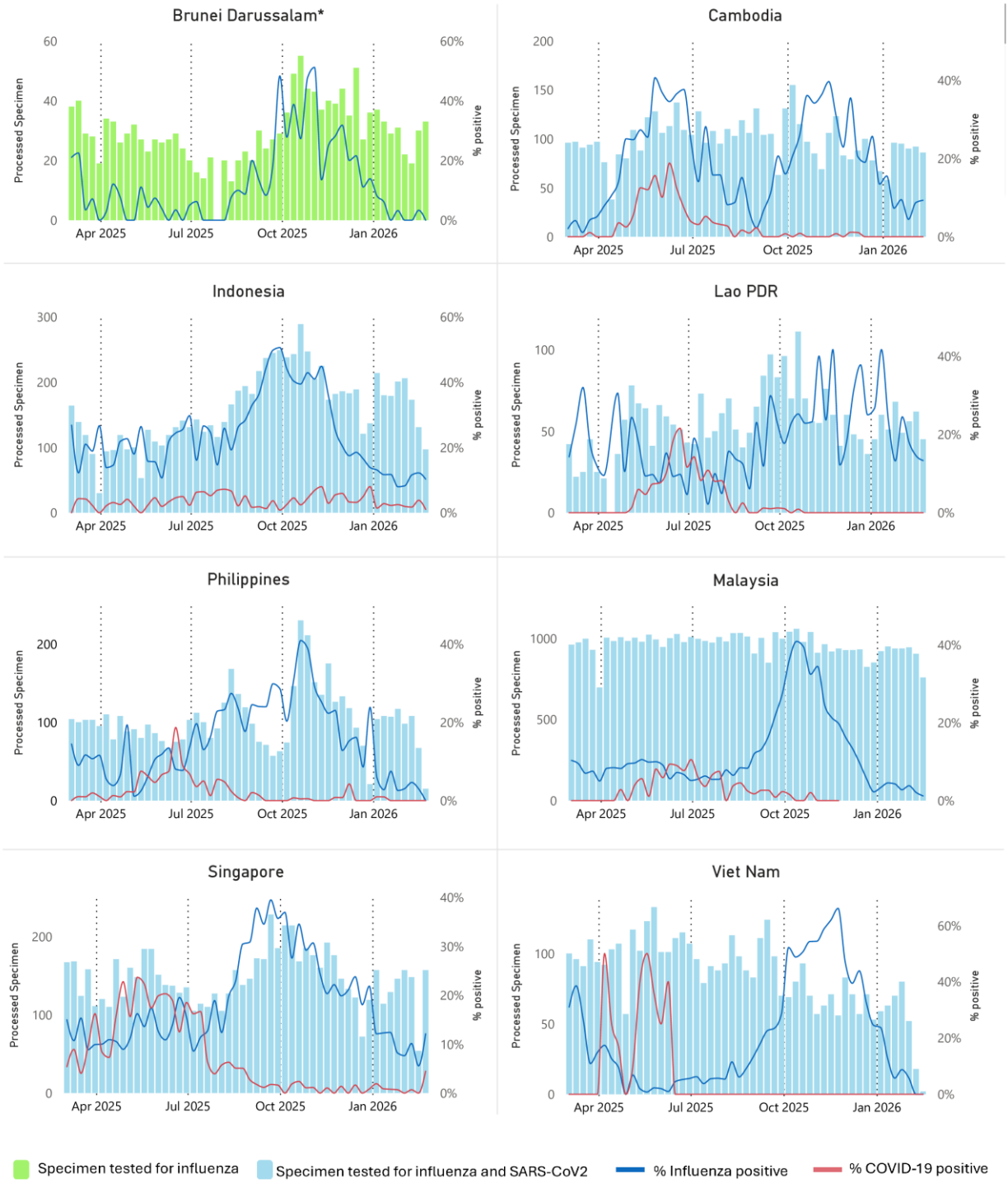

Figure 5: Number of specimens processed and % of specimens positive for influenza by week, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026

** Brunei Darussalam only tests sentinel specimens for influenza.*

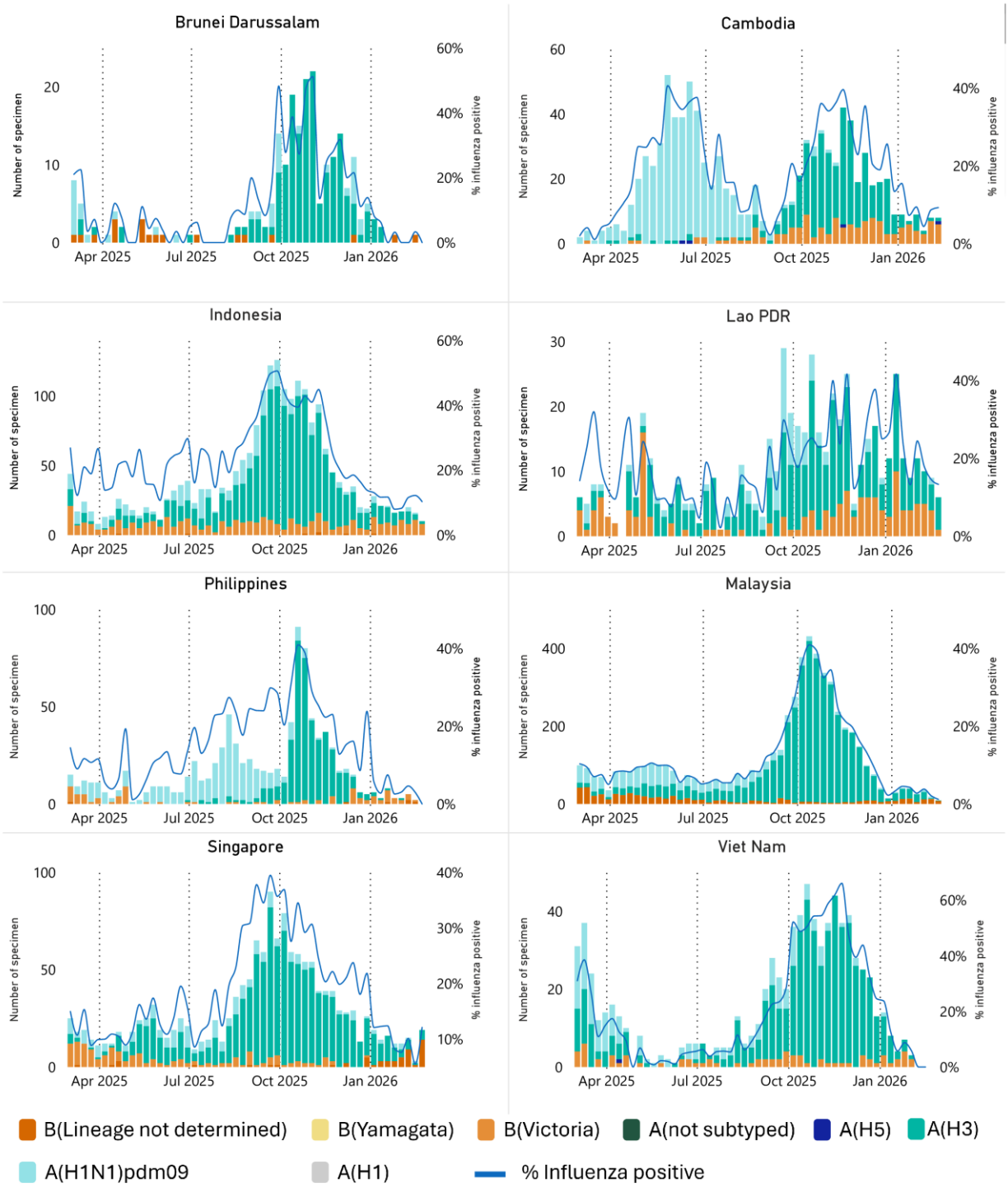

Figure 6: Influenza virus detections by subtype by week, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 activity in the Oceania, Melanesia and Polynesia

Influenza activity has declined in all countries in this transmission zone with positivity below 5%. The positivity rate for SARS-CoV-2 is highest in Fiji at 6% as of week 9. The predominant circulating influenza subtype is influenza A(H3) in this transmission zone, but influenza B(Victoria) has been detected in Australia (Figure 8). No data was received from New Zealand in this reporting period.

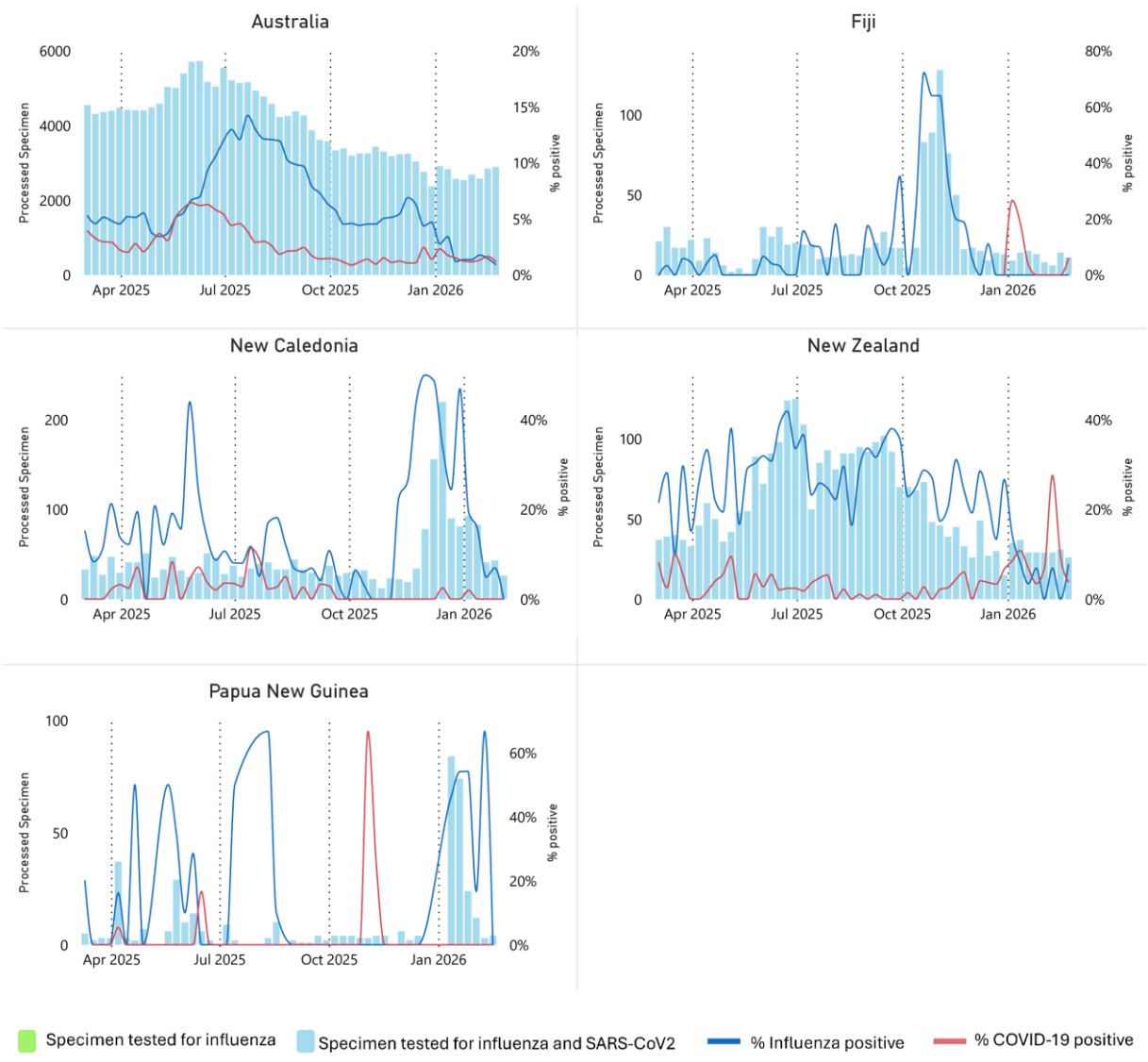

Figure 7: Number of specimens processed and % of specimens positive for influenza and SARS-CoV-2 by week, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026

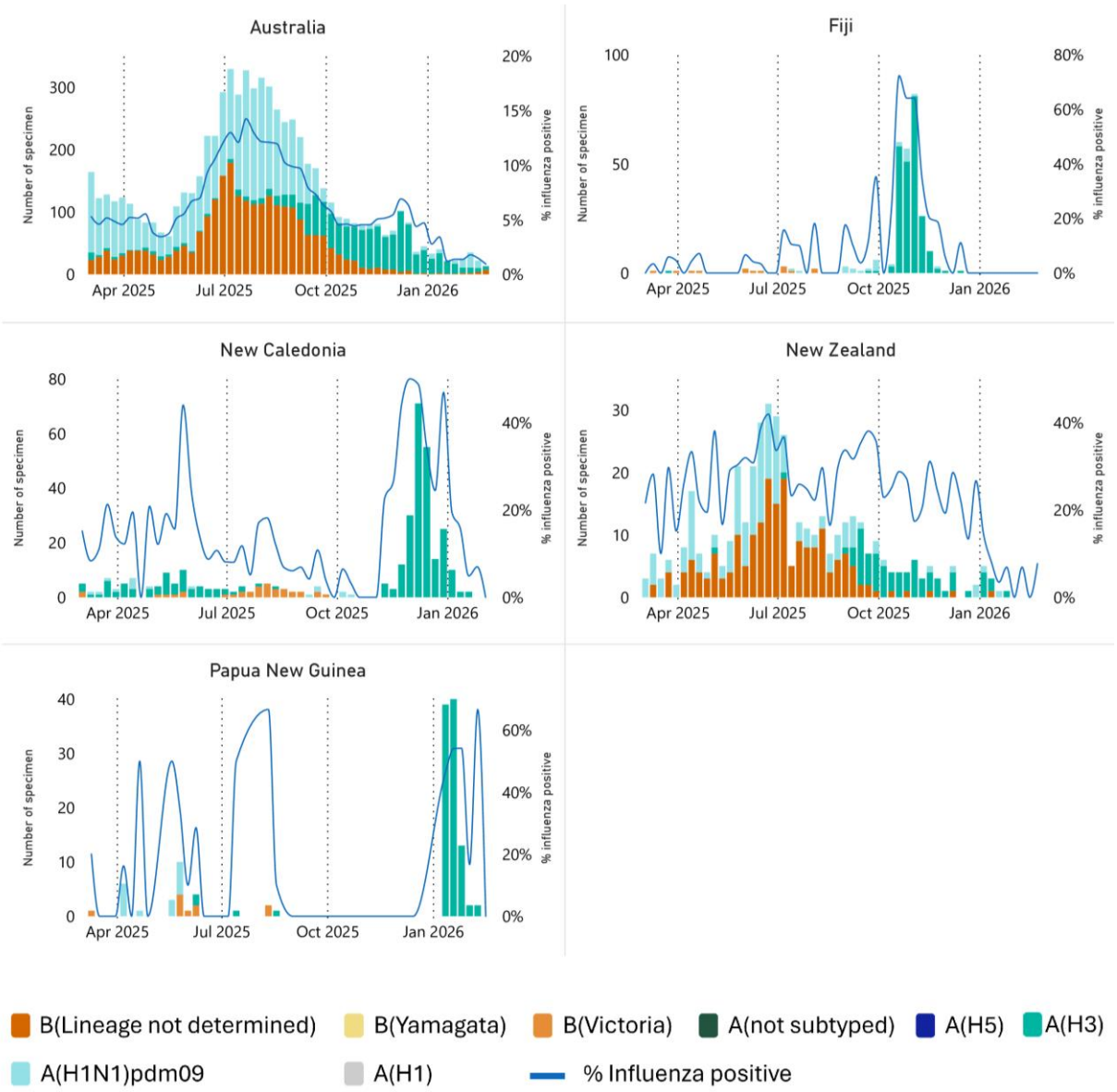

Figure 8: Influenza virus detections by subtype by week, 3 March 2025 to 1 March 2026

Influenza like illness (ILI) situation in the Pacific Island countries and areas (PICs)

The PICs collect data weekly for ILI and SARI through the Pacific Syndromic Surveillance System (PSSS) and report weekly ILI data to RespiMart. Data up to week 7 of 2026 has been received from PSSS and is presented below (Figure 9a, 9b). No data was received from French Polynesia, Guam and Niue. Pitcairn Islands have reported no ILI cases in the past 52 weeks. An increase in ILI cases was reported in Kiribati, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu, while ILI cases decreased in Solomon Islands.

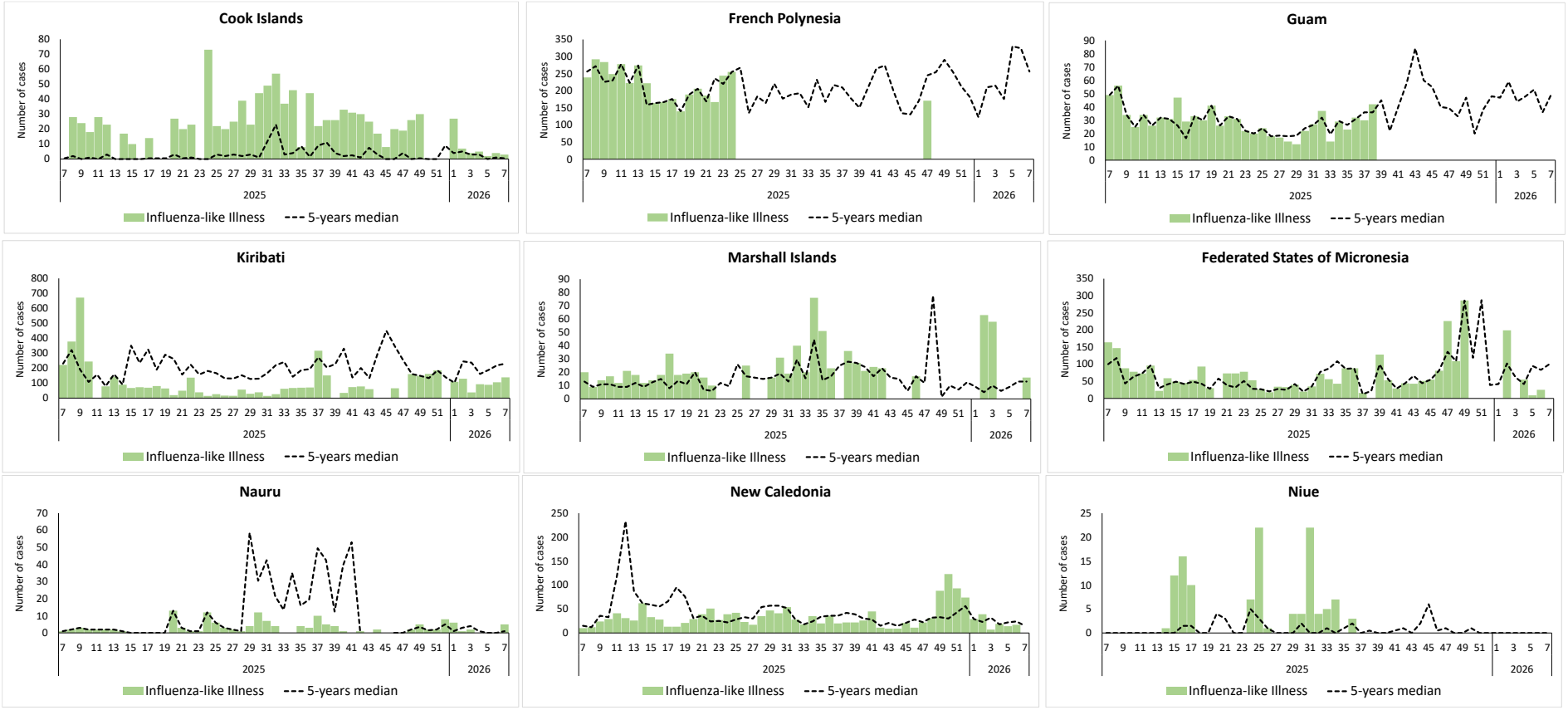

Figure 9a: Reported cases of influenza-like illness from week 7, 2025 to week 7, 2026 (Source: Pacific Syndromic Surveillance System Weekly Bulletin)

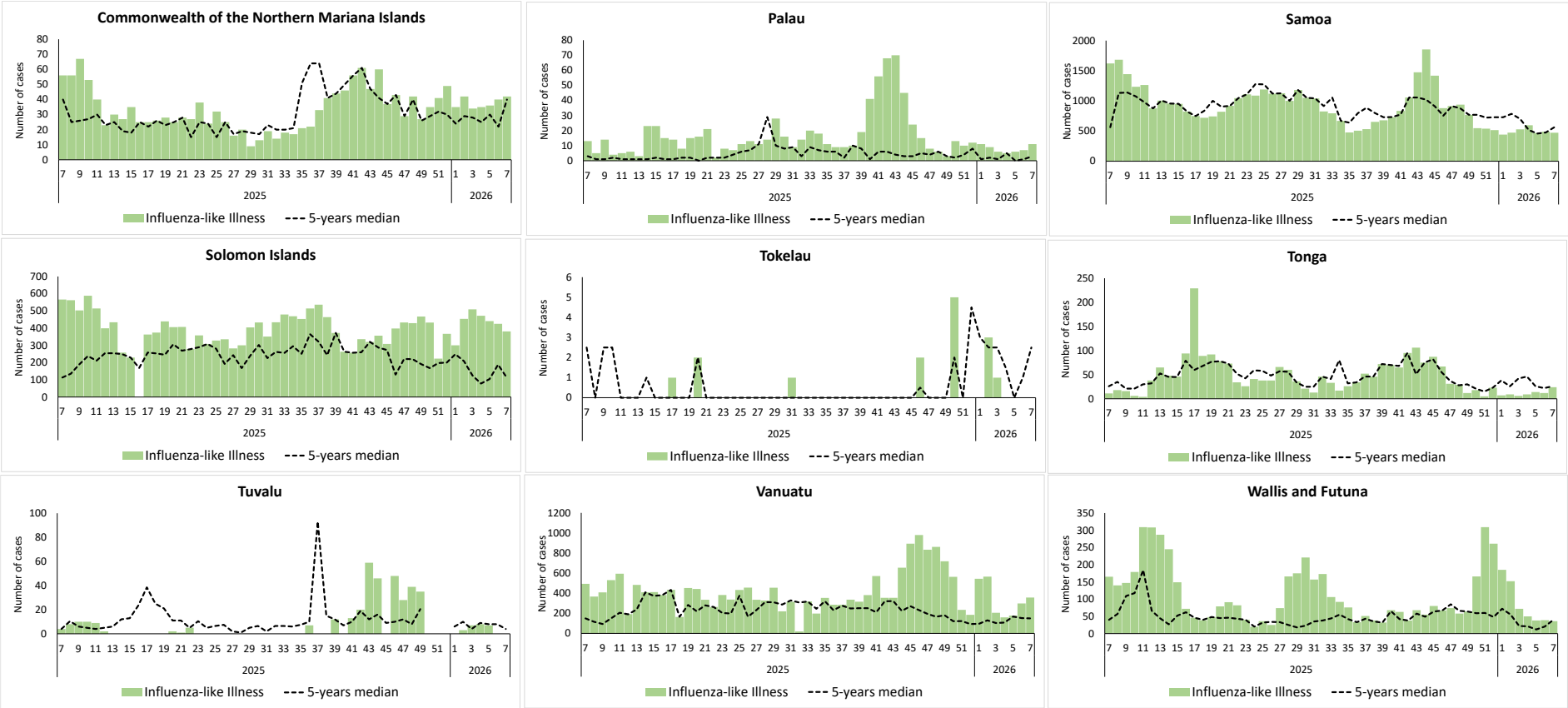

Figure 9b: Reported cases of influenza-like illness from week 7, 2025 to week 7, 2026 (Source: Pacific Syndromic Surveillance System Weekly Bulletin)

Tracking SARS-CoV-2 variants in the Western Pacific Region

As of 10 March 2026, the relative frequency of circulating SARS-CoV-2 variants in the Western Pacific Region, based on sequences submitted to GISAID (Table 1), is as follows: NB.1.8.1 at 35.17%, XFG at 26.30%, B.1.1.529 at 17.74%, KP.3.1.1 at 14.37%, JN.1 at 4.89% and remaining variants collectively at 1.22% (Figure 10). Contribution of SARS-CoV-2 sequences to GISAID for regional analysis is indicated in Table 1.

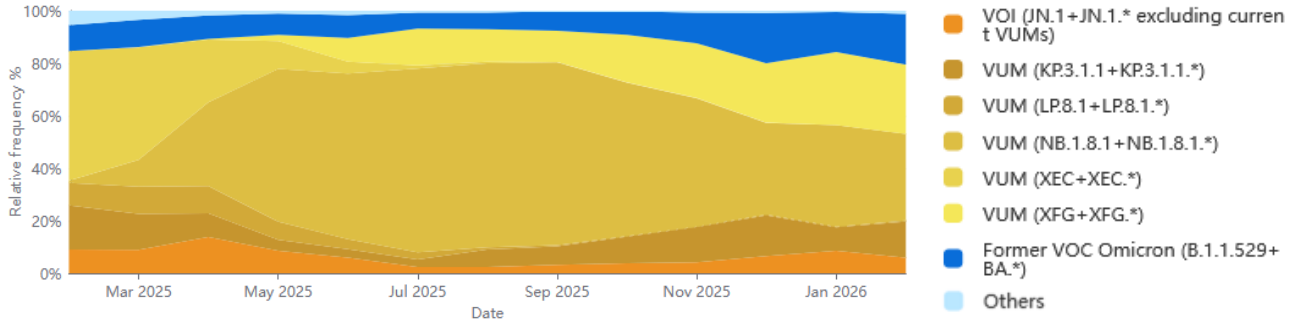

Figure 10: Relative frequency (%) of circulating variants in the Western Pacific Region, 2025-2026
Note: Indonesia data is not included in this figure. (Source: GISAID hCoV-19 Variants Dashboard)

Table 1: Number of SARS-CoV-2 sequences submitted to GISAID from the Western Pacific Region*

Country and area	Total number of sequences submitted in quarter 3, 2025	Total number of sequences submitted in quarter 4, 2025	Total number of sequences submitted in quarter 1, 2026	Last submission
Australia	2 373	1 390	397	Feb-26
Brunei Darussalam	11	0	0	Sep-25
Cambodia	19	5	0	Oct-25
China	2 221	370	42	Jan-26
China, Hong Kong SAR	153	78	21	Feb-26
Guam	26	0	0	Aug-25
Indonesia	34	15	0	Nov-25
Japan	1 578	377	39	Feb-26
Lao PDR	43	0	0	Sep-25
Malaysia	217	15	0	Dec-25
Micronesia (Federated States of)	1	0	0	Jul-25
Mongolia	3	2	0	Oct-25
New Caledonia	8	0	0	Sep-25
New Zealand	867	314	180	Feb-26
Philippines	2	0	0	Jul-25
Republic of Korea	1 863	395	36	Jan-26
Singapore	1 007	172	97	Feb-26
Viet Nam	9	0	0	Aug-25
Wallis and Futuna	1	0	0	Jul-25

** All data presented are from: GSAID SARS-COV-2 variants dashboard (as of 10 March 2026)*

Data Sources and Disclaimer

- Caution should be taken in interpreting this data as there may be changes in the number of sentinel sites reporting to the Pacific Syndromic Surveillance System.
- The information presented in this update is based on data provided by Ministries of Health and National Influenza Centers of Member States to Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)'s online platform RespiMart (Integrated influenza and other respiratory viruses surveillance output) and open data that Ministries of Health published on its website or shared with the WHO Regional Officer for the Western Pacific.

Reference links:

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