



BECA UNVEILS RECOVERY PLAN

THE Business Events Council of Australia has created a "Response & Recovery Framework" to sustain the sector through the next 12 months, with the document submitted to the Government for initial consideration.

The organisation said it had identified key challenges facing the industry, and particularly highlighted gaps which are not alleviated by existing stimulus and support measures.

"With finite resources, it is critical that efforts are concentrated on those areas that are expected to bring the largest benefits to the industry and Australian economy more broadly," BECA said.

The first "Response" phase aims to enable the industry to effectively hibernate during the panic and to build domestic demand, industry capacity and

strategy for the future market.

Despite Government measures, "the viability of industry businesses and organisations is at immediate risk with no cash-flow or forward pipeline of business events," the framework document notes.

Response phase initiatives include having the Government as an events leader, to encourage official agencies to outsource meetings and event management activities.

BECA is urging incentives to encourage early bookings and development of the pipeline, as well as the development of a national business events strategy that sits alongside Tourism 2030.

A major event cancellation relief fund is also envisaged, as well as a strong focus on employee skills & training and ensuring industry capability and



coordination.

The second "Rebound & Grow" phase envisaged by BECA aims to position and market Australia for success in the new global market.

The Council has suggested the renewal and extension of the Government's Bid Fund, and the creation of new Trade and Investment Priority Business Events that tap into Australia's competitive advantages in key growth industries and regional areas of the country.

Simplification of visas, international research, and improved business events metrics that enhance Tourism Research Australia's visitor surveys are also suggested.

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

TCEB campaign

THE Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has announced a new project focusing on digital-based business events services as a way of supporting the industry.

The "Virtual Meeting Space" initiative aims to help MICE entrepreneurs run events online and also re-skill staff via virtual platforms.

TCEB has also released a new health safety standard to give venue operators information on preventing the spread of COVID-19 in their meetings and events - businesseventsthailand.com.



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What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the events sector? Read more in the April issue of *travelBulletin*.

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GCCEC cooks for the community



THE Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) isn't resting on its laurels during the COVID-19 enforced downtime.

Despite having to temporarily close its doors due to legislation that limits gatherings and imposes social distancing, GCCEC has formed a Community Team which has been tasked to head up initiatives to provide support in these straitened times.

Executive Chef, Garry Kindred and his kitchen team have been creating nutritious dishes and desserts, which have been used by organisations including OzHarvest, St John's Crisis Centre, Love This City and Hillsong CityCare.

By the end of last week they had prepared about 15,000 meal portions for distribution to the area's most vulnerable.

The initiative has been strongly backed by IGA and its supply partners, who have

committed to donating five tonnes of perishable food.

Ruth Arnold, spokesperson for Love This City which is the charity offshoot of OurChurch, said meals had been distributed to senior and disability patrons who have been isolated by COVID-19.

Other recipients have included families impacted by the financial effects of coronavirus, as well as people in the "at risk" category for isolation plus doctors and nurses on the front line at local fever clinics and the Robina Hospital emergency department.

GCCEC GM Adrienne Readings, said "if there's a silver lining in the current crisis, it's seeing the community rally together to support those most affected," with the centre's tech team also providing services for local schools by creating temporary studios & recording lessons for online delivery.

ATEC recovery push

THE Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) has launched a "Road to Recovery" free online weekly tutorial series.

The sessions are part of ATEC's Build Back Better strategy, aiming to give individuals and businesses tools to be stronger than ever once the industry gets back on track.

"This is undoubtedly an unprecedented challenge for our industry and many people have lost their jobs or their entire business," said ATEC MD Peter Shelley.

"But the tourism industry is full of passionate and committed people who will be there at the other end of this pandemic, looking to re-engage and find new opportunities".

The tutorials take place every Thu at 2pm AEST - atec.net.au.



WE MIGHT be continuing to live in lockdown, but our culinary dreams can't be constrained.

And for some particularly keen gourmets in Germany, they're not letting social distancing get in the way.

Residents of Lauterbach, near the border with France, appear to have a particular fixation with baguettes and have come up with a unique way of still getting their fix.

Borders have been closed, meaning they can't get across to the neighbouring French village of Carling where there is a popular bakery full of pastry treats.

An innovative system has been developed which allows the Germans to call in their orders by phone.

The bakery's owner, Myriam Jansem-Boualit then takes the goodies down to the border barrier - where her clientele make their pick-ups at an appropriate distance using a fishing rod (**pictured**).

It all goes to show once you taste French pastries you can quickly get hooked.



MEA Jobkeeper

MEETINGS and Events Australia (MEA) will host a special webinar to explain the ins and outs of the Federal Government's JobKeeper national wage subsidy program.

The \$130 billion six month package aims to keep employees connected by subsidising their wages by \$750 per week.

MEA's webinar will be led by Hugh McPherson from Broad Reach Employee Relations and Greg Zeigler from BSA Partnership, taking place at 9am AEST this Thu 23 Apr - **REGISTER HERE**.