

# Media Release

## Three-Point Tourism, Events and Hospitality Plan to avoid a knock down from lockdowns

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It has become predictably clear that the nation's \$150 billion tourism, events and hospitality industry was the first and most severely affected by the impact of COVID-19 and will be the last to recover.

This is why the peak tourism industry bodies of all state and territories, brought together under the Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC), have issued an urgent call-to-action to the federal and state/territory governments. ATIC has a combined membership of some 10,000 businesses.

ATIC, Deputy Chair, Daniel Gschwind said, "Throughout the past 18 months, tourism and hospitality businesses have been disrupted, repeatedly locked down and remain effectively cut off from their customers, both domestically and internationally.

The impact has been nothing short of devastating and has left businesses large and small depleted of any financial reserves and many are on the brink of giving up. Australia cannot afford to stand by and see one of the major national employment sectors and driver of regional economies, decimated without further assistance.

"Even if we are not in a lockdown situation, the ongoing operating restrictions and lack of access for visitors will continue to burden an industry that relies on people being able to move freely across the country – and across borders.

"This presents a clear and present danger to the sustainability of the entire sector in every part of the country and we need urgent action".

The proposed emergency plan to sustain the industry until more certainty for businesses and consumers is restored, covers three areas:

1. To the end of the calendar year, affected tourism, hospitality and event operators across Australia must have access to targeted financial support to sustain operations and maintain staff engagement. 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. A more detailed Covid-19 Transition Roadmap agreed by National Cabinet to provide more operating certainty to the industry's pathway to recovery.

"In our darkest hour, we are asking the government to stand with us", Mr Gschwind said.

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