

Inquiry into the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Tourism and Events Sectors

Mr Duane Swan

Organisation Name:

Your position or role:

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

Covid has clearly devastated events and tourism across Victoria and Australia, and the effects have been felt across the board, most acutely felt by those who make their livelihood solely from events. Having worked from the bottom up in events and hospitality over 20 years, the number of direct and ancillary workers, contractors, businesses and suppliers that are involved in running an event is enormous, and the effects from current restrictions and limitations are unsustainable for most. From all those that work at Harry the Hirer or Frontier Touring to all the sole traders and family businesses dotted around the state, without any direct and targeted solutions from the government immediately, the events and tourism industries will be damaged beyond repair, along with the livelihoods of those that create it.

We do need action immediately, though in no way do I suggest the actions up till now have not been greatly appreciated and beneficial in getting Victoria into a position to be open again for events and tourism.

With the current movement on vaccines and the lifting of more restrictions being positive, the next 6 months for events will be crucial for survival and then recovery.

Additionally, with the lack of international travel for the foreseeable future it is imperative that we protect the events and tourism industry during this next stage. The mantle of 'the events capital of the world' is something we proudly enjoy, and we truly do have an amazing array of events. AFL Grand Final Parade, Melbourne Cup, Formula 1, Australian Open, Moomba, St Kilda Festival and all the expos like the Toy Fair, Food and Wine or Arnold Schwarzenegger, then all the small and communities events, and those livelihoods dependent on events and tourism, such as a towtruck operator in a rural area or a family run merry-go-round, this is all at risk.

There are a range of issues we are currently facing which pose a devastating risk to events and tourism in Victoria and beyond that need to be addressed -

- There is no confidence in events or travel across the board from attendee, event organiser, supplier
- The end of jobkeeper creating unsustainable venues and workplaces
- The end of rent relief and evictions
- Winter is the quietest part of the year
- Loss of IP and associated technology
- Loss of local skilled professionals is occurring at a rapid rate
- Loss of casual workforce, students, backpackers and overseas professionals
- Loss of logistics, hire companies and suitable materials
- Increased insurance and liabilities
- Increased event application and approval
- And many more addressed in the submissions already provided

These issues facing events and tourism are broad and spread across so many complementary businesses, workers and suppliers and the challenges ahead are real. This is a multi-faceted problem that needs direct and targeted solutions from the government.

There are positive suggestions currently that have merit, the government should be considering, including -- Government backed insurance, accessible and available to all, the message the public and events are seeing is no confidence in managing outbreaks, so events need protecting from sudden lockdowns and restricted travel or isolation orders

- Directed support again, actual financial support in line with downturn and future revenue of businesses and individuals

- Rent and eviction support again, not just a deferred rental debt

This has been a tremendous shift in events and tourism, and currently unsustainable for most without direct support.

To lose everything due to the global Covid pandemic is one thing, to still be in virtual lockdown is other.

Thankyou for your time and consideration

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:



Signature:

Duane Swan