



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has three pages of news and a full page from **One&Only Wolgan Valley**.

MCEC closed

THE Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre (MCEC) has temporarily closed to the public from midnight last night, and will reopen on 13 Apr, in accordance with the Victorian Govt's guidelines.

"This has been a very difficult decision to reach and one that we haven't arrived at lightly," said Chief Executive Peter King.

"But as a business that brings people together we have a responsibility to do what we can to help support efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19."

MAJOR EVENTS CANCELLED

A NUMBER of event cancellations have emerged since the Australian Government advised against mass gatherings of 500 or more people to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Exhibitions and Trade Fairs announced The Business of Events would not proceed on the scheduled date of 19 Mar at Luna Park, Sydney, and are "carefully working through the next steps to determine potential new dates".

Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) has followed suit, deciding to postpone New Zealand's annual business events industry trade show MEETINGS, which was due to take place in Auckland on 22-23 Apr.

The Meeting & Events Australia (MEA) State and Territory Awards, as well as its



annual flagship event, Evolve 2020, will also be postponed until further notice.

"We will continue to deliver relevant webinars during these difficult times to assist the members in managing the impact COVID-19 is having on their businesses," said MEA CEO Robyn Johnson.

Johnson also revealed that MEA was "working with venues to determine potential new dates" effective immediately.

Other countries around the world are also seeing major event cancellations, including IMEX Frankfurt, Seatrade Cruise Global, Incentive Summit Europe (ISE) and Incentive Summit Americas (ISA).

Some of Australia's largest cultural events have also fallen victim to coronavirus cancellation, including Vivid Sydney, The Royal Easter Show, and the Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

Live stream rise

DIGITAL events company Create Engage has produced over 35 live streams since the beginning of the year, with 53% citing COVID-19 as the reason for implementation.

The company urges event organisers to embrace digital solutions, rather than cancelling events altogether.

Museums close

SYDNEY Living Museums has temporarily suspended all public programming through to 26 Apr, including onsite learning programs and walking tours.

The 12 museums and historic houses will remain open to the public.

One&Only

EMIRATES One&Only Wolgan Valley is offering an inclusive group stay with daily dining, regional wine and beverages, a conservation experience, and meeting room hire.

See the **back page** for more information.

Amora adds

AMORA Hotel Riverwalk Melbourne has recently completed a \$5 million ground floor transformation.

The new floor features a transformation of the former marquee area into an Events Pavilion with a capacity for up to 350 people.

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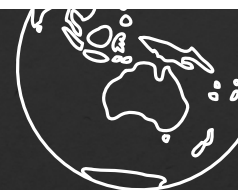
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Travel Daily



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CLICK to read
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Global talent

THE Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) has praised the Federal Govt for marking the business events industry as "a key mechanism to attract global talent to Australia" through its Global Talent Program initiative.

"We commend the Government on this initiative and look forward to working with the Department of Home Affairs to identify international business events that align with the program's priority sectors," said AACB CEO Andrew Hiebl.

"Beyond the direct economic benefit of delegate spend, business events can be strategic tools for attracting trade, investment and global talent".

REDUCTIONS TO 100?



THE Federal Government is reportedly meeting today to discuss the option of bolstering the public gathering ban from 500 to 100 people.

The idea was first flagged at a meeting of state and territory leaders over the weekend, *The Guardian* reports, and if approved, would place an even greater strain on the country's meetings and events industry.

Australia's Finance Minister, Mathias Cormann, confirmed the discussions about scaling up the response to COVID-19 are

currently taking place.

"We continue to receive medical advice," he said.

"Obviously some other parts of the world, in particular Europe and also the US, are somewhat further advanced in terms of the spread of the virus there."

If the Australian Government were to press ahead with a change, it would follow recent advice issued by The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to cancel all gatherings of more than 50 people in the United States.

BECA appoints

THE Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) has appointed Dr Vanessa Findlay as its new Independent Chair.

Dr Findlay has previously held a number of senior positions including Chief of Staff in the Turnbull Government in the trade, tourism and international education portfolios.

"With this role comes a high level of responsibility to ensure the business events sector can maximise its contribution to the Australian economy," said Dr Findlay.

Developing a recovery strategy that draws on experience in managing previous crises will be the main focus of BECA in the coming weeks and months.



Amora Hotel Riverwalk Melbourne is the place to be!

After a \$5 million ground floor transformation, Amora Hotel Riverwalk Melbourne on the banks of the Yarra, just got even better!

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Balgownie deal

BALGOWNIE Estate Vineyard and Resort, located in Victoria's Yarra Valley wine region, is offering a 24-Hour Corporate Retreat package, including accommodation and meals, starting from \$365pp.

For more info, [CLICK HERE](#).

CROWNE PLAZA REFURB

CROWNE Plaza Sydney Coogee Beach has completed the first phase of its multimillion-dollar redesign, with the property now featuring a purpose-built events centre, 10 new flexible meetings spaces, and new event dining concepts and menus.

All of the meeting spaces have been modernised and offer more than 1,175m² of space for up to 400 guests, and feature the latest in audio visual.

"What we can now offer guests is much more flexibility when it comes to staying here on business, with upgraded technology, smarter use of our social spaces and responding better to the changing ways in which people do business," said the hotel's Area General



Manager, Gareth Long.

"We've been buoyed by the amount of interest and excitement in our new meeting spaces...and we're already seeing strong interest coming through for 2020 and beyond."

Pictured: The Studio, an area on the ground floor which can be used either as a private meeting or event space or as shared work space.

Event App

EVENT software company Entegy has launched its new Wayfinding & Interactive Floorplans, which allows event professionals to "provide attendees with superior user experience and personalisation".

Event organisers can upload floorplans to the Entegy CMS and use the wayfinding editor to plot exhibitors, rooms and other points of interest, which attendees can then view on the Event App.

Event professionals are also able to include exhibitor logos, booth numbers, and links to more detailed exhibitor pages within the app.

To learn more, [CLICK HERE](#).



THE global panic brought on by COVID-19 outbreak didn't stop 3,500 people in western France from getting together on 07 Mar - all in the name of setting a Guinness World Record for the largest-ever gathering of Smurfs!

The festival was hosted in the town of Landerneau, one day before France banned public gatherings of more than 1,000 people.

"We must not stop living... it was the chance to say that we are alive," the town's mayor, Patrick Leclerc, told the local media.

"There's no risk, we're Smurfs," one attendee reportedly said.

"Yes, we're going to Smurferize the coronavirus."





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myCWT launch

BUSINESS and events travel management company CWT has launched web-based flight bookings on its platform, myCWT, allowing travelling employees to book flights and hotels through any of CWT's channels.

According to CWT, the new offer "gained excellent traction" and "clearly filled a previously unmet need" during the four-month testing stage.

The new feature is available in 25 countries in 13 languages, and will be rolled out in phases to CWT clients through 2020, along with "many other platform improvements".

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A Meaningful Retreat

Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley is a chic conservation retreat in the Greater Blue Mountains offering epic fresh air adventures, wholesome dining and blissful private villas. Experience Australia at its finest and witness the incredible transformation of nature.

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