

## AUSTRALIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY COUNCIL (ATIC) NATIONAL PRIORITIES TO SAVE AUSTRALIA'S STRUGGLING VISITOR ECONOMY

### Background

From the inception of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, it was always predicted that the nation's \$150 billion tourism, events and hospitality industry would be the first affected by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and we would be the last industry to recover.

Throughout the past 18 months, businesses operating within the nation's visitor economy have been unable to reactivate at the same pace and scale of businesses in other sectors of the economy.

Even if we are not in a lockdown situation, the ongoing residual operating restrictions will continue to impede an industry that relies on people being able to move freely across the country – and across the globe.

This reality substantiates the need for ongoing, sustained support for an industry that has been most severely affected by these ongoing disruptions. When you lockdown the eastern seaboard, as we have seen recently; as the major feeders of tourism movement across the country, you effectively lockdown the whole country and the reverberations are felt nationwide.

### National ATIC Industry Survey

In a recent survey conducted by ATIC to its 10,000-strong member base across the country, more than 80% of respondents are now "worried" or "extremely worried" about their future viability.

Furthermore, 86% of respondents said interstate travel restrictions and border closures were significantly impacting their business.

76% said that their business is experiencing a significant downturn due to current lockdowns, business restrictions, or travel restrictions as at July 2021.

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## ATIC'S THREE POINT PLAN

The Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) has formulated the following three-point plan to support the industry until we can achieve a more stable operating environment for our industry:

1. To the end of the calendar year, tourism, hospitality, and event operators across Australia must have access to targeted financial support to assist in navigating the challenges of the next six months until Australia can achieve the threshold levels of vaccination rates agreed by National Cabinet to transition our Covid Health Response. This support could be structured along similar lines to the support offered to the aviation sector, in the form of wage subsidies.
2. Re-introduce the flexibility provisions in the Fair Work Act that were put in place for employers during the JobKeeper period. This will allow businesses to maintain relationships with employees and will give a degree of certainty to employees that their jobs are being protected. In combination with the first measure proposed, this will make a material difference to both employers and employees.
3. We need to see more detail related to the longer-term for the Covid-19 Transition Roadmap agreed by National Cabinet to provide more operating certainty to the industry's pathway to recovery.

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